



## **Roll Out the Barrel - Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest is Here!**

(Waterloo Region, Canada – October 11, 2013) – Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest opened to fanfare, friends and flowing beer this morning, kicking off the 45<sup>th</sup> edition of Canada's Greatest Bavarian Festival!

The Official Opening Ceremonies and keg tapping took place at Kitchener's Civic Square this morning as thousands of chicken-dancing spectators celebrated the return of the nine-day festival. Newly crowned Miss Oktoberfest 2013, Tara Hebblethwaite, joined in the festivities as did Onkel Hans, Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest's lovable goodwill ambassador, and his nephews, Ziggy and Zaggy, visiting from Bavaria. The Opening Ceremonies also included a performance by Grammy-Award winner Walter Ostanek, who led the crowd in a rousing chorus of traditional Oktoberfest songs.

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne and Festival President, Harry Vogt, tapped the ceremonial keg and opened the festivities. City Mayors Carl Zehr, Brenda Halloran and Doug Craig joined in the Opening Ceremonies, as did representatives from local police and fire departments; as well as, K-W Oktoberfest Inc. organizers. As the keg was tapped the festival was declared open, beginning nine-days of festivities across the region.

The Region is preparing for more than 700,000 festival goers during this international event. German-Canadian Clubs – or festhallen – throughout the region are looking forward to offering the German music, food, and culture that is at the heart of this Bavarian festival.

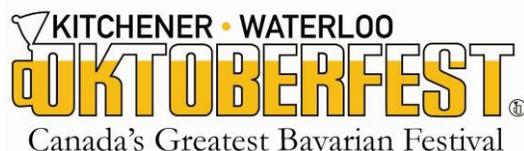
King Street will remain closed around Kitchener City Hall as festival participants enjoy lots of family events and great experiences, including Grillefest and a Fall Art Market!

Traditional highlights and favourites are back this year, including: Rocktoberfest12, the Great Oktoberfest Barrel Race, and the Oktoberfest Car Show; not to mention the Oktoberfest Thanksgiving Day Parade on Monday, October 14.

Tickets are still available for these events and some festhallen and can be obtained online at [www.oktoberfest.ca](http://www.oktoberfest.ca) or by calling 519-570-4267 x233.

### **Video and Photo Opportunities:**

- K-W Oktoberfest Inc. Retail Store, 17 Benton Street, Kitchener



- K-W Oktoberfest Inc. Parade Headquarters for Parade preparations, 265 Lexington Court, Waterloo (please call for details)
- Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest mascot Onkel Hans (advance notice required)
- Interviews with Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest President Harry Vogt, Executive Director Dave MacNeil, and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Alfred Lowrick

### **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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### **For additional information:**

#### **Dave MacNeil**

Executive Director,  
K-W Oktoberfest Inc.  
519-570-4267 ext. 222

