

The Blossom Bulletin

March & April 2022



Ways
that we

UNPLUG

We love our computers, TVs, tablets, and smart phones, but ***did you know*** that too much screen time can actually be hazardous to your physical, mental, and emotional health? So, put those devices away as often as you can! **Need inspiration? Here are some staff suggestions of ways to unplug:**

MEDITATION

Prayer

Listening to calming sounds

Mindfulness with the Verv app

Guided meditations on YouTube or Spotify

Sitting in silence to get in tune with your internal clock

JOURNALING

Prayer
journaling

Writing future
goals

Gratitude
journaling

Journaling
thoughts and
reflections

READING A GOOD BOOK

Then She Was Gone by Lisa Jewell

Behind Closed Doors by B. A. Paris

Verity and It Ends With Us by Colleen Hoover

Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine by Gail Honeyman

Untamed by Glennon Doyle

The Stand by Stephen King

Inca Gold by Clive Cussler

Watchers by Dean Koontz

The Wolf Gift by Anne Rice

The Lord of The Rings by J.R.R. Tolkien

Harry Potter by J.K. Rowling

A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towle

The 7½ Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle by Stuart Turton

The Starless Sea by Erin Morgenstern

Classics by Jane Austen and Nathaniel Hawthorne

Anything by V.E. Schwab, Grady Hendrix, Stephen King, Priscilla Shirer, Joyce Myers, or Easton Ellis

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Hiking in Mount Hope Cemetery in Rochester, NY when the weather is nice

Take a trip to Buttermilk Falls in Ithaca, NY, or Beaver Lake Nature Center in Baldwinsville, NY

Try walking or hiking at Tryon park, Buckland Park, Lucien Moren Trail, Highland Park, or Cobbs Hill, all in Rochester, NY

Walk around your neighborhood or a local park

Visit the beach

Go swimming, play tennis, ride a bike, or try roller skating

Trails by the beach for running

Adventure in Letchworth State Park, state land in Tuscarora/Sonyea, or state land in Hemlock and Canadice

EXERCISE

Aerobics

Walking

Hiking

Yoga

Dancing

Biking

Running

Weight lifting

EmbodiaFit.com for
online classes

ARTS AND CRAFTS

Crochet

Drawing

Ceramics

Photography

Sewing

Wall Murals

Coloring books

Wreath Making

Cross-stitching

Refinishing furniture

Kids arts & crafts



Blossom Bulletin Board

Holiday Closures

Blossom offices will be closed:
Friday, April 15 for Good Friday.



Congratulations on your New Position!

Dan Oonk, QA Generalist
Sarah-Catherine Sargeant, Health Homes Supervisor

Welcome to Blossom!

Jessica Appel, Marketing Coordinator
Yomarie Morales, HR/Recruiting Administrative Assistant
Michael Rapp, Financial Business Analyst
José Santiago, Health Homes Care Manager
Stacie Schwager, HR Generalist
Mikayla Smith, Health Homes Care Manager

Welcome, New Blossom Field Staff!

Adela M., Alexis F., Angela J., Brontejah H.
Chloe G., Dilia R., Elizabeth C., Giona H.,
Gregina R., Jayona H., Jazmine D., Joann G.,
Julie P., Kamia H., Lorraine M., Shakema R.,
Shaswalliah S.

2021 4TH QUARTER CORE VALUE CHAMPIONS

1	EXTENDING THE FAMILY	Emily Briggs	
2	GET IT DONE	Zak Wallace	
3	LEAD WITH HEART	Angela Gioia	
4	SOLVE THE PROBLEM	Aurora Vega	
5	LITTLE FUNNIES :)	Kierra Martin	

Donate for Denim

Donate for Denim Recap:

In January we supported the **Yellow Tea Rose Foundation**.

In February, we raised money for **Focus on the Children**.

What's YOUR favorite charity?

Know of a charitable organization that resonates with the Blossom mission? We want to know about it! Email your suggestions to bfindlay@blossomhcs.com.

Denim Down the Line:

In March we'll be raising money for the **Brain Injury Association of New York State**, an organization whose work helps many of our clients. On March 11 we're going **BLUE** in support of brain injury awareness month. Join us by wearing blue!

In April we'll be supporting **Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of Western and Central New York** in their efforts to find a cure for Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis and improve the lives of those suffering from these diseases.

Usually, the State of the Company is a review of the last quarter, but this time I'd like to do something a little different. For the past two years, the pandemic has taxed every part of our lives, and its effects on our morale weigh heavily on me. I want to let each of you know how much I appreciate you, not just as employees but as individuals doing their best in the midst of unprecedented challenges.

Aides: You are the ones showing up every day, doing whatever it takes to keep our clients safe. You're the heart of what we do, and I know how hard it's been to keep going. Thank you for your courageous, compassionate work.

