MEDIA ADVISORY

2026 K-W Oktoberfest Official Keg Tapping

- **Canada's Polka King and German Ambassador to Canada Tap the Keg**
- **FREE Family Programming All Weekend at the Willkommen Platz**

October 6, 2026 – KITCHENER, ON – Come down to the Willkommen Platz this Friday as we tap the official keg and kick off Thanksgiving weekend in true Bavarian style.

Joining us as this year's official keg tappers are none other than Canadian polka legend and longtime K-W Oktoberfest favourite Walter Ostanek, along with Matthais Luttenberg, the German Ambassador to Canada.
Date: Friday, October 9
Time: 11:30 am – 12:30 pm
Venue: Willkommen Platz, Carl Zehr Square

Be sure to stick around and check out these fantastic, **FREE** events:

Willkommen Platz and the Bavarian Vendor Market
Be Bavarian with us! From Friday, October 9 to Sunday, October 11, Downtown Kitchener will once again transform into a bustling Bavarian village along King Street from Queen Street into City Hall.
Raise your stein in the large open-air Biergarten, savour German and festival favourites from food vendors, shop the vendor market and take in live performances on the main stage. K-W Oktoberfest is bringing the heart of the Festival to DTK — and it's all **FREE** again this year!

Biergarten & Main Stage Hours:
Friday, October 9: 11:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Saturday, October 10: 11:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Sunday, October 11: 11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
King Street Vendor Market:
Friday, October 9 to Sunday, October 11 from 11:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.
Indoor Vendors at Kitchener City Hall:
Friday, October 9 to Sunday, October 11 from 11:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.
The weekend entertainment lineup features a mix of traditional Bavarian favourites and live music, including **Walter Ostanek, Bif Naked, Bran Van 3000, Lee Aaron, Robyn Ottolini** and more.

KIDtoberfest at the Willkommen Platz presented by Tim Hortons
Back by popular demand and located inside the Kitchener City Hall rotunda, **KIDtoberfest** is perfect for families with children — or anyone who is a kid at heart!
The three-day, **FREE** event features music, dancing, Bavarian activities and family-friendly entertainment throughout Thanksgiving weekend.
Dates/Times:
Friday, October 9, Saturday, October 10 and Sunday, October 11
11:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.
For a complete list of entertainment and Festival programming, visit **oktoberfest.ca/kidtoberfest**.

DOGtoberfest presented by the Humane Society of Kitchener Waterloo & Stratford Perth
Don't leave your four-legged besties out of the Oktoberfest fun! DOGtoberfest, presented by the Humane Society of Kitchener Waterloo & Stratford Perth, is back at Gaukel Block for two days of tail-wagging festivities – and it's **FREE** to attend!

Dogs and their people are invited to check out a dog-focused vendor market, take part in contests and other furry shenanigans and access on-site services provided by the Humane Society of Kitchener Waterloo & Stratford Perth. New this year, kick off Saturday with the Hudson's Pack Walk, hosted by ReLeash The Hounds! The pack will meet at the ReLeash The Hounds booth at 11:00 a.m. before heading out together. All are welcome with leashed dogs – no retractable leashes, please – and participants will even have a chance to win some fun prizes! The DOGtoberfest vendor market opens at 12:00 p.m. following the walk.

Dates/Times:
Saturday, October 10 – Pack Walk at 11:00 a.m.; Vendor Market from 12:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, October 11 – 11:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.

Roll out the Barrel with the latest Fest-Wear and 2026 Pin!
Make sure you check out our latest Oktoberfest gear! Shop online or at the Hans Haus pop-up for Oktoberfest souvenirs, apparel and swag including the limited edition 2026 pin design, plus some cute outfits for the kids! Get fest ready!

Festhallen tickets can be found HERE.

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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 Women of the Year celebration and Waterloo Region Women's Expo as well as family-friendly events like KIDtoberfest, Thanksgiving Day Parade and the Willkommen Platz. For more information visit oktoberfest.ca.

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