From the President...

In October 1621, 53 Pilgrims gathered in Plymouth, MA to celebrate the successful fall harvest along with 90 Native Americans who had helped them survive a very difficult year. As a member of Mended Hearts, we have much to be thankful for. Huntsville Hospital is now allowing us to visit the heart patients again. I have visited on two separate occasions and have gained a lot from the visits. The patients that I visited seemed very appreciative of the visits.

We can be thankful that even though we are not able to meet one another in person, we have the technology to meet with each other through our computers, phones and tablets. We appreciate those members who have joined us monthly on our zoom meetings. Elsewhere in this newsletter, you will find information on how to join us for this month’s meeting.

Again, if you would like the experience of offering support and encouragement to a heart patient and their family, please contact our chapter visiting chair, Dr. Fredonia Williams at 256.837.7354 for more information. Our Mended Hearts motto is “It’s great to be alive and to help others”.

This month is National Caregivers Month. We thank all of our caregivers who do a great job with all of us who are heart patients. Thank you so much for what you do. We appreciate you.

As we are adjusting to this new method of meeting, we will postpone our annual “Celebration of the Heart” in person Christmas event. We will however resume our monthly zoom meeting with the **January 20, 2022** meeting. Enjoy the holidays and stay safe. We look forward to seeing all of you soon in person.

**Lindell Smith, President**
The Beat Goes On—Huntsville AL Mended Hearts Chapter 260

November 18th @ 6:30

Chapter 260 November support group zoom meeting.

Please join us Thursday, November 18th @ 6:30 PM for our monthly meeting. The speaker is Tonya Hardy, Exercise Physiologist at Huntsville Hospital Cardiac Rehab. As we prepare for the holidays, Tonya will provide some very important information to help us stay on our nutritional track for the holidays and still enjoy the great holiday foods. The zoom link is included in the email message. We look forward to having you join us to learn heart healthy eating tips for the holidays.

Time to Get Your Flu Shot

This year it's more important than ever to get your flu shot. In a normal flu season, heart patients are at a greater risk of developing serious complications from the flu. This year, with COVID-19 putting people with underlying health conditions at risk, heart patients and caregivers of those with congenital heart defects (CHDs), need to be even more vigilant when it comes to protecting their health and the health of their loved ones.

For more information on how to protect yourself during flu season, visit https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/keyfacts.htm

American Diabetes Month: Researchers work to improve current diabetes treatment options

Diabetes is one of the world’s most common chronic diseases, affecting about 463 million adults worldwide. This number is expected to increase to 700 million by 2045, according to the International Diabetes Federation.

About 90 percent of these cases are type 2 diabetes, according to Nature Reviews Endocrinology. Patients with type 2 diabetes are resistant to the effects of insulin, a hormone that regulates blood sugar, or do not produce enough insulin to maintain normal blood sugar levels, according to the Mayo Clinic.

Patients who are unable to regulate their blood sugar with diet and exercise alone are usually prescribed metformin, which lowers blood sugar. However, about 30 percent of patients with type 2 diabetes do not respond to metformin and are vulnerable to other complications while their blood sugar remains elevated, according to Science Daily. Between 20 and 30 percent of patients experience side effects that are difficult or impossible to tolerate, according to Genome Web.

Swedish researchers have identified biomarkers that can show in advance, via a simple blood test, how a patient will respond to metformin, according to Science Daily. The researchers hope that this research can be further developed to help inform prescribing decisions for health care providers so patients can receive appropriate medications immediately, according to Science Translational Medicine, a publication of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.
November is National Family Caregivers Month

The Family Caregiver Alliance is shining the light on the importance of caring for caregivers, whether that means you’re caring for yourself or playing a supporting role. Taking care of someone else too often means that you’re not taking care of yourself. The Family Caregiver Alliance reports that sleep deprivation, poor eating habits and postponement or failure to make medical appointments are just a few of the ways caregivers fall short of taking care of their own health and well-being. Always remember when you prioritize your own needs, you’re better able to care for those around you.