Staffing: Scheduling is always a difficult job, but the pandemic has made it even more so, with daily check-ins, staffing shortages, and scheduling around COVID exposures. I want to thank Andre, Jenn, Cynthia, Aixa, Liza, and Edna for your outstanding work.

Nursing: To our amazing nursing team, Santali, Elaine, Lisa, and Alison, I can't thank you enough. I know how hard this has been—keeping all of our clients safe, taking on extra tasks, and handling a larger case load. I truly appreciate all that you do.

LHCSA Support: To Linda and Tatiana, thank you for the work you've done coordinating and making sure our clients get onboarded successfully. It's been challenging, especially since there is so much need for our services.

Office Coordinators: Selina and Amber, thank you for not only greeting everyone with your usual friendliness but for stepping up to help with tasks that are outside your normal area.

Recruiting: Lorretta and Kim, you have worked diligently to keep the company staffed despite the pandemic restrictions. Bringing each new aide on board has been a challenge and a victory. Thank you for adapting and always giving it your best.

Health Homes: To Colleen, Kayla, Sarah-Catherine, Torri, Ellen, Sabrina, Brianna, Cynthia, Brittany, Rachel, and Shalonda, I know the situations you're dealing with

are far more challenging than anything we've seen before. I appreciate your focus and your amazing work.

CDPAP: Our CDPAP team—Emily, Angela, Betzy, Marilyn, Steve, Rocio, Margie, Jennifer L. Jennifer P., Annie, and Diana—have not only faced the problems of the pandemic but have also worked through software system obstacles. Thank you for your dedication and your hard work in overcoming every challenge.

Marketing: Thank you to Brooke, Mary, Melissa, and Jessica. Despite the pandemic, you successfully launched our rebrand and continue to build relationships in the community. You are connected to who we are as a company, and it shows in the work you're producing.

COO: Thank you, Marie, for guiding our operations while learning your new role. You've done a superb job.

Finance: Molly, Kristina, Michael, and Robin have kept revenue coming in, payroll flowing, and our billing systems working. We were able to stay financially stable during unstable times, and I deeply appreciate that.

Administration/IT: Thank you to our IT and admin teams, who have faced their share of challenges. Sandi and Anzetta adapted to a new system of managing all of our records. Zak took on additional responsibilities with a positive attitude. And Laura, thank you for everything you've done to lead the

team through intense challenges.

HR: To the HR department, a big thank you! Kelly and Kierra, you showed dedication and stepped up when it was really needed. Aileen, you've taken on the challenge of leadership better than I could have hoped.

Education: Thank you, Katie, Wanda, and Aurora. You found a way to keep trainings going, adapt to whatever was needed, and do it all with a positive attitude.

QA: To our outstanding QA team, Molly, Dan, and Tori, you've been a steady support to the rest of the company throughout this challenging time. I truly appreciate it.

The past two years have forced every one of us to step up, step in, and solve the problem. The unrelenting effort you've put into this company, however, has taken its toll, and I want you to know that I understand how hard this has been. I see how much you've given. Someday, we'll get back to some kind of normal, but in the meantime, I want to make sure you know that I appreciate each one of you.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you.





SPRING CLEANING:

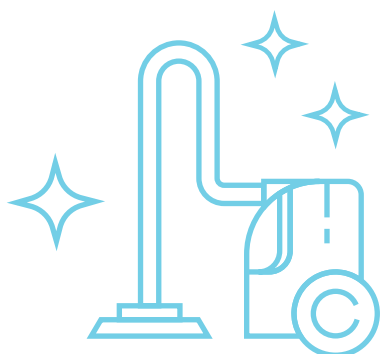
GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH!

BY MARY WOJCIECHOWSKI

WE ALL KNOW how beneficial spring cleaning can be for our floors, furniture, and closets, but the advantages extend beyond the home. Spring cleaning can actually be good for your health in a number of surprising ways!

RESPIRATORY AND IMMUNE HEALTH

A house filled with dust, mold, and pet dander is a house filled with respiratory risk. The best way to reduce the risk is a thorough cleaning of your home. Be sure to clean under beds, in closet corners, behind furniture, and along baseboards. Also, don't forget to clean those kitchen appliances where food splatters can sometimes host mold and bacteria. A good spring cleaning can support a healthy immune system!



SAFETY

Spring cleaning is a perfect time to safeguard your home from potential problems. Add these tasks to your spring cleaning checklist:

- Check and replace the batteries in your smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, and flashlights.
- Get rid of expired medications, ointments, and food.
- Make sure your walkways are clear of clutter and cords to prevent injuries.

