

# Kettlebell helps people swing into new form of fitness routine

By MELISSA SCHULTE

Diane Salettel, owner of the new Kettlebell Studio in downtown Chagrin Falls, is training people of all fitness levels in an exercise once used exclusively by the Russian military.

The kettlebell, or "girya" in Russian, has been gaining popularity in the United States since Pavel Tsatsouline, a former Russian special forces trainer, defected from the Russian Army and brought his passion to the states in 2000. Now the U.S. military, professional athletes, celebrities and average fitness-minded people are incorporating the kettlebell into their workout routines.

A kettlebell is a cast-iron weight in the shape of a cannonball with a flat bottom handle on top. The basic kettlebell exercise is the "swing," where the body starts in a squat position and the weight is swung backwards between the legs then thrust forward to chest level.

On his Web site, Mr. Tsatsouline states that kettlebells "deliver extreme all-around fitness, and no single other tool does it better."

Mrs. Salettel is a firm believer in this philosophy, she said. "Instead of wasting time doing single joint and muscle exercises for 20 minutes each, with kettlebells, you get an aerobic and strength-building, total body workout in 20 minutes."

Working as a personal trainer for eight years, Mrs. Salettel started swinging kettlebells and using them with her clients two years ago. Since then, she has trained and earned her kettlebell certification under the guidance of Mr. Tsatsouline. She is one of three instructors in Ohio to have attained a second-level Russian kettlebell certificate.

She believes the advantage of training with kettlebells comes from the off-center structure of the weight, Mrs. Salettel said. "Most everything we deal with in life is off-balance. We need to strengthen the ligaments and

tendons that support our everyday functions."

Before kettlebells, she used truck tires, kegs and large rubber bands in her training routine to achieve the off-center weight that a kettlebell provides. "I never use weight machines, treadmills, or ellipticals. To put someone on a treadmill for 15 minutes, you might as well be robbing them," Mrs. Salettel said.

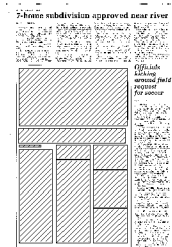
Lauren Krupar, a 25-year-old master's student and a former competitive swimmer, is a client at the new Kettlebell Studio. "I've done different weight training before, and I just got so bored," she said. "I don't think I've ever done anything the same since coming to kettlebell classes. It's always different all around, which makes it more fun."

Although an athletic background might help when a person begins kettlebell training, it is not necessary according to Mrs. Salettel. Her clients come from a wide spectrum of backgrounds and ages, she said. "Anybody can do a kettlebell workshop. Currently, I have my daughter, who's a 10-year-old, swinging, and my oldest client is around 53. I've seen people much older than that swinging kettlebells, and the training keeps them healthy and young."

When she starts working with a client, Mrs. Salettel takes them through a "functional movement screen." During this process, she analyzes what areas the person needs to work on and also what limitations they might have due to injuries, she said. "I always take the client into consideration and build a routine that works for them."

An example of how the screening process benefits her clients is seen in Dan Ross. "I have a really bad back," he said. "When I do kettlebells, it strengthens my whole core, so I don't have the bad back anymore."

Mrs. Salettel's emphasis on personal attention is evident in the



small size of the kettlebell group sessions. With a maximum number of six participants, she is able to watch her clients closely as they run through a progression of squats, swings, cleans, snatches and other kettlebell exercises.

Before enrolling in a group session, Mrs. Salettel requires that people attend a kettlebell workshop, which costs \$25 for 1 1/2 hours. In the workshop, she teaches clients the basic techniques of the kettlebell and ensures that each person is doing the movements properly to avoid injury, she said. She also offers personal training sessions.

She believes the amount of classes

a person should attend per week depends on their fitness goals, she said. "If you're a professional athlete, obviously, you would train more often. If you're a busy mom who wants to fit into a dress, lose a couple pounds and do a kick-butt workout that doesn't take you away from the kids for too long, then kettlebells three days a week will get you to your goal."

In his training videos, Mr. Tsatsouline said you do not have to be a Russian soldier to participate in kettlebell training. "Hard comrades of all persuasions" can train with the Russian weight, he said.

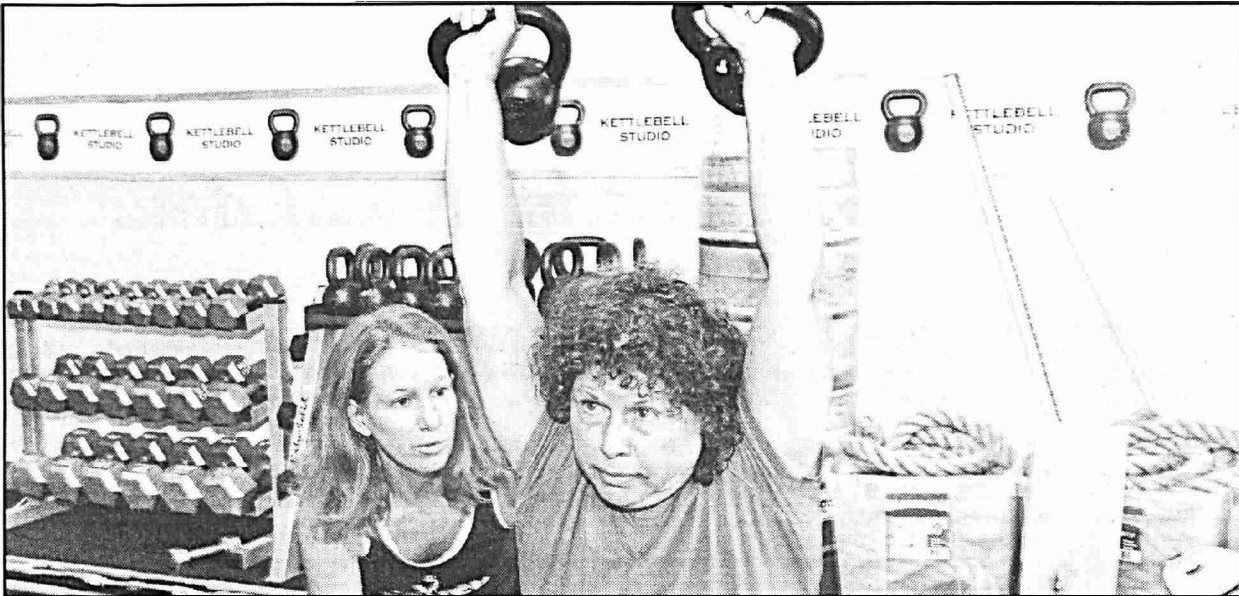


Photo by Itamar Gat

Diane Salettel instructed Susie Orchen, of Solon, in the proper use of kettlebells at her new Kettlebell Studio in downtown Chagrin Falls.