From the President...

I had hoped at this time to be giving you a report on the patient visiting program at the hospital. However, due to the increase in the number of patients with Covid 19, the hospital has asked that we do not return to the hospital at this time.

In the meantime, the nurses in the Heart Institute are giving the patients and their families the copies of the “HeartGuide, The Journey to a Healthy Heart.” We will maintain communication with the hospital. As soon as they decide we can return, we will begin our visiting program.

Because of covid we need more accredited visitors. If you are already an accredited visitor, please make sure that your accreditation is up to date. If you would like to be an accredited visitor, please contact our Visiting Chair, Past President Dr. Fredonia Williams to learn how to become one or respond to the note below.

Full Visitor Training Session

If you are a member who would like to become an accredited visitor, or you are already a visitor who would like to take the full three-hour accreditation session again, then join us on September 15 at 1:30 PM ET for our full training on Zoom. To register for the session, please email Mandy at Mandy.Sandkuhler@mendedhearts.org.

Our next online chapter meeting will be September 16, 2021, at 6:30 pm. Burr Ingram Huntsville Hospital, Senior Vice President, Operations (Support Services) will be our guest speaker. The link to this meeting is included in this email.

Huntsville Mended Hearts 260 is celebrating 27 years of providing hope and encouragement to heart patients and their families. During the month of August, we added 21 new members to our chapter. We are looking forward to in person meeting, so we can celebrate our 27 years of success.

Lindell Smith, President
In Memory...

November 18, 1948 ~ August 20, 2021

Chapter 260 extends its deepest sympathy to Laura Mickler Walker and family on the untimely death of her husband, Carl. Carl and Laura were the patient-caregiver team for our visiting program. Carl was not just an avid Bama fan, but he was a dedicated heart patient visitor with a personality and compassion that would leave everyone in a better frame of mind after talking with him. He offered support and encouragement with a sense of humor and did so with his caregiver, Laura always visiting patients with him. Both of them visited patients and families before, during and after surgery. His personality could light up a room within a few minutes of his arrival. When Covid paused our in-hospital visiting, the chapter was provided an opportunity to visit patients in cardiac rehab because these surgery patients needed support and encouragement. Carl was one of the 3 Accredited Visitors who chose to visit patients at the rehab center. His smile, his teasing and his commitment to the visiting program is a tremendous loss to the chapter, to the hospital program and to patients.

Our third annual Creating a World of Support Fundraiser is back again! Pick your activity to complete your distance and you have one month to get it done starting on World Heart Day, September 29. You can form a team, raise funds, and participate in honor or memory of a loved one. Help us get all the way around the world together! (Watch on the virtual map to see how far we get)

Pick your distance goal of 5K, 10K, 13.1 miles (half-marathon) or 26.2 miles (full marathon).

NEW this year:
• Track your distance on your device (Fit Bit, Apple Watch, smart phone Health app, etc.) and we will keep track for you!
• You can get mileage credit for volunteer hours!
• Share pictures in our Scrapbook so people can see your accomplishments.

Each participant gets a new World of Support Wristband and a certificate. Prizes are given for individuals raising $100, $500 and $1,000. Registration opens September 15 at www.Mendedhearts.org.

Look for a special email with information on how you can the Chapter 260 team. Last year, our chapter raised over $1000 during the campaign. We can do it again with your help.
Your September landscaping to-do list

Summer comes to a close this month, and that means that it's time to get back to work in the garden. With a little time and planning each fall, you can enjoy better landscaping year after year.

* Remove faded and droopy summer annuals and replace them with hardier flowers. Pansies can take a beating through a light frost and will provide a splash of color through the fall. Mums are also a great choice.

* Plant any new evergreens during September and keep them well-watered until the ground freezes.

* Plant any new deciduous trees and shrubs. Use root-stimulating fertilizer to encourage root growth.

* Divide any overgrown spring blooming perennials and water them thoroughly after re-planting. After a hard frost, cut the perennials to the ground.

* Plant spring-blooming bulbs. Make sure to consider color and height, placing smaller bulbs toward the front of your garden where you'll be able to see them in the spring.

September is also National Cholesterol Education Month, a good time to get your blood cholesterol checked and take steps to lower it if it is high. During National Cholesterol Education Month, take some time to learn about lipid profiles and about food and lifestyle choices that help you reach personal cholesterol goals.

There is overwhelming evidence that coronary heart disease can be prevented with aggressive reduction of cholesterol levels, cessation of smoking, and controlling weight and diabetes.

September is National AFib (Atrial Fibrillation) Awareness Month

Under normal circumstances, the human heart pumps to a strong and steady beat – in fact, more than 100,000 heartbeats each day!

But if you have atrial fibrillation, or AFib, the heart doesn’t always beat or keep pace the way it should. Many people with AFib say they can feel their heart racing, fluttering or skipping beats.

