MEDIA RELEASE
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2026 Oktoberfest Cares Silent Auction

- **Walter Ostanak One-of-a-Kind Signed Accordion Up for Auction**

September 22, 2026 – KITCHENER, ON – Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest is inviting the community to bid, support local initiatives and take home a piece of Oktoberfest history through the **Oktoberfest Cares Online Silent Auction**, running **September 25 to October 12, 2026**.

This year's auction features a variety of donated items, experiences and packages from generous community partners. "The annual online auction is part of the Oktoberfest Cares initiative, our year-round commitment to giving back and supporting the cultural, economic and social vitality of Waterloo Region," shares Tracy Van Kalsbeek, Executive Director. "Through Oktoberfest Cares, funds raised help support charitable partners and Festival initiatives that enrich the community like the Onkel Hans Food Drive and keep admission costs low or free for beloved events including Willkommen Platz, KIDtoberfest, DOGtoberfest, the Thanksgiving Day Parade and other family and community programming."

Among this year's auction offerings is a particularly special item for Oktoberfest fans: a **signed accordion belonging to Walter Ostanek**, a longtime and beloved face of Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest.

This year will mark the Polka King's final performance with the Festival, making the signed accordion a one-of-a-kind piece of Oktoberfest history. For generations of Oktoberfest-goers, Walter has been part of the sights and sounds that make the Festival special. The signed accordion offers one lucky bidder the chance to take home a meaningful piece of that legacy while supporting Oktoberfest Cares. Fans can cheer on Walter during his final sets at the Willkommen Platz on Friday, Saturday and Sunday of Thanksgiving weekend.

Starting at 10:00 am on September 25th, silent auction bids can be made HERE. The auction closes at 8:00 pm on October 12.

PHOTOS ATTACHED: Walter Ostanek signing his accordion, Oktoberfest Cares Silent Auction.

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About Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest
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. Tens of thousands of visitors celebrate annually in our Festhallen, at local restaurants and by attending one of our many family and cultural events. 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. *Oktoberfest Cares* provides funding for charitable partners and supports Festival initiatives that enrich our community such as the Onkel Hans Food Drive and keep admission costs low or free for favourites including the Waterloo Region Women's Expo and Women of the Year celebration as well as family-friendly events like KIDtoberfest, Thanksgiving Day Parade and the Willkommen Platz. For more information visit oktoberfest.ca.

About Oktoberfest Cares

Oktoberfest Cares is Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest's commitment to community collaboration, giving back and growing together. The year-round initiative supports charitable partners and Festival programs that enrich the Waterloo Region community. This includes fundraising efforts such as the Onkel Hans Food Drive, as well as helping keep admission costs low or free for family-friendly and community events such as Willkommen Platz, KIDtoberfest and the Thanksgiving Day Parade. Through partnerships with local businesses, volunteers and community organizations, Oktoberfest Cares helps ensure Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest remains a source of community pride and a welcoming place for everyone to celebrate.

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