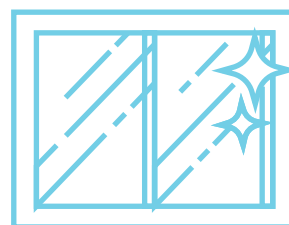


DUST MITES are microscopic bugs that feed on the dead skin cells that fall off our bodies every day. Dust mites are common in most homes and, generally, don't do any harm. People with allergies or asthma, however, can experience problems with dust mites. To reduce risk, dust regularly, wash your sheets weekly, put a protective cover on your mattress, and reduce the number of soft, humid places where dust mites can grow.

KEEP YOUR DESK NEAT! With more people working from home, the home office is an important space to keep clean. According to a Princeton University study, clearing the clutter from your home work space can help improve your focus and make you more productive.

IMPROVED MOOD

When it comes to clutter, many studies have proven its negative effects on mental health. Disorderly surroundings can lead to feelings of anxiety, depression, and stress. On the other hand, a clean, tidy environment can lead to feelings of calm, confidence, and happiness. Spring cleaning is a great time to create an environment that will support a healthy sense of self-worth. But don't just tidy during the spring—making time to clean a little each day can help reduce stress.



BETTER HABITS

According to the Journal of Neuroscience, your brain processes information more easily in a tidy environment than in an untidy one. That means a good spring cleaning can help you form better habits, like exercising and eating healthy foods. In fact, a study conducted at the University of Minnesota showed that people in orderly spaces were more likely to make healthier food choices than those in cluttered, disorderly spaces.



YOU CAN'T CLEAN CLUTTER! Start your spring cleaning with a thorough decluttering. Go through your house, room by room, with a trash bag and three boxes labeled "Donate," "Recycle," and "Put Away." After decluttering, take out the trash and deal with the three boxes as necessary. Be sure to actually get those donation items out of the house. Don't just put that box somewhere else to deal with later!

SLEEP

Believe it or not, a clean and tidy home can even improve your sleep. According to the National Sleep Foundation, a tidy bedroom, clean sheets, and fresh air (free of allergens) can lead to better, more restful sleep.



NEED DONATION CENTER SUGGESTIONS? The Health Homes team suggests:
Monroe County: Asbury Storehouse, Matthew's Closet, and the House of Mercy.
Livingston County: Finder Keepers (household items) and Pleasant Valley Baptist church - Lydia's Closet (clothing).
Ontario County: Open Closet in Naples and Treasure Trove in Canandaigua. Also, the Health Homes department collects dishware, small appliances, and unused hygiene products for clients. (no clothing).

IF KEEPING YOUR HOME CLEAN can make you happier, safer, and healthier, then what are you waiting for? It's time to dust, declutter, and clean your way to a healthier you!



January 2022

TONI FELTON

as long as
I can

JANUARY AIDE OF THE MONTH

Toni Felton is more than an aide to her clients—she is a companion, social worker, life coach, chef, and friend. She is devoted to her clients and loves to do whatever it takes to help them thrive. “I pray every day that I can keep doing this job as long as I can,” she says.

“I PRAY EVERY DAY THAT I
CAN KEEP DOING THIS JOB
as long as I can.”

Although Toni has long been interested in the health-care industry, home care was not her first career. After starting a medical records program at a community college, she opted instead to take a job in the field of electronics manufacturing, where she eventually rose to the position of Quality Inspector. Eventually, due to factory layoffs, Toni went back to college, earning her associate's degree in medical assisting and her bachelor's degree in health information management. A desk job, however, was not in the cards for Toni.

Over the years, she had discovered a passion for caregiving. In addition to raising three children, she took care of her parents as well as other senior friends, assisting them with shopping, appointments, and transportation. When her boyfriend's father needed help at home, Toni was the one who dutifully took care of him twice a day for two years until his death. So, after earning her degree, instead of a desk job, she turned to home care.

Toni believes the most important part of home care is

restoring the client's sense of independence. “When I was taking care of my mother, I saw how she was an independent woman and how she had a hardship of giving that up. I see that now with the different clients I have.” She has seen clients who find it hard to accept their limitations and others who are so despondent they don't even try to do the things they still can. Toni gives all of them her own special combination of encouragement, honesty, and, sometimes, tough love. “They have choices,” she says, “even though, at times, they feel like they don't. I let them know they still do.”

“THEY HAVE CHOICES, EVEN THOUGH,
AT TIMES, THEY FEEL LIKE THEY DON'T.
I LET THEM KNOW THEY *still do.*”

Toni also has a talent for helping her clients to blossom. She introduces them to new foods and recipes. She helps them communicate their needs to their families. She also makes friends with the clients' pets. “I learned to acknowledge the pets, because they treat them like members of the family, their babies. When I come in the door, I'm practically carrying on a conversation with the pet.”