AFib is the most common heart rhythm disorder (arrhythmia). A major concern with AFib is that it also makes blood clots in the heart that can travel and cause strokes or block flow to other critical organs.

If you’ve been told you have atrial fibrillation, it can be helpful to write down a list of questions to ask your heart doctor during your next visit. Some questions might include:

- Are there any foods I should avoid because of atrial fibrillation?
- What is causing my atrial fibrillation?
- What type of atrial fibrillation do I have (e.g., paroxysmal, persistent, permanent)?
- What kind of activities can I perform and what should I avoid?
- What exercise program is best for me?
- Is my atrial fibrillation hereditary?
- Has my heart been weakened by the atrial fibrillation?
- What medicines should I take to control my heart rate or control my heart rhythm?
- What is my risk of having a stroke?
- What can I do to lower my chance of having a heart attack or a stroke?
- If my heart returns to the normal rhythm, can I stop my blood thinners?
- Are there things that might trigger episodes of AFib?
- Should I have a procedure to restore a normal heartbeat?
- Do I need blood thinners to avoid a stroke? What kind (e.g., aspirin, warfarin, dabigatran, rivaroxaban)?
- Will I still feel symptoms even if I am taking medicines for atrial fibrillation?
Maybe you're just starting a walking routine or you're a walking veteran with years of brisk daily walks under your belt. Either way, it's no fun when aches and pains slow you down or even send you back to the couch. But not all pain is created equal, and while some pains are just inconvenient or uncomfortable, you should know when to call your doctor.

Heel pain is often caused by plantar fasciitis, when the band of tissue that runs from your heel to the ball of your foot is strained, according to Prevention. Pain in your heel or arch first thing in the morning is a common sign. Stretching and supportive shoes are a must, or you can try cold packs or shoe inserts, according to the Harvard Health Letter. Call your doctor if the condition persists.

Calf pain that primarily shows up on one or both sides of the lower calf may be due to spinal stenosis, a condition in which a narrowed spinal canal results in compressed nerves. According to the Harvard Health Letter, symptoms often worsen during the day, so you may choose morning walks instead of evening walks. If you experience pain while walking, take breaks until the pain subsides.

Knee pain that feels like a throbbing in front of the kneecap is often a simple case of runner's knee, according to Prevention. Try another type of exercise, like cycling or swimming, for a few weeks until the pain subsides. You might also consider some exercises to strengthen your quads and help support your knee for future activity.

Pain throughout the leg that occurs every time you start activity and stops when you finish could be a sign of peripheral arterial disease, or PAD. According to Duke Health, PAD occurs when major blood vessels that supply blood to limbs become fully or partially blocked by fatty deposits. If you're obese, a smoker, diabetic or have high blood pressure or high cholesterol, you may be at increased risk for PAD. If you have leg pain that starts and stops with activity, contact your doctor. A variety of treatments are available, and the earlier the condition is treated, the better.

Did you know?

Fitness trackers may help with weight loss goals. If you're trying to drop some weight, a fitness tracker might boost your chances of success. According to a new study published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine, fitness trackers -- such as smart watches or other bracelet-style devices -- helped overweight or obese people with chronic conditions reduce their body weight and lower their body mass index (BMI). Researchers found that weight loss programs lasting at least 12 weeks were the most effective, and individuals who wore commercially available trackers, such as a FitBit, lost an average of six pounds. According to the study, the devices helped remind participants to stay on track with health-related goals and participate in daily activity. But there's a catch -- according to the Mayo Clinic, while fitness trackers are a great way to keep yourself moving, there's no substitute for keeping your diet on track.
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.

September Birthday
- Robert Allen
- Randy Boyette
- Rebecca Grimes
- Beth Magie
- P. Dean Olive
- Edwin Rudolph
- Jill Schroeder
- Marion Terry
- Ruth Wright

September Mendiversary
- Robert Jones
- Emma Mamo
- Bob McCall
- Donald McElvea
- William McMillan
- Barbara Morris

21 added in August
- Laura Chalk
- Chris Green
- Barbara Morris

New Members!

Friendly Reminder:
If you forgot to renew your $20 or $40 for family dues last year, please do so by using the membership form and mail to:

Mended Hearts
1500 Dawson Road
Albany GA 31707

Our chapter receives 25% of dues paid.

About 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 Mission Statement: “To inspire hope and improve the quality of life of heart patients and their families through on-going peer-to-peer support, education, and advocacy.”

Vision Statement: “To be the premier nationwide resource and peer-to-peer support network for all heart patients and families affected by Heart Disease across the life span.”
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

*It’s great to be alive and to help others.*

*Please note, as of January 1, 2021, no local dues for chapters. For more information, call me at 256.837.7354.*
Effective January 1, 2021, the Resource Center will process all new memberships (all levels) and all membership renewals.

All chapters will be reimbursed 25% of all paid national dues or renewals of dues.