

# THE HEARTBEAT

HEARTLAND HEALTH & WELLNESS FUND

SPRING 2022

EDITOR: CHARLOTTE KYLE/COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

## IN THIS ISSUE:

*Member Spotlights*

*Spring Cleaning – For Your Teeth!*

*Tips For Stress Relief*

*... AND MORE!*



# In This Issue...

The Heartbeat newsletter is all about YOU, the participants of the Heartland Health & Wellness Fund. In this issue, we're spotlighting a team of participants who understand teamwork makes the dream work! After you've learned how this Troy, Ohio, deli/bakery department keeps things running smoothly on **page 3**, check out **page 4** for tips on reducing stress.

There's A LOT going on this season, so it's easy to grab a soda for a midday pick-me-up. Do you ever think about how much sugar is in that drink? Check out **page 5** where our wellness coordinators provide a bottle demonstration to help you consider alternatives.

You can't think about spring without thinking about

spring-cleaning. Don't worry – we're not asking you to tackle the storage system in your closet. That mess can stay your little secret, and we won't tell anyone. Instead, we're encouraging you to schedule your dental cleaning. Communications Director Charlotte Kyle shares her own recent dental struggles on **page 6** as a cautionary tale, so take advantage of those dental benefits.

Wellness Coordinator Misty Kessler cooks up delicious paninis at home, so check out the chicken panini recipe on **page 7** and then come up with your own!

Have a wellness story, a recipe or any other feedback regarding the Heartbeat newsletter? Email Charlotte at [CharlotteK@ufcwbenefitplan.com](mailto:CharlotteK@ufcwbenefitplan.com) with your thoughts.

## SPRING: Stop and Smell the Flowers

The floral departments have been BUSY this spring with Easter, Mother's Day, proms and high school or college graduations all happening at once.

Wellness Coordinators Erin Gebhardt and Misty Kessler took time to stop and smell the roses while visiting Heartland participants on the job. Erin stopped in at store 832 in Springfield, Ohio, to admire their beautiful floral display for Easter, while Misty wanted to recognize the hard work of store 356 (Middletown) in Louisville, Kentucky.

The Middletown store handcrafts the famous rose garland that is draped over the winning horse for the Kentucky Derby. This stunning and famous garland consists of approximately 460 roses and has been made by Kroger since 1987. The 10- to 12-hour process is an event open to the public to watch.

Congratulations to our Heartland florists for their wonderful work on this iconic garland – and a special shout-out to Rich Strike for winning that prized floral arrangement this year!



(above) Terri Smith poses in front of her Easter floral display with Newt Thornsbury in store 832. (below) Shanna Sergeon and Madeline Smith at store 356, the Louisville location where the Derby garland is handcrafted.



# TEAM SPOTLIGHT

Erin Gebhardt – Ohio Wellness Coordinator

*In each issue, the Heartland Health & Wellness Fund's team of wellness coordinators features a participant or team with a story to tell. If you want to share your story or suggest a friend's story, email CharlotteK@ufcwbenefitplan.com.*

We often say, "I see my co-workers more than I see my own family." The people we work with are a big part of our lives. We spend a lot of time together! It doesn't matter what kind of work you do – it could be any industry position.

Regardless of your daily tasks, the people in your work environment play a significant role in your emotional well-being. In addition, our co-workers become long-term relationships and, just like any other lasting relationship, we experience ups and downs, good days and bad days and even major life events together.

When I met the deli/bakery team at Kroger store 984 in Troy, Ohio, I was truly impressed by their genuinely positive attitude, and I asked, "Why are you all so happy?!" The answer over and over again was, "We have a really great department lead, we always support each other and we don't allow any drama."

After speaking with everyone, I took away several important messages that are key to a positive work environment and good mental health.

## It starts with great leadership

The department lead treats each person with trust and respect. Bambi Wagner leads her crew by setting a positive example. Bambi said she also has a wonderful relationship with store managers, and this support from management allows her to create a positive environment for her team.

## Acknowledge strengths and weaknesses

A team works best together when each member plays to their strengths and supports each other's weaknesses. This department has it down!

## No drama and no gossip

When drama and gossip enter the scene, trust and respect lose their place. It is so important to avoid the negative social interactions that can cause a chain reaction. This department does not tolerate drama or gossip.

Bambi said she could not be more proud of her department, and it's easy to see why. These participants love their work because they have love for each other, and it really shows!

Our mental health is deeply affected by our social relationships and our co-workers are a big part of that, so let's all make a big effort to support each other.



