THE PARKINSON'S update

SUMMER/FALL 2026
ISSUE 84

ALWAYS A MAKER

Page 14-15

IT TAKES A TEAM

Page 4-5

LIVING WELL WITH PARKINSON'S:

The Power of Occupational Therapy

Page 6

parkinson SOCIETY SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO

A MAGAZINE FOR THE PARKINSON'S COMMUNITY OF SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO

FROM THE CEO'S DESK

As I begin to share what's happening at PSSO, I realize this will be my final newsletter message.

For the past 17 years, I have had the incredible privilege of serving this organization and our community. At the end of December, I will begin a new chapter in my life—retirement.

As I reflect on these years, what has inspired me most is not only the work we have accomplished, but the people who made it possible: the courage of those living with Parkinson's, the devotion of carepartners, the generosity of our donors, the compassion of our volunteers, and the dedication of our staff. Together, we have built something truly special - a community where people feel seen, supported, and understood during some of the most difficult moments of their lives.

While I may be stepping away from my role, I do so with tremendous hope because I know this community will continue to grow stronger. The commitment, compassion, and resilience that define PSSO will continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

It has been a busy and rewarding spring at PSSO. From support groups and exercise programs to educational conferences, two third-party pickleball events, and our incredible 16th Annual Parkinson Golf Classic presented by Velikonja Financial of CIBC Private Wealth, I hope you have found an opportunity to connect with us in some way.

In April, during Parkinson's Awareness Month, our theme was *Real Stories, Real Strength.* Behind every diagnosis is a story shaped by emotion, resilience, and connection. These are stories that deserve to be shared so our communities can better understand not only the challenges faced by those living with Parkinson's, but also the resilience that carry them forward each day.

As summer continues, our work remains just as busy as we prepare for two of our most important fall events: our Fall Regional Conference and our largest annual fundraiser, Walk for Parkinson's.

This year's Fall Regional Conference will be held in Kitchener on Saturday, October 17. *(See the enclosed flyer for details.)*

There is something powerful about coming together for a shared purpose, and this September we invite you to join us once again for **Walk for Parkinson's.** Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario is proud to welcome you back to our largest annual fundraising event, taking place **September 12 and 13** in 14 communities across the region.

Walk for Parkinson's is so much more than just a walk. It is a celebration of strength, a show of support, and a reminder that no one faces Parkinson's alone. It is neighbours, families, friends, and communities, coming together to uplift one another and stand beside the people they love. Every dollar raised stays local, helping to provide programs, services, education, and support for individuals and families living with Parkinson's throughout our region.

As I prepare to conclude my time with PSSO, I hope to have the opportunity to see many of you one last time—whether at one of our Walk for Parkinson's events or at the Fall Regional Conference. It would mean a great deal to thank you in person for allowing me to be part of this remarkable community.

Thank you for the trust you have placed in me over the past 17 years. Serving PSSO has been one of the greatest honours of my career, and I will always carry this community with me. Although I am retiring, I know the future of PSSO is bright because of each of you. Together, you will continue to ensure that no one in southwestern Ontario has to face Parkinson's alone.

Shelley Rivard

Shelley Rivard, CEO

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MISSION STATEMENT

Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario enhances the quality of life and care for people living with Parkinson's in southwestern Ontario.

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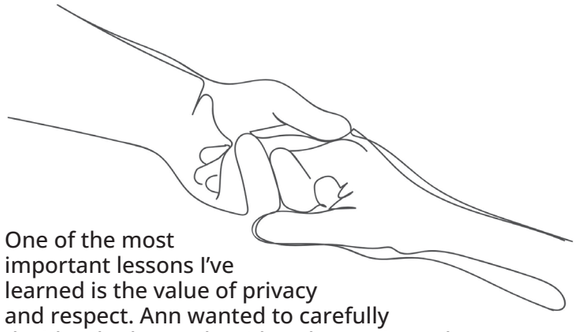
THE SIMPLE GIFT OF BEING THERE

By: Joyce Fleming



To me, it isn't about fixing things, giving advice, or stepping in unnecessarily. It's about being present, listening, showing respect, learning about Parkinson's, and making sure our friendship continues to be filled with fun, laughter, support, and time together.

When my friend, Ann, shared her diagnosis with me, my mind immediately went where many loved ones' minds go with any life-changing news: How is this possible? Why her?

At first, I felt upset and uncertain about how to help. But I have the distinct advantage of being friends with someone who has always shown unwavering grace and wisdom, no matter the challenge. As I have many times throughout our decades-long friendship, I looked to her for guidance on the way forward.

Unsurprisingly, Ann met this diagnosis with the same grace and quiet acceptance she brings to all aspects of life. I realized then that the best thing we can do for our loved ones in moments like these is to follow their lead, respect how they choose to manage their journey, and ensure they know they will always have someone firmly in their corner.

One of the most important lessons I've learned is the value of privacy and respect. Ann wanted to carefully decide who knew about her diagnosis, and when. That choice belongs entirely to the person living with Parkinson's, or any medical condition. Providing support means listening without judgment and creating a safe space where people can share when they are ready, knowing their privacy will be respected.

I have been Ann's friend for more than forty years. We have supported one another through many seasons of life, and I deeply respect her husband and the important role he plays in her day-to-day support. My role is simply to stand beside them both as a caring and steady friend.
Some days, our loved ones may seem quieter or harder to read. Those are the moments when we need to listen more carefully. Ann never wants to burden anyone, so sometimes my support means noticing the small cues, offering company, and simply being present.

I've also tried to educate myself by attending the Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario's conferences, webinars, and local support group meetings to better understand Parkinson's and its effects. PSSO plays such a tremendous role in education and highlights the importance of community.

We still laugh and make time for the simple things we've always enjoyed together, because our friendship remains vibrant and strong. Parkinson's has not changed the heart of our friendship; if anything, it has reminded me to treasure the little moments even more. And if one of those moments happens to involve a Dairy Queen Blizzard run, then that's exactly what we'll do!

IT TAKES A TEAM...

By: Theresa Daly

Remember the saying, “It takes a village to raise a child”? A version of that saying for folks with PD and their carepartners would read, “It takes a team to support you in the journey with PD.”

Perhaps, when you received a diagnosis of Parkinson’s or Parkinson-Plus, you thought the neurologist or movement disorder specialist (MDS) was the most important and the only health – care professional you needed. There is no question that these specialists play a vital role in diagnosing, prescribing, and troubleshooting. I know folks with PD who keep careful records of their symptoms and questions, for months and months, until their next appointment with the specialist. Even if a significant troublesome symptom occurs, many people wait for that next appointment because they don’t want to bother the “busy specialist.”

What if there was a way to feel supported even though your next appointment with the specialist is months away?

What if there were other health – care professionals around you and your family to answer the frequent questions that come up about medications, movement challenges, and changes in mood or sleep?

