From the president…

The front page of our local paper sums it well. **Holidays at home.** Yes, it’s like no other. We face the real possibility of our usual holiday traditions put on hold or in some cases, some will cautiously gather with family. One thing is certain, COVID-19 is real and cases are rapidly increasing. Yes, people have COVID fatigue but my “bucket list” isn't complete, so I am socially distancing, wearing a mask and sanitizing.

Hopefully, the new year will bring a vaccine and we have some possibilities of life changing. Until then, we hope our members are taking care of themselves. We have made wellness checks on chapter members and it’s delightful to talk with many of you. Remember if you haven't received a call, your contact information is incorrect in our records.

Upcoming Events

♦

♦ Thursday, December 3rd virtual meeting **"Home for the Holidays".** Our program will include holiday music by Angela Williams and husband Jeff Tennessen. You will receive a zoom invite prior to the meeting. We do not publish a December newsletter.

♦ As per our chapter bylaws, in December the executive board will appoint the nominating committee for the 2021 officer elections. If asked to be one of the members of this committee, we encourage you to say **YES.**

♦ **As a reminder, the chapter does not meet in January.**

**Dr. Fredonia B. Williams, Chapter 260  Interim President**
WHY NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVERS MONTH IS IMPORTANT

For families whose elderly members need a little extra attention, caregiving can be rewarding, a labor of love that can be life changing in more than one way.

*Remember if you don’t take care of yourself, you can’t take care of anyone else.*

- **Caregivers need love, too**—Caregiving while still holding down an outside job is exhausting. Much of caregiving is unpaid. National Family Caregivers Month in November provides resources for self-care, advocacy, and de-stressing for our caregivers. The month is dedicated to supporting caregivers as they care for others. This year’s theme is “Caregiving Around the Clock.”

- **Learn how to cope**—National Family Caregivers Month features lots of vital information to help caregivers cope with a tough, and sometimes thankless job. There are tips for caregivers such as taking care of your own health, accepting offers of help from others, learning the skills to speak effectively with doctors, and being open to new, assistive technologies that can lighten your load. If you don’t take care of yourself, who will?

- **Check yourself for depression**—Watching a parent age or seeing someone change drastically due to illness can be devastating. Take some time to monitor your own wellbeing. If you are not sleeping well, exercising, or feel yourself becoming reclusive, speak to a professional about depression. It can hit anyone at any time. There's no shame in feeling overwhelmed.

Many family caregivers juggle home and work, often shouldering the financial as well and physical tasks of caregiving.

**Here are a few tips to ensure that you remember to relax and take care of yourself when you can.**

1. Take care of yourself first. If you are not healthy, you won't be able to provide the level of care you want to provide.

2. Find respite care when needed. You can't do everything for everyone all of the time. When you need a break, respite care may be available. If you're not yet interested in respite care, accept help when family members offer.

3. Build a support network including friends, family and other caregivers. Having individuals with a variety of experiences in your life, including those who are also family caregivers can help you to see solutions to issues you're experiencing and can help to reduce your stress levels as you connect and build relationships.

Caregiver Action Network (caregiveraction.org) offers a variety of resources for family caregivers and spearheads the annual celebration of those individuals.
What connection could there possibly be between a card game and diabetes?

The Royal London Hospital reports that for every two hours you spend watching television daily, your risk of diabetes rises by as much as 14 percent. When you play games like cards and Scrabble, you are less likely to be snacking than when you watch TV.

The hospital also found that when one spouse has diabetes, the other's risk of getting the disease is doubled. Diabetes is not contagious, but a "diabetes lifestyle" is. During November, check your own risk factors. Search the Internet for American Diabetes Month and click on the Diabetes Risk Test. If your score is high, you may have pre-diabetes. The good news is that the recent Diabetes Prevention Program study conclusively showed that people can prevent the development of type 2 by making changes in their diet and increasing their level of physical activity. They may be able to return their blood glucose levels to the normal range.

The study showed that medications may delay the development of diabetes, but diet and exercise work better. Just 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity coupled with a 5 percent to 10 percent reduction in body weight resulted a big reduction in risk.

People who have type 2 diabetes should follow their doctors' instructions to avoid the complications of diabetes: heart attacks, eye disease, nerve damage, and kidney failure.