♦ Nurture yourself regularly
♦ Sit quietly with a book.
♦ Giving yourself the gift of exercise by moving daily.
♦ Schedule your own self-care medical appointments.
♦ Seek support from friends

*When you’re supporting a caregiver, you can be a tremendous source of support and rest assured they do need your support, even if they’re not actively seeking your help. Here are a few ways to lend a hand and provide encouragement.*

♦ **Offer support, not advice.** Tell your friend you can see how hard they’re working, and then ask, “What is this like for you?” Allow him or her to share what’s on their mind-without offering tips, advice or your own personal experiences unless asked. Simply listen.
♦ **Give the gift of time.** Offer your time by saying something like, “I bet you could use a few hours to catch up on your life and I want to help you do that.”
♦ **Deliver day-brighteners.** There are countless little ways to make caregivers feel loved and appreciated: deliver a bouquet of fresh flowers, treat them to a coffee or send them supportive cards or text messages.

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**Ten Tips for Family Caregivers**

1. **Seek support from other caregivers.**
2. **Take care of your own health so you can take care of your loved one.**
3. **Accept offers of help and suggest specific things people can do to help you.**
4. **Learn how to communicate effectively with doctors.**
5. **Be open to new technologies that can help you care for your loved one.**
6. **Watch out for signs of depression and seek help if you need it.**
7. **Caregiving is hard work so take breaks when you need it.**
8. **Organize medical information so it’s up-to-date and easy to find.**
9. **Make sure legal documents are organized.**
10. **Give yourself credit for doing the best you can!**
A Thanksgiving message you can use

Being thankful: It's healthy

Reflect on your present blessings, on which every man has many, not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some.

—Charles Dickens (M. Dickens, 1897, p. 45)

If we didn't have a Thanksgiving, we would invent one because giving thanks -- feeling gratitude -- creates health and happiness.

We really don't need a study to tell us that a thankful person is just plain nicer to be around that one who is critical and displeased with everything. But that study exists anyway.

In 2003, Robert A. Emmons of the University of California, and Michael E. McCullough of the University of Miami conducted three experiments on the effect of a grateful outlook. They concluded: Results suggest that a conscious focus on blessings may have emotional and interpersonal benefits.

The lore of our own Thanksgiving Day, seasonally criticized by the critics, does offer some genuine lessons in the practice of gratefulness. The pilgrims in 1620 didn't have all that much to be grateful for. They were oppressed in England and had to leave the country. Then they sailed for the New World, where they had to literally build themselves a place to live. Half of them died the first year.

For the Pilgrims, there was plenty of hardship and death in the past, with plenty more to come that they didn't yet know about. But they did manage to set aside a day in gratitude for their hard-won harvest.

That is the thing about gratitude -- it is always about the present. You can't know what will happen tomorrow. But right now, if you have to clean up your house, be grateful for the house. If you have to make dinner, be grateful for the food. So happy Thanksgiving right now to you and yours. Be grateful.

Be polite: Don't be this person. Here are the seven most impolite things you can do at a holiday dinner or any other dinner.

1. Not acknowledge the invitation. Still show up.

2. If you are coming, say so. Make a decision.

3. Come late. Grandma spent $200 on that standing rib roast and you are an hour late for dinner.

4. Complain. If you don't like cranberries, don't take any and don't point out that you don't like them. It's also rude to show up and say you aren't hungry.

5. Watch TV. Sorry your football game is on, but you have to interact with humans. Don't plant yourself on the couch.
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
- Howard Carr
- Rhonda Johnston
- Donnette Smith
- Sylvia Townsley

November Mendiversaries
- Rhonda Johnston
- Earla Lockhart
- Kathy McFarland
- John Phillips
- Gary Stewart

Hope you’re feeling better!
Barbara Morris
Donnette Smith

Schedule a visit. You can schedule a telephone visit or a video chat visit with a trained volunteer who is a heart patient, caregiver, or a parent of a child with a heart condition just like you. To speak to someone right now, please call our toll-free number: HEARTLINE at 1-844-HEART87 (1-844-432-7887) The Visiting Center is open between 10AM and 6PM Eastern Monday through Friday and Noon to 3:00PM Eastern on Saturday. If you do not get someone, please leave a message and we will get back to you.

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.