One of the best presentations at a PSSO conference I attended was one that talked about building YOUR health – care team to enhance your everyday life. You might ask, “Isn’t the doctor the one who should be doing this?” and “Would my specialist get angry if I reached out to other professionals?”

The answer is NO.

Your general practitioner and specialist know that PD is a complex disease that requires “all hands on deck.” Symptoms change, medications lose their effectiveness, or side effects pose challenges. Pharmacists, physiotherapists, social workers, and organizations like PSSO and Parkinson Canada can all play a significant role in helping you manage your everyday living with PD.

Pharmacists can help you understand how and when to take your medications and how to manage side effects.

Physiotherapists can see you more often than your specialist, assess any changes in your mobility, and recommend therapies to help you. Physiotherapists can also advocate for you if they see a change that requires the attention of your specialist.

Social workers are the main providers of mental health services in Ontario. They can provide one-on-one counseling for you and/or your carepartner. They can also help you find the right service for your needs in your community. The health – care system is just too big and sometimes confusing for you, or a carepartner, to manage alone.

Speech-language pathologists can help with swallowing problems, a weakened voice, and choking.

Occupational therapists can assist you in creating a more PD-friendly environment in your home. It should be noted, though, that OTs assess and make recommendations, but most do not order equipment for you.

Palliative care specialists are invaluable health – care experts at maximizing comfort and care for a patient when active treatment is no longer helping. For more on this, consider looking at the book “Hope for the Best, Plan for the Rest” (2023) by Dr. Sammy Winemaker and Hsien Seow (Canadian authors). They provide “7 Keys for Navigating a Life-Changing Diagnosis.”

PD support groups and carepartner support groups offer mutual support as well as information about what is available for you in your community. It is here you will find very real ways to cope with Parkinson’s from people who share your journey. Group members can also provide recommendations of health – care professionals or organizations they know are helpful.

Theresa Daly speaking at the Guelph Flag Raising Ceremony.

Here is a way to begin to create your personal care team:

- Get yourself a notebook to keep track of people and visits with your team.

- Think about what symptom is most troublesome for you right now and start with a health – care practitioner who can support you with this (e.g., Speech-Language Pathologist for swallowing, choking, quiet voice; physiotherapist for struggles with balance or walking).

- Make an appointment with a pharmacist, physiotherapist, or social worker to discuss this idea of having a team approach and ask if they will be on your team. Don’t assume you have a team member if you haven’t asked.

- Look at any private insurance you may have. Now is the time to use it fully. If you don’t have private insurance, these health – care providers can all be found through your local Ontario Health at Home (Home Care).

- If you don’t know where to start, talk to a social worker in your region, PSSO, or your local support group for help creating a team. Invite a professional from each discipline to your support group meetings to educate you on how best to use their services.

Although our health – care system is large and complex, there are professionals dedicated to supporting you through this journey. **It takes a team to journey with you!**

LIVING WELL WITH PARKINSON'S:

The Power of Occupational Therapy

By: Dr. Jeff Holmes, BA, MScOT, MHK, PhD

Dr. Jeff Holmes presenting at the London office.

Occupational therapists are an important member of the healthcare team supporting people living with Parkinson's disease. As the condition progresses, challenges can arise that affect movement, thinking, independence, and overall well-being. Occupational therapists help individuals and their carepartners adapt to these changes and continue participating in the activities and roles that matter most to them.

These activities may include self-care tasks such as bathing and dressing; household responsibilities like cleaning, yard work, and managing finances; meaningful hobbies such as gardening or golf; community participation through activities such as attending church or volunteering; and mobility-related activities such as driving and navigating home and community environments safely.

To support participation in these activities, occupational therapists assess how symptoms affect daily life and provide practical strategies, energy conservation techniques, adaptive equipment recommendations, and home modifications to promote safety and independence. They may also help individuals develop new routines, manage cognitive changes, reduce fall risk, and find new ways to participate in everyday activities. For carepartners, occupational therapists can provide education and training on safe assistance techniques, such as helping someone get up after a fall or assisting with transfers, while reducing physical strain and supporting the well-being of both partners.

Occupational therapy extends beyond physical challenges to support emotional well-being and relationships. Occupational therapists can help couples navigate changes in intimacy, shifting roles, and relationship dynamics. When changes in function make it harder to fulfill important roles, such as being a spouse, employee, volunteer, or community member, a person's sense of identity can also be affected. These changes may influence confidence, mood, and social participation. By helping individuals adapt tasks, environments, and expectations, occupational therapists support continued engagement in meaningful occupations, fostering confidence, purpose, dignity, social connection, and a strong sense of identity.

By focusing on what matters most to each individual, occupational therapists help people living with Parkinson's and their carepartners continue to live meaningful, engaged, and fulfilling lives.

THE ROLE OF PHYSIOTHERAPY IN PARKINSON'S CARE

By: Karla Andrews, PT, Registered Physiotherapist

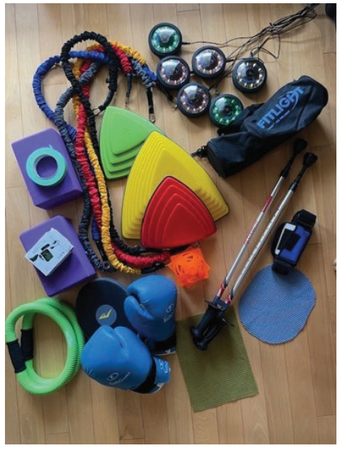
Physiotherapists play an essential role in the care of a person living with Parkinson's disease throughout their journey. Parkinson's disease (PD) affects movement, balance, posture, and coordination, which can make everyday activities increasingly difficult over time.

Physiotherapy intervention will look different at different stages of the disease, depending on an individual's goals. If someone is newly diagnosed or in the early stages of living with PD, with minimal symptoms, the focus is often proactive. It is imperative to provide individuals with information about exercise guidelines and encourage them to integrate regular physical activity into their daily routine. This is also an excellent opportunity to obtain information about the person's posture, flexibility, walking style, and balance. It is helpful to have this information so we can track changes over time and make adjustments to someone's program when necessary.

In mid-stage PD, physiotherapy sessions may focus more on problem-solving challenges and teaching exercises or movement strategies. Some examples include teaching people how to lengthen their steps if they find they are shuffling, or ensuring good turning techniques, so they do not trip when changing direction.

When someone has lived with the disease for 10 or 15 years or more, physiotherapy interventions may focus more on everyday skills, such as rolling over in bed, standing up from a chair, or getting in and out of the car. A physiotherapist can offer guidance on how to improve these daily activities and make recommendations for assistive devices. Physiotherapists also educate family members on safe movement techniques and find ways to support daily activities.

One of the main benefits of physiotherapy for PD is improving mobility. Mobility challenges are often due to bradykinesia (slower movements), muscle stiffness or rigidity, or freezing episodes. Falls are a major concern as well. As the condition progresses, the risk of falling increases due to poor balance and postural instability. Physiotherapists can address several factors that hinder mobility to help people move more safely.



