



## **Larry Blundell to Bid *Auf Wiedersehen* to Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest**

(Kitchener-Waterloo, Canada – July 14, 2010) – Executive Director of Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest, Larry Blundell, announced today that he will retire as head of Canada’s Greatest Bavarian Festival, following the 2010 festivities. Effective December 31<sup>st</sup>, Blundell will close the books on over 35 years of dedicated service to Waterloo Region’s most beloved festival.

“I have given this a great degree of consideration and I feel it is time for me to call it a day as your Executive Director,” says Blundell. “I feel I have served the Festival well during my tenure and my contribution has benefited the organization. My period with the festival has been both rewarding and challenging through my years as a volunteer, and as Executive Director. However, all good things must come to an end and it is time for me to take a breather in my life and start enjoying my senior years in other endeavours.”

Blundell will stay on in the role for the 2010 edition of the festival, through what will be his 15<sup>th</sup> festival as Executive Director, under no fewer than eight different Festival Presidents. He first joined Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest in 1974 and has held a number of roles within the organization over his 20 years as a volunteer. Since taking the Executive Director position in 1995, Blundell has not only brought the Festival to its revered position in Ontario Tourism, but has himself become an iconic part of the Festival; and for many in the Region, he is the embodiment of the Spirit of Gemuetlichkeit.

“Larry Blundell has been a steadfast icon of our Festival,” says President Paul Buttinger. “While he is well recognized as the ambassador of our Festival, his impact and influence reaches far beyond our community, to many in the tourism industry. It will be hard to fully express our appreciation for his service, and harder still to replace him.”

### **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 435 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 \$21.1M annual 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.

**For additional information:**

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