- » **Lee** absolutely loves chatting with customers and customers will come in just to say hi!
- » **Laura is Bambi's right hand and can even finish her sentences.**
- » **Sarah** is Bambi's left hand and keeps work fun.
- » **Billy** is the best cook.
- » **Denise** provides vital overnight support, and daytime folks couldn't do it without her.
- » **Carl** keeps everything organized.
- » **Susan** will compliment your singing – a very important job!
- » **Michael** will do absolutely anything for you.
- » **Shirley** is always there for emotional support – she was an incredible support when Bambi lost her mother just a few months ago.
- » The night crew – **Jacob, Sonya, Beth and Nate** – are so dependable, Bambi said she doesn't worry about a thing after her shift.



# ARE YOU FEELING

# STRESSED?

Stress is a part of being human, but that doesn't mean we have to let it rule our lives. There are quick and uncomplicated ways to de-stress that we can fit into our busy lives. Reducing stress may help improve cardiovascular, digestive, immune and overall health.\* Listed below are options that may offer relief from the everyday stresses of life. As always, consult with your physician before beginning any exercise program.

**EXERCISE REGULARLY** The Mayo Clinic suggests at least 30 minutes a day of moderate exercise. Pick an activity you enjoy like walking or biking, even if you only do 10 to 15 minutes some days. Movement is good for the soul!

**MEDITATE/BREATHING** There are quite a few free apps available to help you with meditating. These include Insight Timer, Smiling Mind and Healthy Minds Program. There are also popular apps that require a subscription, like Calm and Headspace. Simple breathing exercises may help also with sleeping.

**TALK, TALK, TALK** Sometimes getting the words out can be a huge weight off of your shoulders. Find a trusted friend or family member that you know you can vent to. You may be surprised at how more relaxed you feel.

**LAUGH** Per the Mayo Clinic, laughing can release endorphins which can stimulate our organs and smooth tension. So, pop in your favorite comedy movie or share a silly joke with a friend. You'll feel better!

**UNPLUG!** We love to stay connected to our friends and know what is going on in our world, whether it be news or entertainment. However, too much information can be overwhelming and stressful. Try to limit your time on social media when possible and unplug before bedtime to get a restful night's sleep.

\*Information provided by the Mayo Clinic. Visit [www.mayoclinic.org](http://www.mayoclinic.org) for more information.

Wellness Coordinator Misty Kessler talked about stress relief with Heartland participants from UFCW 227 during her visits to Kroger stores. Jacqueline Miller from store 309 in Louisville, Kentucky, said she loves to walk and work out to alleviate stress. It must be working, because Misty said she always sees Jackie and her smiling face when she visits the store! Jonathan Stone from store 721 in Lexington, Kentucky, said he does not experience much stress because he meditates daily, a 15-minute habit he's had since he was 17 years old.

**COORDINATOR CORNER**



*Misty & Jonathan*



*Misty & Jacqueline*

more than

# A SPOONFUL OF SUGAR!

Sugar can hide in plain sight, and our wellness coordinators Erin Gebhardt and Misty Kessler are spreading the word about cutting back on sugar.

As part of a demonstration, Erin and Misty filled a soda bottle with the equivalent amount of white sugar found in the average regular soda to demonstrate exactly what folks are drinking when they grab a cold one.

At Kroger store number 762 in Clarksville, Indiana, Misty spoke with Sam who drinks around three 20 oz. Coca-Colas a day to "keep her going." She was shocked by the bottle Misty had.

A 20 oz. of Coke has 65 grams of sugar in it, Misty said, which is almost 16 teaspoons worth. Per the American Heart Association, the recommended amount of sugar is 24 grams for women and 36 grams for men per day.

Based on that information, Sam said she was inspired to start cutting down on how many she consumes each day, even hoping to cut back to one per week. Misty's recommendations for reaching that goal? Baby steps.

"I suggested to her that she start by cutting back slowly, perhaps instead of three per day, starting off with two and a half for two weeks and see how she progresses," Misty said. "If she feels ready, cut down to two per day for the next two weeks, etc., until she reaches her goal. She was excited to try this."

With any changes to your habits, starting with small goals is key and don't forget to always discuss diet changes with your health care provider.



Jason & Dave

Misty took her sugar bottle to store 743 in Louisville, Kentucky. Local 227 union representative Dave Manco showed the bottle to participant Jason Kayse, which made him reconsider his daily soda choice. At store 817 in Wilmington, Ohio, Amelia Gardner and Alyssa Richardson examined the sugar bottle and told Erin how Starbucks offers many ways to lower the sugar content in their beverages.



Amelia & Alyssa



# SPRING CLEANING

According to the American Dental Association, 100 million Americans fail to see a dentist each year, but regular dental visits can prevent oral health problems or identify them earlier when treatment may be simpler and more affordable.