Having a physiotherapist as part of the care team ensures that treatment focuses not only on managing symptoms with medication, but also on preserving independence and maximizing quality of life through movement. Their expertise helps people with PD stay active, safe, and engaged in their daily lives for as long as possible.

HOW SOCIAL WORKERS SUPPORT PEOPLE LIVING WITH PARKINSON'S

By: Erin Beasley and Madison Hayes

Social workers play an essential role within interdisciplinary Parkinson's care teams by addressing the emotional, relational, social, and psychological impacts of the disease that are often overlooked in medically focused care. While healthcare professionals frequently prioritize motor symptoms, social workers provide holistic support that recognizes how Parkinson's disease affects all aspects of everyday life.

Individuals living with Parkinson's may experience:

- Anxiety
- Grief
- Stigma
- And more
- Depression
- Social isolation
- Uncertainty about the future

These challenges can significantly impact well-being and daily functioning. Social workers provide education, emotional support, and a safe space to explore these concerns. They can also help individuals identify goals, develop coping strategies, advocate for their needs, and connect them with community resources and support.

Carepartners also face unique challenges as they adapt to changing roles and responsibilities over time. Many experience feelings of exhaustion, guilt, helplessness, sadness, or isolation. Social workers offer a non-judgmental space to share these experiences, validate the realities of caregiving, and encourage carepartners to prioritize their own well-being alongside the needs of their loved one.

By promoting person-centered and strengths-based care, social workers contribute to more compassionate and holistic Parkinson's services that support both emotional and physical well-being.

Through a partnership with King's University College School of Social Work, Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario offers free, short-term counselling with social work students for both people living with Parkinson's and carepartners. Counselling focuses on supportive listening, identifying key concerns, processing challenges, and collaboratively setting goals through a solution-focused approach that supports meaningful, positive change.

KING'S Western University • Canada | School of Social Work

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR PHARMACIST'S EXPERTISE

By: Lisa Silverthorne

Pharmacists are a valuable resource and should be part of your Circle of Care.

Community pharmacists remain among the most accessible health-care practitioners, available by phone, appointment, or simply by walking into your local pharmacy.

We can assess and prescribe for a growing list of minor, easily treated ailments. Beginning July 1, 2026, this list will expand further as pharmacists gain additional scope of practice. These services are provided free of charge to patients. Pharmacists also offer free Influenza and COVID-19 vaccinations, with additional publicly funded vaccines becoming available in July, including RSV, Tetanus, and Shingles for eligible populations.

Your pharmacist is an expert in medication management. Take advantage of their knowledge by having your medications and supplements reviewed to ensure they are accurate, complete, and free from potential interactions with other prescription or non-prescription therapies. For someone living with Parkinson's disease, this complementary review can be invaluable. It can help establish appropriate medication schedules and supplement timing to ensure you receive the greatest possible benefit from your treatment plan.

Pharmacists also review newly prescribed medications to evaluate their appropriateness, explain what to expect, discuss administration times, and provide recommendations to help manage side effects or address challenges such as difficulty swallowing or opening packaging. We also consider your overall health status, including lifestyle factors that may influence both your health and the effectiveness of your medications.

Pharmacists are a valuable resource and an essential part of your Circle of Care. Never hesitate to reach out and make use of their knowledge and support.

WHAT IT MEANS TO ME

By: Heidi Wyma

The Walk for Parkinson's has become one of the most meaningful traditions in my life, rooted deeply in my family's story and shaped by the many ways Parkinson's has touched our family over the years.

My connection to the cause began more than 35 years ago when my mom was diagnosed with early-onset Parkinson's. Even then, when treatments were limited and information was harder to find, my mom never let the diagnosis define her. She has always been the kind of person who gets things done and refuses to let Parkinson's slow her down. That strength has shaped how all of us face this disease and continues to inspire me every year we walk.

Over time, Parkinson's touched more branches of our family tree. My mom's sister was diagnosed, and more recently, my brother was, too. Each diagnosis brought its own challenges, but it also strengthened our resolve. Parkinson's may be part of our family's story, but so are resilience, humour, and a deep commitment to supporting one another.

I've been participating in the Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario Walk alongside my family since at least 2013. By 2014, we proudly walked as "Steps for Bepps." Beppe means grandmother in Frisian, and it's the affectionate name her grandchildren have always called her. From the beginning, the walk has been about more than fundraising. It has been a way to bring our family together year after year to support the people we love and to stand with the broader Parkinson's community. It's a reminder that none of us walk this path alone.

What gives me hope is how much progress has been made since my mom's diagnosis. Treatments have improved dramatically, research is accelerating, and awareness is growing. Every step we take feels like a step toward better care, better understanding, and, ultimately, a cure. That hope is what keeps us walking.

About 10 years ago, our family added another tradition: a community yard sale, with all proceeds going to Parkinson's. It has become a beloved annual event. My niece wakes up early to bake cinnamon rolls and other treats, and now people come not just to shop but because they look forward to those homemade goodies. It's a small but powerful example of how community spirit can grow into something bigger than we ever expected.

For me, the Walk for Parkinson's is a celebration of resilience—my mom's, my family's, and the entire Parkinson's community's. It reminds me that even in the face of challenges, we can keep moving forward, one determined step at a time.

WALK FOR PARKINSON'S

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2026

Brantford, Brant-Norfolk & Haldimand County - Mohawk Park
Registration 1:00pm, Walk 2:00pm

Goderich - Rotary Cove Pavillion #4
Registration 10:00am, Walk 11:00am

London & District - Springbank Gardens
Registration 10:30am, Walk 11:30am

Owen Sound - Kelso Beach, Nawash Park
Registration 1:00pm, Walk 2:00pm

South Grey Bruce & Hanover

- Hanover Town Park
Registration 9:00am, Walk 11:00am

Stratford & Area - Upper Queen's Park
Registration 9:30am, Walk 10:30am

Waterloo Region - Kiwanis Park
Registration 10:00am, Walk 11:00am

Wellington-Dufferin - Centre Wellington

Sportsplex
Registration 10:00am, Walk 11:00am

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

Chatham-Kent - Kingston Park
Registration 12:00pm, Walk 1:00pm

NEW LOCATION
Grand Bend - Huron Shores United Church
Registration 1:00pm, Walk 2:00pm

Oxford County - Roth Park
Registration 1:00pm, Walk 2:00pm

Port Elgin, Kincardine & Area - North Shore Park Saugeen Shores
Registration 1:00pm, Walk 2:00pm

Sarnia-Lambton - Canatara Park, Seaway Kiwanis Pavillion
Registration 1:00pm, Walk 2:00pm

Windsor-Essex - Malden Park
Registration 12:00pm, Walk 1:00pm

PSSO IN THE COMMUNITY

WEST REGION

The Windsor-Essex region was pleased to host another successful session of Dancing with Parkinson's, welcoming 15 participants throughout the spring and summer. We look forward to continuing the program with our Fall/Winter sessions beginning in September 2026. A special thank you to Kaydence, Katarina, and Cathy for their hard work, dedication, and commitment to making the program such a success.

