Welcome to our March 2023 newsletter.

“It's great to be alive—and to help others.”

Mended Hearts® support statement is “To support heart patients and their families by creating an inclusive and compassionate community through meaningful connections so no one feels alone®.” One of the ways that we do this is through the Accredited Visiting Program. This program is vital SUPPORT for patients and families. Our trained volunteers make more than 200,000 peer connections each year. Visitors will never give medical advice, but they can listen and share information about living with heart disease from a patient, parent, or caregiver perspective.

Locally we have accredited visitors who visit heart patients in the Huntsville Hospital. We can always use more accredited visitors. Along with giving encouragement to the patients, we also give each one a heart shaped pillow. The pillows are made by local volunteers. As I was placing our supply of pillows in our storage closet last week, one of the hospital employees came by and said to me, “So you’re the one who makes everyone smile.” The patients that have heard about the pillows are waiting to receive them.

Being a member of Mended Hearts® is a very rewarding experience because you get to discuss with others who have had similar experiences. This year it is time for us to elect officers to direct the operations of our local chapter. Each officer is elected for a two-year term and may be re-elected. Our local chapter has four(4) officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. If you would like to serve as an officer, please contact Lindell Smith (lfsbsmith@comcast.net) or Dr. Fredonia Williams, fredoniabw@att.net).

Lindell Smith, Chapter President
Join us for our regular monthly support group meeting on Thursday, March 16th 6:30-8:00 PM CST. The speaker is Alicia Pettis, RN, MSN, CCNS at Huntsville Hospital. Lisa is in her 42nd year of nursing where her focus has been in the Cardiology Stepdown Units and the Cardiovascular Stepdown Units. Her topic for our meeting is “From Heart Failure to Heart Success”.

Join Zoom Meeting
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82508365719?pwd=Z3lvbmU0MXBxYjUrbVd6anFVSnJzZz09
Meeting ID: 825 0836 5719
Passcode: 538872

Get your walking shoes together and take your heart for a walk. Join the team of MH 260 for the Huntsville Heart Walk.

Look for the Mended Hearts table and stop to pick up materials from team members.

Medicare question

My doctor wants me to get checked for glaucoma. Are there any Medicare benefits for this?

Yes, Medicare covers a glaucoma screening once every 12 months if you are high risk. Early detection can save your vision. You are high risk if you have diabetes and/or a family history of glaucoma, or if you are 50 or older and Hispanic or African American aged 65 or older. About half of the people who have glaucoma don’t know it.

MH 260 will return to in person support group meetings at the usual area, the Dowdle Center on the corner of Gallatin and Governors. Watch for more details.
Out of quarantine: What we need first

If you have just been in isolation for months (or someone you care for has), some basic human needs will have to be renewed upon social opening.

**Touch.** The deprivation is real. It often doesn't require a full-on massage, but all people need caring touches. A light rub on the back and shoulders means a lot. Hugging communicates love, trust, and well-being.

**Shared laughter.** Think of the stories you remember about childhood, vacations, frustrations and disappointments. What can you laugh about now that didn't seem so funny then? Laughing is one of the best parts of being human.

**Eating together.** We certainly don't have to go to a restaurant to enjoy a shared meal! A light dinner with family and friends is a simple pleasure that boosts spirits and forges connections.

**Foot care.** Two or three months alone in the house can take a toll on feet. Get to a podiatrist or a pedicure place for toenail cutting and moisturizing. A lot of time spent in bed can result in pressure sores on the heels. Check for sores, especially if you or your patient are diabetic.

**Hair care.** Nearly everyone joked about needing a haircut during quarantine and lockdown, but with things opening up, it's time to get out and fix up for both pleasure and health.

**Enjoy nature.** Just getting out of the house, especially if it means being able to sit in a park, see flowers and plants, breathe in the trees around you.

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What's sapping your strength?

Doctors writing in *Health* magazine say these are common causes of feeling tired too much of the time.

**Lack of sleep:** Turn off the TV and get to bed on time.

**Stress:** Worry wastes a tremendous amount of energy. Release tension with yoga, meditation or physical activities.

**Depression:** Fatigue and insomnia are common signs of depression. If the blues and sadness linger, get help. Counseling, medication and exercise can help you feel better fast.

**Lack of exercise:** Your body is like a car. It won't work right if you don't use it. Work out three or four times a week. Take a walk every day.

**Irregular diet:** Skipping breakfast or lunch is asking for trouble. Sugar and caffeine give you a boost, but then send you into an energy slump after a short time.

**Low vitamin D** can make you feel fatigued. After a long winter, get some outdoor time in the sun and eat some fatty fish like salmon or trout. Take a simple supplement.
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.

March Birthdays
Gary Stewart

March Mendiversaries
Barbara Turner

Thanks to all who have renewed their membership. The chapter’s funding depends on renewals and new memberships.

Renew Your Mended Hearts membership or join us. National dues individual $20; family $40
No local dues as chapter receives 25% of national dues paid

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.

* Please do not mail to Huntsville Hospital Volunteer Office.
MEMBERSHIP FORM

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

Date ______________________________

Name (Mr./Mrs./Ms.) ______________________________ ______________________________

Address _____________________________________________________________

Chapter/Group ______________________________ National Member ________________

City / ST / Zip ______________________________ ________

Phone ____________________________________________

Email address ____________________________________________

I want to be a support volunteer: [ ] Yes [ ] No

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 INFORMATION: Race: ______________________________

Gender: ______________________________

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/group meeting for MH, MLH or YMH
- 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, MLH, YMH
- 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 MLH Drawing Backpack or MH/MLH Notecards (10 pk)
- 5% off registration of any National (not regional) MH/MLH/VMH 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
- 10% off registration fees at National MH/MLH/VMH Conferences / Symposia
- 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 an Associate Membership, PLUS
- One year annual subscription to Heartbeat magazine ($30 value)
- Membership Cards for all members of the family
- 2 Car Decals — Select MH, MLH, YMH
- Each family member receives a one-time 5% off coupon for purchase from the MH store. Use only one coupon per order.

[ ] Bronze Family Membership --- $75 annual donation

- All the benefits of a Family Membership, PLUS
- One Membership Pin per member
- Choice of MLH Drawing Backpack or MH/MLH Notecards (10 pk)
- 5% off registration of any National (not regional) MH/MLH/VMH Conference or Symposium

Family Members:

Spouse [ ] Child [ ] Heart Patient [ ]

Spouse [ ] Child [ ] Heart Patient [ ]

Spouse [ ] Child [ ] Heart Patient [ ]

Spouse [ ] Child [ ] Heart Patient [ ]

ALL Donations are tax deductible

**PAYMENT INFORMATION:**

Membership Level ______________________________ $ ______________________________

Additional tax-deductible Donation to:
[ ] Mended Hearts [ ] Mended Little Hearts [ ] Young Mended Hearts

$ ______________________________

TOTAL TO NATIONAL $ ______________________________

**ADDITIONAL CHAPTER/GROUP DONATION:**

Chapter/Group Name: ______________________________

Amount $ ______________________________

TOTAL TO CHAPTER $ ______________________________

**Please note: To be a member of a Mended Hearts Chapter, Mended Little Hearts or Young Mended Hearts Group, you must be a member of The Mended Hearts, Inc.**