

# LIAISON

April 2023

## Turning on the tunes: 3 evidence-based benefits of music



What do radio, vinyl records, cassettes, CDs, YouTube, and Spotify have in common? They are all ways that people can listen to music, the universal language that breaks down barriers and builds invisible bridges that connect us. So, what does the research have to say about the benefits of music for our mental and physical health?

### 1. [Music for hospital stays](#)

Music therapy, a safe and non-invasive complementary strategy to medical treatments, can yield positive results for cancer patients who are in hospital to undergo a surgery/procedure/treatment. More specifically, patients who listen to music before and/or after a surgery/procedure/treatment may experience moderate reductions in anxiety, pain, and depression. Slightly less fatigue may be another plus.

### 2. **Music for walking**

As we age, we may notice changes to our walking ability, such as our steps becoming shorter and pace slowing down. Changes like these can reduce mobility and increase the risk of falls. Listening to a steady beat (e.g., like that provided by a metronome) or music while walking can help to enhance walking speed, the length of our stride, and the rhythm and symmetry of our walk. When choosing what to listen to, aim for music with a unique and stable rhythm; and that you find enjoyable.

### 3. [Music for sleep quality](#)

Not getting good quality sleep can negatively impact our mental, cognitive, and

physical health. Although medications for sleep-related issues do exist, they are associated with unwanted side effects. Alternatively, music-based interventions are non-drug strategies that appear to have the potential to improve sleep quality. Although generally deemed a safe strategy, take stock of any possible hazards and put in place actions to remedy them. For instance, using headphones while sleeping may not be ideal, so speakers may be the way to go.

To read the full McMaster Optimal Aging Portal blog on this topic, [click here](#).

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## How you can volunteer with RTOERO and give back to your own community

April 16-22 is National Volunteer Week. RTOERO celebrates and thanks the many district volunteers who make RTOERO the incredible organization that it is! All initiatives at the district level are volunteer-led; volunteers do everything from publishing your district newsletters to spreading the message of [RTOERO political advocacy](#) locally.

The annual [RTOERO Community Grantsare](#) an incredible volunteer-led initiative many districts take part in.



These grants fund local projects that directly benefit communities. In 2022 grant-funded projects ranged from those that improved the lives of seniors, such as Algoma's Get Moving program for Seniors and Hamilton's Cycling Without Age program; to those that help protect the environment, such as the Ottawa River Watershed Health Assessment and Monitoring Project and the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust in Leeds County; to those that foster stronger ties within the community, such as the supporting of local food programs in Ottawa and Collingwood, ON and Nanaimo, BC.

To get involved with a Community Grant project in your district, or find out about other volunteer positions available, please contact [membership@rtoero.ca](mailto:membership@rtoero.ca) to be put in touch with your local district representatives.



## Foundation announces first-ever silent auction

The RTOERO Foundation's first-ever silent auction event will take place on May 15, 2023 during the reception of the RTOERO Annual Meeting in Toronto.

There will be an online component of the auction which is open to participation from all 83,000 RTOERO members nationwide.



The online auction will be live from Saturday, May 6, 2023 at 8:00 a.m. EST and will close on Friday, May 12, 2023 at 8:00 p.m. EST. The auction is open to all RTOERO members, staff, board members, partners, family and friends.

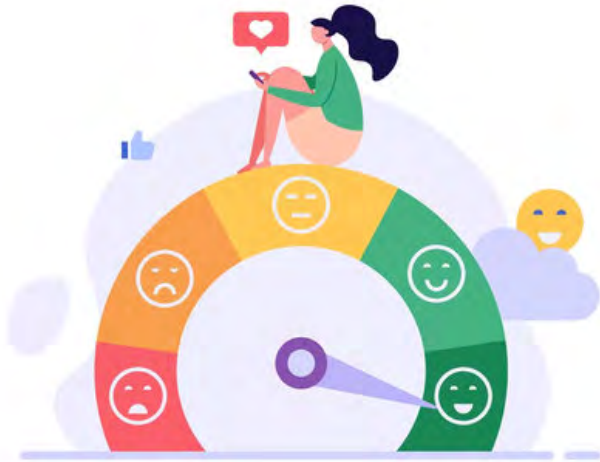
The Foundation is excited to be offering a wide variety of prizes including:

- 10-day all-inclusive vacation package at a 5-star luxury resort in Cancun, Mexico
- \$2,000 gift card towards an e-bike & accessories
- Stratford getaway packages including theatre tickets, dinner for two and an overnight hotel stay
- Stained glass window from Manchester, England dated between 1890 and 1900
- Two (2) tickets to the National Arts Centre
- Two (2) platinum seats to a Maple Leafs hockey game
- Two (2) seats for the 2023/24 season for the Toronto Raptors
- Restaurant gift certificates
- Gift baskets

More details about the online silent auction to follow, so stay tuned!



# What's on your mind? Share your views in 2023 member survey



Every two years, RTOERO conducts a comprehensive survey of members – asking for your feedback on all aspects of your membership experience, from communications and the health benefits plans to your interactions with your district.

By now, you have received an email from CEO Jim Grieve inviting you to complete the survey. Check your spam folder if you don't see the invitation in your email inbox. You have until April 10 to respond.

The survey is developed, administered and analysed by an external research company, Cathexis Consulting. This ensures that the survey findings are statistically reliable and analyzed independently.

All members for whom RTOERO has an email have received invitation to complete the online survey. Those for whom we don't have email addresses are randomly selected for telephone interviews. Both the survey and phone interviews are conducted in English and French.

Survey results will be shared with all members, as well as the board, committees, districts and staff. The results will be used to measure progress on the RTOERO strategic plan, identify areas for improvement and plan new programs and services for members.