We are also excited to have developed a partnership with the Chatham Community Foundation, which has helped support the expansion of our Louder, Clearer programming. Through this collaboration, Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario has been able to offer a new in-person SpeakOut Chatham program, helping participants strengthen their communication skills and confidence. We look forward to welcoming everyone back this fall.

As part of our commitment to bringing Hope Closer to Home, PSSO has also strengthened partnerships throughout the Sarnia-Lambton area. In collaboration with Lambton County long-term care homes, our team has helped establish support groups, drumming programs, and educational opportunities for residents, families, and staff. These partnerships continue to create meaningful opportunities for connection, learning, and support within the community.

Lorne Hyatt and his family at the Parkinson's flag-raising ceremony in Petrolia.

CENTRAL REGION

It has been a busy and rewarding year so far, with plenty of opportunities to learn, connect, and stay active.
In March, we recognized Fraud Prevention Month with a special presentation at the London office featuring members of the London Police Service. Attendees received practical advice on identifying scams, protecting personal information, and responding to suspicious emails and phone calls.

We also welcomed community members to our Annual General Meeting, where attendees had the opportunity to meet our Board of Directors and hear Olivia Crozier's presentation, Self-Management in Practice: Insights from Research and Occupational Therapy. We would also like to thank Alysia Christiaen, Dr. Jeff Holmes, and Gary Pullam for their years of dedication, leadership, and service to PSSO as they step down from the Board.

First meeting of the London Walking Poles Exercise Group.

This spring, we hosted a successful Spring Conference in Woodstock featuring keynote speakers Dr. Martin L. Duennwald and Dr. Jack Scott. We also launched a new exercise pilot program in Oxford County, led by Kinesiologist Katie Yeandle, in response to community feedback about the need for more Parkinson's-focused programming.

Other highlights included a Carepartner Workshop in Forest, a Parkinson's Awareness Day flag-raising ceremony in Strathroy, and the launch of a new Walking Poles Exercise Group in Springbank Park led by Coach Brenda Lipson.

A special congratulations goes to the organizers of the Pickleball for Parkinson's tournaments in Stratford and St. Thomas, which raised an impressive $7,400 and more than $8,500 respectively in support of PSSO.

EAST REGION

In April 2026, Parkinson's Awareness Month launched with an energetic Flag Raising Ceremony at Guelph City Hall. Mayor Cam Guthrie and retired MP Lloyd Longfield shared heartfelt remarks emphasizing the importance of facing Parkinson's as a community. The ceremony attracted a vibrant crowd of healthcare professionals, volunteers, people living with Parkinson's disease, and carepartners who share a passion for raising awareness of the unique needs of those affected by Parkinson's.

PSSO programming has been flourishing as we head into spring, with well-attended support groups and exercise programs across the region. Isolde Spies has returned to lead PWR! (Parkinson Wellness Recovery) Moves in Orangeville, an evidence-based exercise program designed to build strength and improve mobility. A brand-new program has also arrived in Caledonia: MOVE BOLD, a functional movement class led by Sharlene Hogeterp Louden and designed to challenge both body and mind while targeting the symptoms of Parkinson's disease. In addition, Chair Yoga for Parkinson's has come to Guelph. Led by Chloe Chaput, this gentle and therapeutic program focuses on supporting mobility, balance, coordination, and strength for individuals living with Parkinson's.

Preparations are also underway for our Fall Regional Parkinson's Conference, Carepartner Workshop, Walk for Parkinson's, and more. Stay tuned for exciting opportunities to learn, connect, and get involved in upcoming PSSO programs and events!

Group at the Guelph Flag Raising ceremony.

NORTH REGION

PSSO clients attend the Parkinson's flag-raising ceremony in Hanover.

Spring and summer have been busy across Grey, Bruce, and Huron counties, with plenty of opportunities for connection, learning, and community support.

Our monthly support groups in Hanover, Port Elgin, Owen Sound, and Goderich continue to provide a welcoming space for people living with Parkinson's and their care partners. This season, members enjoyed presentations from a variety of guest speakers, and we look forward to offering more educational sessions in the months ahead.

We are also working to bring back popular movement programs, including Chair Yoga and Tai Chi in Port Elgin and Kincardine, as well as continuing the Dancing with Parkinson's program in partnership with the YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce. Stay tuned for updates as these programs are finalized.

Preparations are also underway for Walk for Parkinson's on September 12 and 13. Walks will take place in Hanover, Owen Sound, Goderich, and along the Lake Huron shoreline for Port Elgin and Kincardine participants. These family-friendly events bring communities together while raising funds for vital Parkinson's programs and services. Volunteers and walk committee members are always welcome.

We are also looking forward to our annual Carepartner Workshop on September 23 at the Neustadt Community Centre. Thank you to our local businesses, volunteers, and community partners whose support helps make these programs possible.

ALWAYS A MAKER

By: Maham Tariq

The tip came from a friend: there was a pottery just down the road in Salem, worth a visit. Bill Mason was in his final year of architecture at the University of Waterloo, not especially looking for anything in particular. He went anyway. That afternoon, he met Ruth. Over fifty years later, it is hard to say where the meeting ended and life began.

Bill Mason in his pottery studio.

Ruth had come to Canada from the United States in the early 1970s, along with a friend who was married to a draft dodger. She found work at a pottery in Salem — and found Bill. Within a few years, the two had rented a farmhouse, quit their jobs, set up their own kiln, and by 1973 were running pottery together: two people who had decided, without much deliberation, to build something from scratch.

That instinct never left him. In the decades that followed, Bill drew on his architectural training to design and build dome homes, custom residences, and commercial spaces across Grey County, sometimes bringing his son along on summer jobs. But the pottery was always the centre of it. He and Ruth built their third and largest kiln together — a hundred cubic feet — and formulated their own glazes from raw materials. It was the kind of work that can only develop over a lifetime, and that is exactly how long it took.

For years, they spent winters in Florida, and quietly, over time, something wonderful took shape around them. Ruth's brother, Eric, bought land nearby first. Bill and Ruth followed. Her parents came, then a cousin. Before long, there was a whole small world of people they loved, gathered around neighbouring properties in the sun. "It was just wonderful for all of us," Bill says.

Over the past few years, that world has gone quiet. Most of the people who have filled those houses are gone. It is the kind of loss that settles into everything. For Bill, everything now includes Parkinson's disease.

He was diagnosed in 2020, in the midst of COVID. Looking back, the signs had been there for some time: a fatigue he couldn't explain, a tremor in his hand, a feeling of having aged all at once that came on without obvious cause. He did what he always does: he researched. By the time he sat down with his neurologist, he had already identified his own symptoms against the diagnostic criteria for Parkinson's, and he was fairly certain of the answer. The confirmation brought a complicated kind of relief. The disease was slow-progressing, his doctor told him. As Bill puts it, it felt like a double-edged sword.

