February is American Heart Month

Every February marks the annual American Heart Month in the United States. In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson issued the first proclamation declaring February American Heart Month.

Since then, U.S. presidents have annually declared the federally designated event for February. This is a time to spotlight heart disease, by bringing awareness and sharing how to take steps to prevent this deadly disease.

The first Friday in February is National Wear Red Day, an annual campaign to raise awareness about heart disease in women. The Go Red for Women campaign started in 1964 when the American Heart Association took on the challenge of raising awareness about the Number One cause of death in women.

How Does Heart Disease Affect Women?

Despite increases in awareness over the past decades, only about half (56%) of women recognize that heart disease is their number 1 killer. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women in the United States, killing 314,186 women in 2020—or about 1 in every 5 female deaths.

What are the symptoms of heart disease for women?

Although some women have no symptoms, others may have angina (dull and heavy or sharp chest pain or discomfort), pain in the neck, jaw, or throat or pain in the upper abdomen or back.

These symptoms may happen when you are resting or when you are doing regular daily activities. Women also may have other symptoms including nausea, vomiting or fatigue.

Sometimes heart disease may be “silent” and not diagnosed until you have other symptoms or emergencies, including:

- **Heart attack**: Chest pain or discomfort, upper back or neck pain, indigestion, heartburn, nausea or vomiting, extreme fatigue, upper body discomfort, dizziness, and shortness of breath
- **Arrhythmia**: Fluttering feelings in the chest (palpitations)
- **Heart failure**: Shortness of breath, fatigue, or swelling of the feet, ankles, legs, abdomen or neck veins

If you have any of these symptoms, call 9-1-1 right away.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

A Warm Welcome to New Members
Sam Mills & Peter Zencak

Peer Support is Just a Phone Call Away
Call 509-421-3641

If you are a patient with heart disease, a caregiver of a loved one with heart disease, we are here for you -- you are not alone. Dominick Ferraro, our Greater Wenatchee Mended Hearts Visiting Program Chair, will be glad to talk with you about your heart condition and concerns.

“It’s great to be alive - and to help others!”
HEARTBEAT AWAY

February Birthdays
26 Gracie HELM

Join Mended Hearts Today
Membership is about how you can help improve the lives of heart patients and their families, beginning with your own. To find out more, contact Chuck Phelps, Membership Chairperson, at 509-860-4554 or email: membership91@nwi.net.

Help raise donations for Greater Wenatchee Mended Hearts 91
Link your Fred Meyers Rewards Card to Greater Wenatchee Mended Hearts 91 at www.fredmeyer.com/community rewards and search for us by our name. Then, every time you shop and use your Rewards card, you are helping Greater Wenatchee Mended Hearts 91 earn a donation.

Newsletter Publication
HEARTBEAT AWAY is published monthly by Greater Wenatchee Mended Hearts, Chapter 91 and printed courtesy of Confluence Health. If you have an item you would like to include in the newsletter or would like to receive the newsletter, contact Ann Diede at 509-679-8181 or email: mendedhearts91@frontier.com.

Newsletters are sent each month to our members as a benefit of Greater Wenatchee Mended Hearts membership. We also send complimentary copies for three months to recent heart patients who have requested our newsletter, meeting visitors and others considering membership.

Greater Wenatchee Mended Hearts
P.O. Box 3231, Wenatchee, WA 98807
Phone: (509) 264-7159
Email: 91President2022@nwi.net
Website: www.mendedhearts.org

OFFICERS
President—Chuck Phelps
Vice President—Phil Aamodt
Secretary—Jan Cripe
Treasurer—Dominick Ferraro

CHAIRPERSONS
Visiting Program—Dominick Ferraro
Membership—Chuck Phelps
Program—Ann Diede
Telephone—Fran Aamodt & Susan Young
Holiday Luncheon—Dominick Ferraro
Sunshine—Yvonne Dixon
Zoom Host—Gracie Helm
Fundraising—Phil Kepler

CHAPTER NEWSLETTER
Editor—Ann Diede

ACCREDITED PATIENT VISITORS
Gene Anderson
Bob & Jan Cripe
Dominick Ferraro
Nikki Johnson

The Importance of Peer Support
Peer support is what Mended Hearts is all about and is reflected in our Mended Hearts Motto: To inspire hope and improve the quality of life of heart patients and their families through ongoing peer-to-peer support, education, and advocacy.

Our goal is to support heart patients and their families by creating an inclusive and compassionate community through meaningful connections so no one feels alone. Our objectives are to offer hope and educate patients and their families about cardiovascular health, empowering them as they manage their journey.

Founded by Dr. Dwight E. Harken, The Mended Hearts, Inc. was started with four of Dr. Harken’s open heart surgery patients. In January 1951, Dr. Harken asked Doris Silliman, one of the first 50 patients to ever have heart surgery, and three other post-surgery heart patients – Keith Otto, Alphonse Santomassimo, and Elizabeth Wilkinson – to meet at the hospital. They spoke of their new feeling of well-being, their plans and hopes for the future — and with renewed happiness they spoke of their “mended hearts.” They realized how wonderful it would be to provide support and help others facing the same experience.

With the assistance of Dr. Harken they formed an organization, wrote up a charter and planned their membership contacts with the aid of the hospital workers. They called themselves the Mended Hearts. They often spoke of how great it was to be alive and to help others.

Recognized for its role in facilitating a positive patient-care experience, Mended Hearts has provided over 70 years of service. We have over 260 local chapters and satellites nationwide, and partners with 350 hospitals and rehabilitation clinics. Mended Hearts offers services to heart patients through visiting programs, support group meetings and educational forums.

In 2000, the Greater Wenatchee Mended Hearts Chapter 91 was established in cooperation with Confluence Health to help those affected by heart conditions to have a positive patient-care experience. We do this through our heart patient visiting program, chapter support group meetings, our monthly newsletter Heartbeat Away, educational speakers, special projects and events. Our trained and accredited, volunteer Mended Hearts Visitors offer peer-to-peer support to heart patients, families and caregivers by way of in-hospital, out-patient and telephone visiting. Since August 2000, Greater Wenatchee Mended Hearts Chapter Visitors have made over 9,650 visits to more than 5,635 heart patients and family members in North Central Washington.

(Mended Hearts Chapter 91 Coffee Mugs will be for sale at our February 6th Chapter Meeting for $10 each.)