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# Earth Day 2023: Initiatives for our planet



Every April 22 on [Earth Day](#), people rally together to advance sustainability and climate action. At RTOERO we advocate year-long for the conservation and protection of our air, land and water.

Whether you use the power of one or the power of many, we all can play a part in environmental stewardship. Here are some challenges alongside initiatives to contribute positively to our environment.

## Plastic pollution

Single-use Plastics Prohibition Regulation is a positive step taken by the federal government to reduce plastic pollution. But the government failed to address the issue of already existing plastic pollution. You can host or participate in a [cleanup event](#), or use a [plastic calculator](#) to work towards reducing your plastic consumption.

## Emission reduction

The federal government committed to [reach net-zero emissions by 2050](#). Transportation accounts for about one quarter of Canada's carbon emissions. You can make a difference by offering carsharing options when organizing an event, and when possible, choose public transit over your own vehicle.

## Safeguarding our water supply

Our freshwater resources are a national treasure, but pollution and misuse continue to threaten them. First Nations often face drinking water advisories. Reach out to governments to address drinking water advisories, and consider installing a low-flow shower head to save water and money.



## Indigenous icons - recognizing and celebrating excellence



*by Shaneeka Forrester for RTOERO, Cree artist, mother and advocate from Brunswick House First Nation*

Every generation has individuals who leave a mark – their talent, passion and voice transcend time, allowing them to influence many generations. When I was a young girl, I had a poster of Buffy Sainte Marie above my bed. At that time, I knew she was a musician whose voice captivated me when she sang. As I grew, my knowledge and understanding of the magnitude of her work also expanded. Sainte Marie has been a trailblazer in Indigenous communities across North America. As a musician, composer and Indigenous activist, she inspires strength, courage and independence.

I've spent my life spinning on stage with Buffy Sainte Marie, living "North of 60" with Dakota House and Tina Keeper, painting classical Indigenous art with Kent Monkman, studying Indigenous botanicals with Christi Belcourt, walking along the dirt roads of Oklahoma with Sterlin Harjo, sitting amongst the Lakotas with Graham Greene, investigating heart-wrenching topics with Alanis Obomsawin and fighting for Indigenous equity and awareness with Cindy Blackstock and Pam Palmater.

Indigenous icons are important figures in our communities, because they influence generations after them. Highlighting and emphasizing the talents of Indigenous icons can be a source of inspiration for young people – and people of all generations.



## RTOERO learning resources for members and district volunteers

**Governance /  
Gouvernance**

**Diversity, Equity, and  
Inclusion / Diversité,  
équité et inclusion**

**Technology /  
Technologie**

**Volunteer / Bénévole**

Have you visited the [RTOERO Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#) yet? This site provides members and district volunteers with access to webinar recordings, district volunteer training videos and more! Current resources include:

- RTOERO Foundation Webinars
- Vibrant Voices Advocacy Webinars
- Cyber Security Webinars
- Facebook training for volunteers, including:
  - Top 10 Questions, Facebook 101, Facebook 201 - Creating Content,
  - Facebook 301 - Managing Your Facebook Page,
  - Facebook 401 - Building Community
- Newsletter Writing
- Managing Your District Website
- Capturing People in Pictures
- Shutterstock User Guide

Access to the site requires a login with your RTOERO membership number, postal code and full name. The RTOERO LMS site is regularly updated with new resources, so be sure to visit often at [rtoero.ca/login-to-rtoero-learning](http://rtoero.ca/login-to-rtoero-learning).

If you have questions or require assistance, please email [elearning@rtoero.ca](mailto:elearning@rtoero.ca)

## Driving after turning 80



It is important to accept the fact that as we age our driving ability can change. Granted, we all age differently and aging does not automatically equal partial or total loss of driving abilities; however deteriorating health conditions, decreased vision, impaired hearing and slower motor reflexes, including the reduction of strength and coordination, can affect our ability to safely control a vehicle. This is why each province and territory has guidelines regarding driver licensing for older Canadians, as well as driver programs intended to keep seniors driving for as long as they can safely do so. These guidelines vary based on where you live.

For example, in **Ontario** once a driver has reached 80 years of age, the driver's license renewal process takes on a different form. **Every two years, the driver must:**

- Take a vision test
- Undergo a driver record review
- Participate in a 45-minute group education session during which there are 2 short in-class screening assignments (non-computerized) that must be completed
- If necessary, take a road test

The process takes about 90 minutes and there is no additional cost for the driver. All requirements must be met in order to renew the license.

Signs of unsafe driving resulting from aging usually come up gradually and since the way we grow old is as unique as we are, there is no way to set one single age at which we should all stop driving. If you have already noticed a reduced capacity in any way, talk to your doctor and perhaps to your family about your concerns.

*[Article courtesy of Johnson Inc.](#)*

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## RTOERO STAFF PROFILE



**Name:** Mike Prentice

**Title:** Executive Director,  
RTOERO Foundation

**How long have you been at RTOERO?** 5 years

**How do you help RTOERO Members?**

I ensure that the work of the RTOERO Foundation is aligned with the strategic goals of RTOERO as a whole.

The foundation offers members a way to participate in unique philanthropic programs that makes us all proud of our collective effort to build a better future for older adults. I also focus on strengthening transparency and accountability by sharing the foundation's impact with our donors and with all members.

**What do you enjoy most about working at RTOERO?** RTOERO and the RTOERO Foundation have created a rare professional environment that genuinely cares about its employees and values their opinions. The senior leadership team at RTOERO and the RTOERO Foundation, including both boards of directors trust the staff to make smart decisions and empowers them to drive the organization forward in a way that is consistent with its vision and mission.

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