



Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest Announces 2023 Volunteers of the Year

October 2, 2023 – KITCHENER, ON – [Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest](https://www.oktoberfest.ca) is pleased to announce the 2023 Volunteers of the Year. The winners were celebrated at Oktoberfest's Volunteer Appreciation Evening on Friday, September 30th at the Schwaben Club in Breslau.

2023 Volunteers of the Year

Andrea Davidson

A member of the Mascots and Parade committees, Andrea encompasses the Festival's spirit of Gemütlichkeit. Throughout the year she can be found either escorting a mascot or wearing the costume herself. She also works tirelessly on parade day to ensure its continued success and actively invites others to volunteer so they can feel a part of Oktoberfest and its many offerings. Andrea is engaging, upbeat and a team player who goes out of her way to volunteer for as many events as she can. As a new mom, Andrea still makes the Festival a priority and truly believes that its heritage and history should be shared with the community.

Rob Hesch

For over 20 years, Rob has been a passionate volunteer with the Festival. He has held numerous roles, most recently sitting on Oktoberfest's Operating Council to help lead their sponsorship efforts. For Rob, Oktoberfest is not a time of year, but a state of mind. He is passionate about his German roots and shares his enthusiasm for heritage, culture and traditions with the greater German-Canadian community. Rob's knowledge, can-do attitude and support has greatly impacted the Festival's success. In the words of his nominator "Rob is an example of what a true volunteer should be. He exudes more than a passion for what he does, he exudes a way to live."

Carl Buder (posthumously)

With close to 25 years as a parade and hospitality volunteer, Carl's commitment to Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest was inspiring. He was a mastermind at creating atmosphere, networking and encouraging people to get involved with the activities he cared about most. Carl was the type of volunteer who prided himself on getting the job done correctly and on time without seeking recognition or acknowledgement. During his career, he served with the Waterloo Regional Police Service and was the liaison between the police and the Oktoberfest Thanksgiving Parade for many years before retiring. Unfortunately, Carl passed away in August of 2023 after a courageous battle with cancer. His wife June and daughter Vicki accepted the award in Carl's honour.

-30-

About [Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest](https://www.oktoberfest.ca)

The first Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest was celebrated in 1969 at Concordia Club in Kitchener, organized by a group of dedicated founders. The keg was tapped and history was made. Since then, Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest has developed its own traditions, becoming one of the largest Bavarian festivals outside of Germany. Hundreds of thousands of visitors celebrate annually in our Festhallen, at local restaurants and by attending one of our several family and cultural events, including the annual Willkommen Platz and the Thanksgiving Day Parade. More than just biergartens, Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest is committed to supporting the cultural, economic and social vitality of Waterloo Region, bringing millions of dollars in economic benefit to the region each year. Through the Oktoberfest Cares initiative, the festival supports local charities and other not-for-profit organizations, partners with over 50 local hospitality businesses, and raises funds to donate meals to the Waterloo Region Food Bank through the Onkel Hans Food Drive. For more information visit [oktoberfest.ca](https://www.oktoberfest.ca).

Media Contacts:

Tracy Van Kalsbeek, Executive Director
Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest
519-616-0793 or tracy@oktoberfest.ca