



Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest Turns off the Taps and Closes the Kegs, Marking another Successful Year

(Waterloo Region, ON - October 19 2014) - The festival that has benefitted the local economy to the tune of \$22.2 Million annually, has wrapped up with another feather in its Bavarian hat. Last night, Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest officially ended its 46th year with Closing Ceremonies at Chicopee Haus. Festival organizers and guests looked on as the ceremonial keg was sealed in anticipation of its revival for the 2015 Festival season.

As volunteers and festival organizers now work to take down the symbolic elements of the festival throughout the region, Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest President, Harry Vogt, recaps the successes in 2014. "Turnout at the 18 Festhallen and 40 family and cultural events has been strong again this year," says Vogt, who ends his 2 year term as President with the festival this year. "I am so proud of the community and the collaborative spirit of this festival. From all indications, Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest is a great success, with record attendance at many of our key events. This year we also had two new initiatives that created quite a buzz and were very successful - **Fusstoberfest**, sponsored by Canadian Tire at the Waterloo Public Square, and **OktoberLICIOUS**, presented by Kik and Molson Coors Canada, at participating restaurants throughout the region.

The Festival started early, with the premier culinary event of the season, **Stein & Dine**, a night of exquisite food paired with Molson-Coors Beer; then continued on with close to 500 riders in the challenging **Tour de Hans** cycling race. The crowning of Miss Oktoberfest, **Lindsay Kalbfleisch** in front of a sell-out crowd at the 2014 Miss Oktoberfest Gala was one of the highlights of this year's festival.

Other highlights this year included: the launch of "Lederhosen" Beer courtesy of Rickard's and Molson-Coors, the return of Tante Frieda after a 20 year absence from the Festival, an expanded Schools Program sponsored by TD and Tim Hortons, a new beginning for the Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest Glockenspiel with help from the City of Kitchener, and a partnership with Hockey Canada to celebrate their 100th anniversary.

Rocktoberfest was a Festhalle-shaking event again this year, with **The Trews**, **Walter Ostanek** and **The Royal Streets** taking the stage on October 12th at Altes Muenchen Haus. The Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest Thanksgiving Day Parade attracted large crowds, and welcomed **Kitchener Mayor Carl Zehr** and **Waterloo Mayor Brenda Halloran** as Parade Grand Marshals for 2014. Our community stepped up again in a big way to help support the Onkel Hans Food Drive, which raised **10,846 lbs** of non-perishable food items and **\$11,587** in cash for The Food Bank of Waterloo Region.

Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest is continually adapting to new technology to better serve our customers and our organization; including: e-ticketing, texting, social media, and media screens throughout the Festival and at the Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest Retail Store and office.

While the financial numbers are still being tallied for this year's festival, the satisfaction and excitement that has spread throughout the area and beyond are good measures for success. Early indicators of Festhallen ticket sales were brisk, also demonstrating the community uptake for the festival attractions.

Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest helps local charities raise over \$1.5 Million during the nine day festival. The festival brand is the third most recognized festival in the country and continues to gain international recognition with its plethora of offerings. The 2015 Festival will run from October 9 - 17.

About Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest

Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest is a not-for-profit Bavarian festival founded in 1969 by a group of volunteers committed to contributing to the social and economic vitality of Kitchener-Waterloo, Canada twin cities with German heritage. Canada's Greatest Bavarian Festival celebrates German heritage, food, music and festivities and is supported by more than 50 not-for-profit organizations. The festival is operated by eight year-round full-time staff, over 480 volunteers and 1,300 community and service club volunteers that stage the nine-day festival each October promoting a unique German cultural experience. As well as the economic boost the festival gives the local economy during the international festival, over \$1.5 million is raised each year by the not-for-profit organizations associated with Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest, one of the top three most recognized event brands in Canada.

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