Toni considers herself the barrier between older adults who need help and nursing homes. Her work at Blossom is to keep people safe in their own homes for as long as she can. She takes pride in restoring her clients' independence, and it's a job she hopes to do for as long as she can. We hope so too, Toni. ■



IN 2014, OUR FEBRUARY AIDE OF THE MONTH, Wanda

Perez, made a move that would change her life. At the urging of her father, she immigrated to Rochester, NY from the Dominican Republic. Her father wanted a better life for her, and his wish was granted in the beautiful life Wanda has made for herself. After moving to Rochester, she eventually found Blossom and a career in compassion.

“ME ENCANTA MI TRABAJO.
HACER ESTE TIPO DE TRABAJO
te cambia la vida.”

Despite the challenges of moving to a new country, Wanda was determined to work hard. Her first job was doing housekeeping and laundry. Then, in 2019, a friend suggested home care. Wanda applied to Blossom (then known as CCOR) and was hired. She soon found home care to be deeply enriching.

“Me encanta mi trabajo. Haciendo este tipo de trabajo te cambia la vida. (*I love my work. Doing this kind of work changes your life.*)” According to Wanda, home care work requires patience and love. In order to provide the proper care, one must develop these qualities. Working in home care has given her a greater love of people, which has enriched her life in many ways.

Difficult situations do come up in home care, but Wanda's secret weapon is the Blossom staffing team. They are always there for her with solutions to help her be the best she can be. “Siendo parte de Blossom, sé que puedo

February 2022
Wanda Perez
**MOVING
FORWARD**

depender de mi departamento de programación para que me apoye cuando sea necesario. (*Being part of Blossom I know I can depend on my scheduling department to support me when necessary.*)”

Wanda's life path has taught her another important life lesson: responsibility. She has successfully overcome the

challenges of moving to a new country and learning new skills. In doing all of this, she has learned how to move forward in life with courage and confidence. One of her proudest achievements was reaching her goal of becoming a citizen of the United States in November 2021. “La vida no es un juego. La vida es una responsabilidad. Cuando seas responsable, se te abrirán grandes oportunidades. (*Life is not a game. Life is a responsibility. When you are responsible, you will have great opportunity open up for you.*)”

“LA VIDA NO ES UN JUEGO. LA VIDA
ES UNA responsabilidad.”

When she's not working, Wanda enjoys a simple, quiet life at home. She values her alone time and enjoys reading and watching TV. She believes that to move forward in life you cannot be surrounded by many things at the same time, only what is necessary.

Every day Wanda lovingly endeavors to make her life and the lives of her clients better. No matter what the situation may be, Wanda rises to the challenge. Every day we are more and more proud and grateful to call Wanda a member of our Blossom family. ■

La version en espanol la puedes encontrar en:
<https://www.blossomnhcs.com/post/february-2022-aide-of-the-month-wanda-perez>



SAFETY CORNER



Distracted Driving By Molly Dillon

What is distracted driving?

Distracted driving is any activity that diverts attention from driving. Some examples include:

- Eating and drinking
- Talking or texting on your phone
- Fiddling with the radio
- Operating a navigation system

According to the United States Department of Transportation, texting while driving is the most alarming distraction. Sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for five seconds. At 55 mph, that's like driving the length of an entire football field with your eyes closed! Any non-driving activity you engage in while behind the wheel increases your risk of crashing.

What are the statistics?

- In 2019, 3,142 people were killed in motor vehicle accidents involving distracted drivers.
- 15% of all police-reported motor vehicle traffic crashes

- in 2019 were reported as distraction-affected crashes.
- In 2019, there were 566 nonoccupants (pedestrians, cyclists, and others) killed in distraction-affected crashes.
- The National Safety Council estimates that cellphones are involved in 26% of all traffic crashes.

(Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the National Safety Council)

Why is this important at Blossom?

According to OSHA, distracted driving is the number one cause of work place deaths in the United States.

Because most Blossom employees drive as part of their job, it is important to remain free of distraction to limit the risk of accidents. It is tempting to accept phone calls or check your messages while on the go, but it is important to resist this urge, as cell phone use while driving, even hands-free, has been shown to increase the risk of having an accident by eight times. Phone calls and messages can wait—the safety of Blossom employees, clients, families, and friends is more important than any phone call or text message.



Hey! Did you hear about the **Employee Referral Bonus Program?**

ka-ching! \$\$\$

YEAH! Now through April 1, we could get **\$1000** for ourselves **and** the referred employee!!!

Call the office or pick up a bonus program flyer for more information.

Stay up to date on all of our latest news, events, and more! Visit BlossomMHCS.com, and follow us on social media!



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HIPAA violations & fraud must be reported.

Our Compliance Officer is Molly Dillon:
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