

# MOVE TO BE STRONG!



## VON SMART NEWSLETTER



APRIL 2022

### Spring Has Sprung!

Spring is the season of renewal; birds come out from their winter nests, the days are longer, and the weather is finally warm.

With nicer weather and sunnier days, one can open up windows and doors and venture outside for more activity and fresh air.

Due to weather factors and shorter days, it is common to engage in less activity throughout the winter, and we become accustomed to a more sedentary lifestyle. After months of being less active, it is important to perform gentle stretches and exercises before engaging in any strenuous activity. Try and create moving moments throughout your day to help you build your strength and find your balance!



### The VON SMART Program

Helping to keep our community dwelling older adults active, engaged and free from falls!

For more information about SMART exercise classes and fall prevention workshops please contact:

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-or-

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## Seasons Retirement Communities Olympics



Featured in the image above is Joyce. She lives at a Seasons Rest and Retirement Home in the Windsor-Essex region. Joyce won the bronze medal for scoring the 3rd highest number of fitness minutes over a 3-week period. She currently attends the VON SMART exercise classes and by participating in these classes Joyce achieved her fitness challenge goals! Joyce also goes for walks around the building 3 times a day and engages in physical activity as often as she can. WAY TO GO JOYCE KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!

## St Patrick's Day Fitness Fun



VON SMART Fitness Friends at Seasons Royal Oak Village enjoying St Patrick's Day Fitness Fun

## Did You Know?

April is Parkinson's Awareness Month



Parkinson's disease is the fastest growing neurodegenerative disorder which affects both motor and non-motor functioning.

Parkinson's is a progressive neurological disorder resulting from the loss of dopamine in a part of the brain called substantia nigra.

Dopamine acts as a chemical messenger, allowing nerve impulses to travel smoothly from one nerve cell to another. This enables the transmission of messages to muscles in the body to begin voluntary movement.

As dopamine continues to decrease, muscle movements become slower and more rigid, tremors can develop and reflexes become more impaired contributing to a loss of balance. Some of the primary symptoms that are associated with Parkinson's include tremor, rigidity, akinesia or bradykinesia, postural instability, soft speech, writing problems and sleep disturbances. Non-motor symptoms can include depression, anxiety, psychosis, dementia, memory problems and difficulty with communication.

While symptoms typically begin to appear at age 55 to 60 years, 10% of all people diagnosed with Parkinson's will be under the age of 40. Both men and women are affected by this disease, and race and ethnicity do not predetermine risk factors for this disorder.

For more information visit:

- <https://www.parkinson.ca/>
- <https://pssso.ca/>



# Monthly Feature: VON SMART Instructor



## Bob Blue

Bob has instructed fitness classes for over 30 years. He started his instructor career at the Wheels Fitness and Racquet Club in Chatham. After more than 10 years at the Wheels, he decided that if BodyPump ever came to Chatham, he would teach that class. Three months after GoodLife opened their club in the downtown Chatham mall, Bob became certified to teach BodyPump classes. He remained at GoodLife for over 15 years, until they closed in 2018. Bob is a certified Fitness Instructor Specialist, past member of and certifications with the Ontario Fitness Council (OFC), and Canadian Fitness Professionals (CanFitPro), Les Mills BodyPump and Les Mills RPM. Current certifications include CPR and YogaFit Level 2 and YogaFit for Seniors. Bob is currently leading VON SMART classes in Chatham and surrounding area.

## Resources

### McMaster Optimal Aging Portal

[Healthy Aging Research | McMaster Optimal Aging Portal](#)

The power of music: 4 ways it can benefit your health

[The power of music: 4 ways it can benefit your health \(mcmasteroptimalaging.org\)](#)



Over the years, music-based strategies have been investigated for everything from hospital stays, to walking, to sleep, yielding positive results in each of these areas. Given the deep connection that most of us have with music, it should come as no surprise that researchers around the world continue to investigate music's therapeutic benefits. Music is a safe, simple, and inexpensive strategy to support health and wellbeing. Whether for yourself, or a loved one, consider incorporating more music into your everyday life and enjoy the benefits it may provide.

### Music may improve cognitive functioning

Research has shown that active music-making therapy may improve cognitive functioning by a small but important amount in older adults with cognitive impairment or mild to moderate dementia. Seek out music-based programming delivered by a professional and that emphasizes activities that actively engage participants in music-making.

### Music can improve walking speed

Walking speed and "gait" (the pattern and manner of walking) are important indicators to gauge your overall health. Whether you realize it or not, you may be training yourself for a longer, healthier, and more active lifestyle by listening to music while you walk.

### Music can help ease your hospital stay

Despite remarkable medical advancements surgery can be scary and time spent in hospital will likely be challenging. Music therapy is a safe, non-invasive, and inexpensive complement to treatment and can help to lower anxiety and pain for patients and may also ease depression and fatigue.

## Music can improve overall behavioural issues in people with dementia

Studies have shown that listening to music allows older adults with dementia to be calmer, which indirectly helps to reduce caregivers' levels of stress. Also, group music therapy sessions led by a trained music therapist helped reduce caregivers' anxiety by allowing them to express and share their feelings.

For more information and resources visit the McMaster Optimal Aging Portal

## VON Updates

Happy Easter from the VON SMART Team.  
As a reminder there will be no classes

Friday April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Monday April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022



## VON SMART Exercise & Fall Prevention

Windsor-Essex | Chatham-Kent | Sarnia-Lambton

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