What came next was harder. His initial medication was never properly escalated, and by his second year, things had become serious — unable to work or think clearly, and, as he says plainly, suicidal. He did what he had always done when something didn't add up: he researched. He found current pharmaceutical guidance, had his dosage adjusted, and within two weeks his symptoms were gone. He now tracks every dose on a strict eight-hour schedule, logged by hand on a chart on the wall — because short-term memory loss has become one of the most constant challenges of his life. "I wouldn't know where I was if I didn't make notes," he says.

With age and disease, the pottery came to its natural close. The kiln — the hundred-cubic-foot one they'd built themselves, the third and largest — demands days of sustained, precise attention that neither of them can manage any longer. Their last firing was in 2020. The kiln still stands in the shed. The shelves inside hold the work of a lifetime.

Bill has been attending a Parkinson's support group for several years now. He finds in those meetings what he describes as community and perspective — the particular comfort of being among people who understand what living with this disease actually looks like from the inside. Having lived with the slow-progressing form for years, he also finds himself in a position to give back. When others in the group are newer to their diagnosis, he shares what he's learned. "Because I've had the experience over a long period," he says, "I'm able to help so many people." As well, he has found himself a new project, one that would strike most people as implausible.

When trees on his property began to die, he saw not a loss but a material. Cherry, ash, and others — he had them cut and milled into lumber and started thinking about what they might become. He can only work three to four hours a day before fatigue overtakes him, but within those hours he is fully himself: designing as he builds, refining as he goes, the same instinct that shaped the pottery and the architecture now finding its way out into the bush.

"I said to the guy loading the logs: This is ridiculous. I'm 81 years old. I should have retired years ago. I can hardly walk, and here I'm doing a brand new logging operation. I must be crazy. He said, 'Yeah, probably.'"

It is tiring work, and he knows he has to pace himself carefully. But it keeps him moving, keeps him thinking, keeps him connected to the part of himself that has always needed to be building something.

"I think it could be worse," Bill says. "It could be far, far worse." The kiln is quiet. The ash trees are waiting. And Bill Mason, at 81, is already thinking about what he'll build next.

Bill alongside his kiln.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

By: Dr. Angela Roberts, PhD, CASLPO reg. (SLP) and Allison Chen, MScA. CASLPO reg. (SLP)

Why do I need a speech-language pathologist (SLP)?

People often think of tremors or walking difficulties in Parkinson's disease, but Parkinson's can also affect thinking, communication, saliva management, eating, and swallowing. These changes may not fully improve with medication alone, but many can be supported with rehabilitation strategies and practical tools. SLPs have expertise in communication, cognition, and swallowing. They work in hospitals, clinics, home care, long-term care, and other community settings.

Communication is Connection

Changes in speech and communication can affect how others hear and understand you, making conversations more tiring or frustrating. Small changes often happen gradually, and many people develop effective strategies to stay connected and participate confidently in everyday life.

Common communication changes:

- Quiet or monotone voice
- Feeling like you are shouting when speaking at a normal volume
- Difficulty pronouncing words clearly
- Trouble finding words or following fast-paced conversations
- Fatigue during longer conversations

SLPs use specialized techniques and interventions to improve speech clarity, communication confidence, and participation in conversations. They can also help you adjust your speaking volume and provide communication strategies to use with family and friends.

Safe Eating and Swallowing Matter

Parkinson's can affect eating and swallowing. This impacts nutrition, hydration, comfort, and enjoyment of meals. Supporting swallowing health can help you continue eating and drinking more safely and comfortably.

Common swallowing changes:

- Difficulty swallowing medications
- Difficulty chewing or clearing food from the mouth
- Drooling or saliva pooling
- Food feels stuck in the throat
- Increased choking risk or food/liquid entering the lungs
- Wet or "gurgly" sounding voice

SLPs use specialized assessments and equipment to evaluate swallowing and recommend strategies, exercises, and food textures to support safer eating and swallowing and improve quality of life.

Start Early

Many people benefit from learning strategies early, before difficulties interfere with daily life. Early support from an SLP can help you maintain communication, eating, and participation in the activities that matter most to you throughout your Parkinson's journey.

IMPORTANCE OF A MOVEMENT DISORDER CLINIC NURSE AND HOW THEY SUPPORT PARKINSON'S PATIENTS

By: Heather Russell, RN.

A Movement Disorder Nurse plays a vital role in caring for people with Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders. They are generally one of the most important and consistent members of a patient's healthcare team.

Provide Expert Education by teaching patients and families about PD symptoms, disease progression, and treatment options. They explain medications, side effects, and strategies for managing symptoms. They also provide education on exercise, nutrition, sleep, safety, hospitalization, disease progression, and issues arising in the end stages of the disease.

Medication Management involves monitoring how well medication is working and identifying issues such as motor fluctuations, dyskinesia, hallucinations, or side effects. They help patients understand complex medication schedules and improve adherence.

Early Recognition of Changes by identifying worsening motor and non-motor symptoms, including falls and balance problems, cognitive changes, mood disorders, sleep disturbances, and autonomic symptoms such as constipation or hypotension, and facilitating timely interventions that can improve quality of life.

Coordination of Care by acting as a liaison between patients, caregivers, neurologists, family physicians, pharmacists, and therapists, as well as helping with referrals.

Support for Device-Aided Therapies by providing education and ongoing management for treatments such as Vyalev infusion therapy, DBS, and LCIG. They help troubleshoot device issues and educate patients and caregivers.

Emotional Support and Advocacy by providing reassurance, counselling, and support during different stages of the disease, helping support caregivers, and advocating for patient needs within the healthcare system.

Improving Outcomes Research has shown that specialist PD nurses can improve symptom management and medication adherence, reduce emergency visits and hospitalizations, increase patient confidence and self-management skills, and enhance quality of life for both patients and caregivers.

Parkinson's disease is complex and affects much more than movement. A Movement Disorder Clinic Nurse provides continuity, education, coordination, and compassionate support, helping patients and families navigate every stage of the disease. They bridge the gap between clinic appointments, ensuring problems are recognized early and that patients receive timely, individualized care. The nurse is a central point of contact and a trusted advocate, significantly improving both patient outcomes and caregiver well-being.

THE 2026 SPRING REGIONAL PARKINSON'S CONFERENCES

CALEDONIA

SPRING CONFERENCE RECAP

Our Living Well Conference in Caledonia was an inspiring day filled with learning, movement, and meaningful connections.

We began the day with Living Well with Parkinson's: How Occupational Therapy Can Help, presented by local Occupational Therapist Markie Ryckman. With more than 10 years of experience, Markie shared practical strategies for maintaining independence, improving safety, and enhancing quality of life. Participants gained valuable insights into daily living, home safety, mobility, and available funding options.