Want something fun for your virtual Thanksgiving dinner?

According to thekitchn.com, one family covers the Thanksgiving table with butcher paper and then gives everyone a marker.

They can doodle, and give thanks, and draw pictures throughout dinner.

The creation then becomes a banner to enjoy for the day or share with your zoom family.

If you don't want to substitute butcher paper for your nice tablecloth, or if you would prefer conversation at dinner, consider hanging a large thankfulness paper on the wall or door. Attach markers so everyone can give their autograph or opinion, or drawing, or thanks.

If you want, you can clip autographs and notes off the banner and scrapbook them.

Another idea is to give the banner to the person who lives farthest away or a family friend.
We recognize member birthdays and surgery dates referred to as Mendiversaries. Congratulations to everyone who is celebrating a heart procedure anniversary this month. If we have your month listed incorrectly or you would prefer not to be listed, please notify the chapter president. If we are missing your celebration, let me know at 256.837.7354.

November Birthdays
Donnie Baldwin
Rhonda Johnston
John Sherrick
Donnette Smith
Sylvia Townsley

November Mendiversaries
Charlotte Bailes
Beverly Hunnicutt
Rhonda Johnston
Earla Lockhart
Kathy McFarland
John Phillips
Toccara Simpson
Gary Stewart

The tempting season: Thanksgiving through Christmas

It's easy to visualize. There is turkey with dressing, potatoes with butter and sour cream, ham, candied sweet potatoes, casseroles, noodles, and scalloped oysters. Then come the cakes, cookies, candy, and pies. These are just some of the delicacies you will find on the endless tables of the holiday season. You could weigh six to 10 pounds more by New Year's Day. Science comes to the rescue. Doctors at the University of Washington say your body is good at matching energy intake to energy usage. In other words, if you pay attention to how hungry you are, you'll eat about as much food as your body needs.

To avoid the temptation to eat it all, here's some good advice:

* Select a combination of protein and complex carbs at each meal. The American Dietetic Association says a good breakfast would be a boiled egg, whole grain toast with peanut butter, and skim milk.

* Have a snack like fruit or some nuts and a big glass of water before you go to the feast. Don't arrive ravenously hungry.

Modern proverbs

Age is a very high price to pay for maturity. Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to a garage makes you a mechanic. Artificial intelligence is no match for natural stupidity. A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory. A closed mouth gathers no feet. If you must choose between two evils, pick the one you've never tried before. My idea of housework is to sweep the room with a glance. Not one shred of evidence supports the notion that life is serious. It is easier to get forgiveness than permission. For every action, there is an equal and opposite government program.
Membership in Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts now is about how you can help improve the lives of heart patients and their families, beginning with your own. We are now offering a free membership level. This was created so that money will not be a barrier to engaging with Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts and receiving access to resources and information.

When you join at this level, you become part of something bigger, and you help us give voice to the many issues heart patients face throughout their lifespan. You also learn about the many educational opportunities Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts provide. Finally, you join the nation’s largest cardiovascular disease peer-to-peer support network and help us support even more people. Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts provide educational programs, peer-to-peer support programs, heart disease awareness campaigns, and we advocate for heart patients big and small every opportunity we can. We need your support to do this. To join Mended Hearts or Mended Little Hearts or renew your membership is easy and can be done online or through the mail.

To renew over the phone, please call 888-432-7899 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET. To renew through the mail, print off and fill out the membership form found in this newsletter. It can be mailed to the address for the Mended Hearts Resource Center found on the form.

We have a variety of levels of membership for both individuals and families. Please review the attached membership for the membership levels. We appreciate the response from last month’s request for joining and/or renewing your membership, so we are including the information in the rest of the 2020 newsletter issues. We really would like to see an increase in both our local chapter as well as the national chapter. An increase in membership is an increase in the number of individuals made aware of the benefits of being involved with Mended Hearts.

Mended Hearts is a national and community-based non-profit organization that has been offering the gift of hope to heart disease patients, their families and caregivers. To offer this hope Mended Hearts provides a variety of programs.