In fact, every dollar you spend on preventive care, such as brushing and dental cleanings, may save you money later in restorative care and emergency procedures.

If you're enrolled in dental benefits through Heartland\*, you are eligible for two oral exams and cleanings per year. These services are covered at 100% if you

visit an in-network dentist. By catching problems early and by cleaning any plaque buildup that can cause cavities, you can avoid spending more time and money later.

Don't have a dentist? Don't worry; you're not alone. Until last year, I did not have a regular dentist. Between moving, the pandemic and life in general, I did not make my dental health a priority. This was a mistake, as a broken crown led to me scrambling to find an in-network dentist.

I have a regular dentist now who I am very comfortable with, so going to the dentist is no longer an anxiety-inducing

experience.

While I've spent more money to fill cavities now than I would have spent visiting the dentist over the years, I can move forward knowing my cleanings are scheduled, my flossing habit has increased and my dentist is proud of my gum health!

If any of this sounds familiar to you, find a dentist now. Schedule that exam, schedule that cleaning and take advantage of these services. It's never too late to get started.

\*Heartland participants employed by Dawn do not have Heartland-provided dental benefits and should consult their employer's benefit information for dental coverage details. However, regardless of who provides your dental coverage, it is still important to maintain regular appointments and cleanings.

## FIND A DENTIST

- 1) Visit [deltadentaloh.com/hhwf](http://deltadentaloh.com/hhwf)
- 2) Select FIND A DENTIST
- 3) On the next page, select *Delta Dental PPO* and *Delta Dental Premier*
- 4) Select YES to search by location and click to find a dental provider

## Quick Bites

Between dental visits, here are tips to help you take care of your smile:

- ✕ Brush twice a day for two minutes each time and floss daily. This is the best way to fight tooth decay and gum disease.
- ✕ Sugary beverages can wreak havoc on your smile, so try to limit your intake of soda pop and sports and juice drinks. Make water your beverage of choice.
- ✕ Trash the tobacco. It increases your risk of oral cancer, gum disease, tooth decay, tooth loss and gum infections.
- ✕ Replace your toothbrush every three to four months and after you've been sick. Using a toothbrush after a cold will let those nasty germs live on.

Story by Charlotte Kyle – Communications Director.  
Additional information and Quick Bites provided by Delta Dental.

# RECIPE FROM *the Heartland*

## A Spring Chicken Panini

selected by *Misty Kessler*  
Wellness Coordinator

"What have y'all been cooking and eating lately?" I asked our wellness program team. "I want something that feels fresh, like spring. Also, it has to be easy to cook. I can't do anything complicated."

Coordinator Misty Kessler said she throws together different paninis using ingredients on hand without following a specific recipe. No panini press, just making it on the stove and smashing it down flat.

"Perfect," I said. "I can make stuff up."

With fresh red peppers and spinach, plus healthy skinless chicken, this warm sandwich can renew your strength and spirit this season.



## Instructions

1. Cut chicken into bite-sized chunks.
2. Dice red pepper.
3. Sauté chicken and red pepper together until chicken is cooked.
4. Add cheese of choice to your bread. The number of slices may vary based on bread and cheese, but it's best to cover bread.
5. In a pan or skillet, top bread and cheese with chicken and diced red peppers.
6. Once cheese has started to melt, add spinach and join bread slices.
7. No panini press? No problem! Use a spatula or the bottom of a clean pan to press your sandwich down. You can get creative to get just the right amount of smash.

Serve warm and, for fresher flavor, dip in tomato sauce.

## Ingredients

- 2 small skinless, boneless chicken breasts
- 1 red bell pepper
- handful of spinach
- 2 to 4 slices of cheese of choice
- 2 slices of bread of choice
- (optional) tomato or pasta sauce for dipping



The joy of cooking and "making it up as you go" is that you can choose the ingredients that suit your life. Pick your favorite bread or the bread on sale at the bakery. Try different cheeses to see what flavors you prefer! Misty and I both used provolone cheese, but she used a ciabatta bread soaked in olive oil, and I used slices from a loaf of bread baked with rosemary and olive oil.



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**PENSION OFFICE:**

Contact your local UFCW for information

**PRE-CERTIFICATION:**

HealthLink: 877.284.0102

**ANTHEM:**

Find a Doctor: 800.810.2583

Website: [anthem.com](http://anthem.com)

Plan: Blue Access PPO

**DELTA DENTAL OF OHIO:**

Find a Dentist: 800.524.0149

Website: [deltadentaloh.com](http://deltadentaloh.com)

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All CVS employees:

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Express Scripts 800.467.2006

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