After a morning of learning, Sharlene Hogeterp Louden got everyone on their feet with an engaging Functional Movement Class. The room quickly filled with energy as participants moved, stretched, and challenged both body and mind.

In the afternoon, Dr. Philip Millar presented Feeling Tired Without Slowing Down: Exercise, Fatigue, and Parkinson's Disease. He explored the latest research on the connection between regular exercise and improved outcomes for people living with Parkinson's. Dr. Millar encouraged attendees to find a movement that fits their unique needs, incorporate short "exercise snacks" into their daily routines, and take advantage of group exercise programs for both motivation and social connection.

The conference offered fresh perspectives, practical tools, and opportunities to connect with others who understand Parkinson's journey. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the day such a success. We look forward to seeing you at future PSSO events!

LEAMINGTON

SPRING CONFERENCE RECAP

Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario was pleased to host its third Living Well Conference of 2026 in Leamington, Ontario, bringing together members of the Parkinson's community for a day of learning, movement, and meaningful connection.

One of the highlights of the day was a presentation from Dr. Martin Duennwald, who shared valuable insights into his research on oxidative stress and its effects on neurons. A particularly memorable analogy compared a healthy neuron to an origami swan. With Parkinson's disease, that swan may become more like a crumpled piece of paper. While its shape and function may change, it is still beautiful. This message resonated deeply with attendees and served as a powerful reminder that a diagnosis does not diminish a person's value or potential.

Mira and Manuel Rocha demonstrating Rock Steady Boxing.

The conference also included opportunities to get moving. A special thank-you goes to Kaydence and Katarina from the Dancing with Parkinson's program for leading an energizing movement break, and to Mira and Manuel Rocha for getting everyone boxing in the afternoon.

This year, we were also pleased to welcome six community partners who hosted informative display tables, providing valuable resources and opportunities for conversation throughout the day.

Thank you to everyone who attended, volunteered, presented, and supported this event. We look forward to welcoming you back for another inspiring conference in 2027.

GODERICH

SPRING CONFERENCE RECAP

The Living Well Conference in Goderich on April 1 2026, was an inspiring and impactful day, bringing together people living with Parkinson's, carepartners, and community members to learn, connect, and feel empowered.

We were honoured to welcome Dr. Mary Jenkins, who delivered an uplifting and practical presentation on Living Well with Parkinson's Disease. Her focus on everyday strategies, resilience, and hope left attendees with valuable tools and renewed optimism. Dr. Angela Roberts explored the importance of staying connected, discussing cognition, communication, and ways to navigate daily life with Parkinson's. Her insights sparked thoughtful conversations and reinforced the important role connection plays in maintaining quality of life.

A special thank-you goes to Brayden Liesicki for leading our movement breaks and bringing energy, laughter, and plenty of movement throughout the day. We are also grateful to Charlie M. from the Owen Sound & Area Support Group for sharing his candid experiences of living with Parkinson's. His honesty and openness were greatly appreciated by attendees.

A heartfelt thank-you goes to our generous local sponsor, Harbour Hill Suites in Goderich, for providing wonderful raffle prizes, and to Bon Vivant Catering of Clinton for the delicious meal that brought everyone together around the table.

From engaging presentations to meaningful conversations, the day truly reflected what it means to live well together and reminded us that Hope is Close to Home. Thank you to everyone who attended, volunteered, sponsored, and presented. Your support helped make this event a tremendous success.

WOODSTOCK

SPRING CONFERENCE RECAP

The Woodstock Living Well Conference, held on April 24, brought together members of the Parkinson's community for a day of learning, movement, and connection. Attendees enjoyed engaging presentations from keynote speakers Dr. Martin L. Duennwald and Dr. Jack Scott, along with presentations from Dr. Erika Howe and Sarah Park, a previous recipient of the PSSO Graduate Student Scholarship. Participants also had the opportunity to get moving during a refreshing movement break led by VON.

Dr. Duennwald's presentation explored the science behind Parkinson's disease, focusing on protein misfolding, oxidative stress, and mitochondrial dysfunction. He also highlighted promising research into potential therapies targeting oxidative stress. One area of interest is Nrf2, a protein that activates the body's natural cellular defenses but becomes impaired in Parkinson's disease. Researchers are investigating whether cannabidiol (CBD) may help activate these protective pathways and support neuronal health.

In the afternoon, Dr. Scott focused on communication challenges commonly experienced by people living with Parkinson's, particularly those who have experienced cognitive changes. He shared practical strategies for navigating misunderstandings, including simplifying information, using gestures, remaining patient, and revisiting conversations when needed.

From neuroscience and communication to movement and community connection, the conference offered valuable insights and meaningful conversations for all who attended.

Introducing Our 2026 Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario GRADUATE STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

RESEARCHER:
Alexandria Northey, MSc, University of Guelph

PROJECT TITLE
Understanding How Exercise-Mediated Changes to the Peripheral Immune System Affect Neuropathology in Parkinson's Disease

People living with Parkinson's disease (PD) experience a range of motor and non-motor symptoms because certain brain cells gradually become damaged, destroyed, and eventually die. Current medications are unable to prevent damage to these cells, and while they can help manage symptoms, they often come with side effects and are less effective at advanced disease stages. To overcome these limitations, research is turning to other ways of modifying disease.

One promising intervention for people with PD is exercise, specifically aerobic exercise (e.g., cycling or running), as it is safe, can reduce chronic inflammation, improve symptoms, and even slow disease progression when done regularly. Even though the mechanisms of these benefits aren't fully understood, it is known that exercise affects the immune system. This is important because inflammation begins early in PD and is linked to the loss of susceptible brain cells. My research explores how aerobic exercise affects inflammation, communication between the brain and the blood, and the health of brain cells. More specifically, we will be collecting blood samples from people with PD before and after a single cycling session to examine immune cell composition.

These samples will then be tested on a cell culture model of the human blood-brain barrier (BBB), a critical point of communication between the brain and the blood, to see whether exercise-related changes in inflammation affect BBB properties and brain cell health. By gaining a better understanding of how exercise impacts immune cells, the BBB, and brain cells in PD, we hope to improve exercise recommendations and discover therapeutic targets that restore BBB function. Working alongside Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario, our goals are to better inform healthcare professionals, people with PD, and their families of the biological effects of aerobic exercise and, ultimately, to improve the lives of those living with this neurodegenerative disease.

RESEARCHER:
Miranda Da Silva, MSc, Western University

PROJECT TITLE
Developing Extracellular Vesicle Blood Biomarkers for Early Detection of Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's disease (PD) is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder that affects more than 100,000 Canadians and will rise to more than 163,700 by 2031. Although it may begin as a movement disorder, it's associated with early and progressive cognitive decline, with nearly 50% of patients developing dementia within 10 years. Without a reliable blood test, early diagnosis remains extremely difficult.