- Mended Hearts is the largest peer-to-peer heart patient support network in the world
- Mended Hearts has been offering hope and support for 69 years, providing more than 230,000 visits each year
- Mended Hearts provides education, support and hope to all types of heart patients and their families
- Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts has 265 chapters in North America, serving 460+ hospitals

*Please note, our chapter has a local dues of $10 per member. Please pay those directly to the chapter and mail to: MH 260, P O Box 18912, Huntsville, AL  35804-8912
MEMBERSHIP FORM

[ ] NEW MENDED HEARTS  [ ] NEW MENDED LITTLE HEARTS  [ ] RENEWAL

Date ____________________________

Name (Mr./Mrs./Ms.) ____________________________  Chapter/Group _______ Member-at-large _______

Address ____________________________  Phone ____________________________

City / ST / Zip ____________________________  I want to be a MH support volunteer: Yes [ ] No [ ]

Email address ____________________________  I am interested in CHD Parent Matching: Yes [ ] No [ ]

(Please check all that apply) I am a  [ ] Heart Patient  [ ] Caregiver  [ ] CHD Parent  [ ] Physician  [ ] RN [ ] Healthcare Employee [ ]

OPTIONAL INFO:  Race: [ ] Caucasian  [ ] Black  [ ] Asian  [ ] Am. Indian  [ ] Hispanic  [ ] Other ____________________________  Gender: [ ] Male  [ ] Female  [ ]

Membership Levels:  All membership levels are for ONE YEAR, renewed annually, except for Heart of Gold Lifetime Sponsorship.

Please choose your membership level and complete any appropriate payment information below.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

[ ] Associate Member --- FREE
  * Can attend any chapter meeting for MH or MLH
  * Can join online communities
  * Can access Member Portal
  * Receives the National e-newsletter

[ ] Individual Member --- $20 annual donation per person
  * All of the benefits of an Associate Member, PLUS
    * Membership Card
    * Car Decal -- Select  ___ MH or ___ MLH
    * One-time 5% off coupon for purchase from the MH store
    * One year annual subscription to Heartbeat magazine ($30 value)

[ ] Bronze Member --- $45 annual donation per person
  * All the benefits of a Full Individual Member, PLUS
    * Membership Pin
    * Choice of _____ Drawing String Backpack or _____ MLH/MLH Notes (10 pk)
    * 5% off registration of any National (not regional) MLH/MLH Conference or Symposium

[ ] Silver Member --- $100 annual donation per person
  * All the benefits of a Bronze Member, PLUS
    * A Stainless Steel Mended Hearts Travel Mug

[ ] Gold Member --- $250 annual donation per person
  * All the benefits of a Silver Member, PLUS
    * A Red Fleece Blanket
    * 10% off registration of any National Conference or CHD Symposium

[ ] Heart of Gold Lifetime Sponsor --- $1500 donation
  A one-time donation per individual
  * All the benefits of a Gold member FOR LIFE, PLUS
    * 15% off registration fees at National MH/MLH Conferences / Symposium
    * Recognition in the next Heartbeat magazine after enrolling in the Heart of Gold Lifetime Sponsorship, in all special Heartbeat issues, and on our website’s list of Heart of Gold Lifetime Sponsors

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP

For members of one household with one mailing address only

[ ] Family Membership --- $40 annual donation
  * All of the benefits of a Family Membership, PLUS
    * One Membership Pin per member
    * Choice of _____ Drawing String Backpack or _____ MLH/MLH Notes (10 pk)
    * 5% off registration of any National (not regional) MLH/MLH Conference or Symposium

Family Members:

Spouse [ ] Child [ ] Heart Patient [ ]

Spouse [ ] Child [ ] Heart Patient [ ]

Spouse [ ] Child [ ] Heart Patient [ ]

Spouse [ ] Child [ ] Heart Patient [ ]

Note: National memberships are tax deductible less $10. Lifetime sponsorships are 100% tax deductible.

If chapter dues / donations apply, they are tax deductible. Please pay the chapter directly as shown here. Please DO NOT send chapter dues to the Resource Center.

Chapter # 260  Annual Chapter Dues $10.00

Additional Chapter Donation Amount $ ____________________________

TOTAL Paid to Chapter $ ____________________________

Check payable to: MH 260
Mail to: P.O. Box 18912, Huntsville, AL 35804-8912

For Credit Card payments, call 1-888-432-7899 (1-888-HEART99)