My research aims to fill this gap by developing a rapid blood-based biomarker system that complements current diagnostic methods and brings PD detection closer to everyday clinical practice. I will focus on measuring proteins carried by extracellular vesicles (EVs), which are tiny particles released by brain cells that travel into the bloodstream. A key protein linked to PD is α-synuclein, which can misfold and build up in the brain. Using nanoscale flow cytometry, an emerging technology for measuring EVs, it can sensitively detect EVs that carry α-synuclein and other PD-related markers.

This research will help to identify EV biomarkers that clearly distinguish individuals with PD and Parkinson's disease dementia from healthy individuals, while also reflecting disease severity. By analyzing patient samples and confirming the findings from a large national study of aging and neurodegenerative diseases, the aim is to develop a reliable and affordable blood test for PD. This test has the potential to reduce the long wait times and high costs of diagnosing PD, enabling timely care, better treatment planning, and an improved quality of life for patients.

RESEARCHER:
William LeBoeuf, MSc, University of Waterloo

PROJECT TITLE
Designing Next-Generation Hybrid MAO-B Inhibitors as Disease-Modifying Therapeutics for Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's disease (PD) is the second most common brain disorder, after Alzheimer's disease. It mainly affects movement. People with PD often experience tremors, stiff muscles, slow movement, and problems with balance and walking. These symptoms happen because certain brain cells that produce dopamine, a neurotransmitter that helps control smooth movement, gradually stop working or die. Current treatments can help manage these symptoms and improve quality of life, but they do not cure the disease or stop it from getting worse.

Scientists now understand that Parkinson's disease is complex and is caused by several factors. One key feature is the buildup of harmful substances in the brain. For example, iron can accumulate in certain brain regions, which may damage cells. In addition, a protein called alpha-synuclein can clump together to form abnormal deposits, which are toxic to brain cells. These changes lead to damage to energy-producing structures in cells and increase production of harmful molecules. Over time, this results in the loss of dopamine-producing cells and ongoing brain damage. Most current treatments focus on replacing dopamine or improving its function, which helps symptoms but does not address the root causes of the disease. This work aims to go beyond symptom control by developing new drugs that can act on multiple harmful processes at the same time. These compounds are designed to enter the brain and target key factors driving Parkinson's disease. The goal is to not only relieve symptoms but also slow down or even stop the progression of the disease.

RESEARCHER:
Viveka Pimenta, PhD, Western University

PROJECT TITLE
Characterizing the Structural and Functional Perturbations of Parkin Under Oxidative Stress

Parkinson's disease (PD) patients struggle with motor symptoms like bradykinesia, tremors, and stiffness that significantly impact every area of their lives. Difficulties with mobility become worse as neurodegeneration advances in the brain's substantia nigra. The neurons in this region produce dopamine, a neurotransmitter that communicates between the brain and muscles to coordinate movement. As neurons die, there is less dopamine to facilitate this communication. Currently, the best available treatments focus on dopamine replacement therapy to alleviate symptoms, but none are able to stop or slow neurodegeneration. Approaching this issue begins with investigating the key conditions that contribute to neuron death: oxidative stress and mitochondrial dysfunction.

Oxidative stress occurs when levels of reactive oxygen species (ROS) exceed the antioxidant defense capacity of the cell, oxidising and damaging cellular machinery. This happens naturally as we age, but neurons are especially vulnerable because their constant activity requires a lot of energy. All required energy is produced at the mitochondria, but the process of generating it also produces ROS that can damage mitochondria and prevent them from working properly. Over time, this creates a vicious cycle where oxidative stress causes mitochondrial damage, damaged mitochondria produce more ROS, and more ROS causes oxidative stress until the neuron is overwhelmed and dies.

During oxidative stress in PD, the protein parkin is key to clearing dysfunctional mitochondria and preventing damage from spreading. However, despite being recruited to areas with the most ROS, parkin is itself vulnerable to being oxidised, and its several oxidation hotspots have known roles in maintaining parkin's neuroprotective activity. My study will determine how oxidation modifies parkin and contributes to PD. By identifying oxidation-sensitive steps in parkin activity, this work could inform strategies to improve its resilience to oxidative stress, potentially slowing neuronal damage.

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

By: Kim Bond

I've learned in long-term care that the right support can change the tone of someone's day. I'm Kim Bond, a Social Worker at The Manor Long Term Care Home in Sarnia. Before coming to The Manor, I spent eight years at University Hospital in the Clinical Neurological Sciences Department, and that experience still guides my work. As more residents living with Parkinson's disease (PD) moved into the Manor, we saw a clear opportunity to strengthen support not only for residents, but also for the carepartners walking alongside them.

In 2024, several of us from The Manor attended the PSSO Conference in Sarnia. We met Samantha Chittle, Community Engagement Coordinator, and built a partnership that's helped us expand Parkinson's-specific education and connection. Today, I facilitate a monthly support group for people living with PD and their carepartners. Some months we welcome guest speakers; other months we focus on conversation and connection through activities like drumming or exercise programs. We also watch PSSO webinars together, which often lead to the best discussions. Samantha has delivered training on the Parkinson's Education Program (PEP) for staff across all three of our Homes, strengthening how we show up for residents and carepartners every day.

Kim Bond and her family.

I first learned about the Annual PSSO Walk in Sarnia while exploring resources on the PSSO website, and I wanted to give back—to PSSO and to my community. I volunteered last year; this year, I'm serving on the planning committee and will be at Canatara Park on September 13 for this year's walk. Whether you're living with PD, supporting someone who is, or simply looking for a meaningful way to help, I hope you'll join us. It's a day to build connections, share reliable information, and remind people they don't have to navigate Parkinson's alone.

16th Annual

PARKINSON GOLF CLASSIC

Presented by Velikonja Financial of CIBC Private Wealth

CIBC

CIBC PRIVATE WEALTH
VELIKONJA FINANCIAL

On May 27, 2026, golfers, sponsors, volunteers, donors, committee members, and supporters came together for the 16th Annual Parkinson's Golf Classic, presented by Velikonja Financial of CIBC Private Wealth. Thanks to their incredible generosity and dedication, the event raised an outstanding $101,567 in support of Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario.

More than a day on the golf course, the Parkinson's Golf Classic is a celebration of community, connection, and hope. This year's event featured several exciting additions, including a new hot breakfast buffet that brought participants together before the day began and a successful online auction that generated additional support for people living with Parkinson's and their care partners.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our Eagle Sponsors: Bluestone Properties and Rembrandt Homes, and our Birdie Sponsors: Canduct Industries Inc., Sifton Properties Ltd., Lerners LLP, Palumbo Homes, and Domus Developments. Their commitment and generosity played a vital role in the success of this event.

Funds raised through the Golf Classic help PSSO continue providing essential programs, education, support services, and resources throughout Southwestern Ontario. Every dollar raised helps ensure individuals and families affected by Parkinson's can access the support, information, and community they need.

To everyone who sponsored, volunteered, donated, participated in the auction, golfed, or helped behind the scenes, thank you. Your support made this event possible and will have a lasting impact on the lives of those affected by Parkinson's.

We are deeply grateful for your continued commitment and look forward to welcoming everyone back next year.

REMBRANDT HOMES

BLUESTONE PROPERTIES

GIVING FROM THE HEART:

By: Grace Ki

When Carl and Joyce Heck first met as teenagers, neither knew they were meeting the person who would stand beside them through every chapter of life. More than sixty-five years later, the high school sweethearts remain each other's greatest source of comfort, strength, and encouragement.

Together, they built a life filled with love, laughter, and family. Carl studied engineering at the University of Waterloo, while Joyce pursued a career as a dental assistant. Through every milestone, challenge, and change life brought their way, they remained steadfastly by each other's side.

That partnership became especially important following a Parkinson's disease diagnosis. It began with what doctors believed was an essential tremor in Carl's mid-70s before progressing to Parkinson's disease several years later.

Carl and Joyce Heck

Like many people living with Parkinson's, he experiences periods of brain fog and low blood pressure. Some days are more challenging than others, but he has found simple strategies that help. When he is feeling lethargic, a fifteen-minute walk to the end of the street and back often leaves him feeling like a whole new person.

Fortunately, medication has helped him continue many of the activities he enjoys, including curling, golfing, and downhill skiing. He is also able to manage everyday tasks around the house, such as mowing the lawn, something he is grateful to continue doing independently.

Like many families receiving a Parkinson's diagnosis, they were left with questions about what would come next. Determined to learn as much as possible, Joyce began searching for information and local resources. Her search led them to Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario, where they discovered educational programs, webinars, and services that helped them better understand the disease and navigate the journey ahead.

One program that made a particular difference was Louder, Clearer. He joined to strengthen his voice and communication skills and continues to practice many of the exercises throughout the day. Reflecting on their experience, Joyce notes, "Most people don't get involved until you're faced with it."

Family has also played an important role throughout their journey. Their children and grandchildren embraced the diagnosis with understanding and compassion. Recently, the entire family came together to replace the deck at their home, a simple act of kindness that reminded them how fortunate they are to be surrounded by people who care.
For the couple, giving back is deeply personal. They know firsthand how valuable education, programs, and support services can be for individuals and families navigating a Parkinson's diagnosis. They also believe that continued research is essential to improving treatments and, one day, finding a cure.

Joyce and Carl Heck's family works together to dismantle the porch.

Their perspective was shaped not only by their own experience, but also by watching a close friend live with Parkinson's disease. An accomplished skier, their friend spent years enjoying the sport and rarely missed a season. As the disease progressed, however, skiing became increasingly difficult until he was eventually forced to stop altogether. Seeing that loss left a lasting impression.

Their generosity reflects a desire to ensure others have access to the same guidance, support, and resources that have meant so much to them. "The way we can help is by donating whatever we can, as often as we can," he says.

That commitment to helping others continues as they prepare to celebrate another anniversary together. In lieu of gifts, they have asked family and friends to donate to Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario. It is a meaningful way to celebrate a lifetime together while helping create hope for others facing Parkinson's.

After more than six decades side by side, Carl and Joyce continue to meet life's challenges with gratitude, resilience, and generosity. Through their support of PSSO, they are helping ensure that individuals and families affected by Parkinson's have access to the programs, services, and research that make a difference every day.

IN MEMORIAM

We offer our sympathy to the families whose loved ones have passed away between December 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026

Brian Barnes
Suzanne Bell
Gracemary Denomy
Don Dietrich
Elizabeth "Betty" Dunn
Robert Edwards
Bill Eves
Gerry Gibbs
Robin Gleason
Wanda Golds
Mildred "Shirley" Greig
Leo Gulikers
Peter Harding
Ann Jones
Barry Jones
Bryan Kay
Ron Kay
Armin-Kurt Korsch
Rosemary Latuns
Harold "Wayne" Lyons
Pauline May
Bill McKeough
Keith "Robert" Nielsen
Bill Osmond
Clare Palmer
Harry Renaud
Margery Sherritt
John Smith
Raymond Smith
Gladys Sproule
Alexander "Alex" Stewart
John Sutcliffe
Kell Svenningsen
Lucy Tremblay
John Vanderheide
Gottfreide Weissenbrunner

We make every effort to include all members who have passed away. We sincerely apologize if any individual was inadvertently omitted from the above list. Please call and let us know if we have missed anyone and we will include their name in our next issue.

SPINNING WHEELS TOUR
PEDALING FOR PARKINSON'S

$15,660

Donated to PSSO in 2025

Helping improve lives across southwestern Ontario

Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario

Spinning Wheels Pedals into London – September 21

Spinning Wheels brings cyclists from across Canada together in support of those affected by Parkinson's disease. This September, riders will stop in London to partner with Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario for a special community event. Join us as we welcome the cyclists and raise funds for essential Parkinson's programs and services across southwestern Ontario.

Stay tuned for more details!

KNOCKOUT-PD

IN LONDON, ONTARIO

Discover the power of movement, strength, and community with Knockout-PD's non-contact boxing program designed specifically for individuals living with Parkinson's Disease.
Our year-round classes help improve balance, coordination, mobility, confidence, and overall quality of life — all in a safe, supportive, and motivating environment. Every class is led by two KO-PD trained coaches who provide personalized attention and encouragement for all fitness levels and abilities.

Fighting Parkinson's One Punch at a Time

At KO-PD, you're not just joining a workout —you're joining a community that fights together.
NON-CONTACT BOXING • SAFE & SUPPORTIVE • ALL FITNESS LEVELS WELCOME
Join us today and take the next step toward moving better, feeling stronger, and living well.

KO-PD

knockoutpd@neuphysio.com
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Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario

BECOME A HERO OF HOPE

Our Membership Program

By becoming a member, you join as a Hero of Hope. Your monthly gift makes hope possible. You not only provide sustainability for services and Parkinson's programs including research, but you also invest in the lives of people with Parkinson's in our community.

Simply fill out the form on our website **psso.ca/how-to-help/hero-of-hope/** or call **1-888-851-7376**.

WALK FOR PARKINSON'S

WHO ARE YOU WALKING FOR?

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2026

Brantford, Brant-Norfolk & Haldimand County - Mohawk Park

Goderich - Rotary Cove Pavillion #4

London & District - Springbank Gardens

Owen Sound - Kelso Beach, Nawash Park

South Grey Bruce & Hanover - Hanover Town Park

Stratford & Area - Upper Queen's Park

Waterloo Region - Kiwanis Park

Wellington-Dufferin - Centre Wellington Sportsplex

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

Chatham-Kent - Kingston Park

NEW LOCATION
Grand Bend - Huron Shores United Church

Oxford County - Roth Park

Port Elgin, Kincardine & Area - North Shore Park Saugeen Shores

Sarnia-Lambton - Canatara Park, Seaway Kiwanis Pavillion

Windsor-Essex - Malden Park

For more information please visit ***walkforpd.ca***

Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario