Welcome to our April 2023 newsletter.

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

Spring is here. It's the perfect time to get out and enjoy the weather. Eating well and staying active are important for preventing heart disease and staying healthy in general. Exercise is great for everything from reducing stress and boosting energy, to improving sleep and lowering your risk for chronic conditions, including dementia and depression.

This month’s meeting on April 20 will be an in person meeting. It has been over 3 years since we have been able to have a group meeting where we could actually get together. I hope that you will be able to attend so that we can all become better acquainted. Since it has been so long since we have met, this will be a good time for us to share our experiences with each other.

The hospital visits have been going well and the patients are looking forward to seeing the visitors and getting their pillows. We can always use more accredited visitors which will help ensure that we do not miss anyone during their hospital stay. Mended Hearts® also has a virtual visiting program which you can take part in without visiting the hospital. Training for this is available online. The Mended Hearts website for this is https://mendedhearts.org/visit-me/.

NOTE: We will meet in the Dowdle Center which is located at 109 Governors Dr SE, on the corner of Governors and Gallatin St. Thanks to all who have been on our zoom calls. We urge you to continue meeting with us.

Lindell Smith, Chapter President
Mended Hearts Chapter 260 resumes its 3rd Thursday monthly support group meetings on Thursday, April 20, 2023 @ 6:30 PM—8:00 PM. Everyone is invited to attend to support each other as we all travel this heart journey. We welcome back all of our former members and strongly encourage anyone who had a heart event during the past years to attend. This is a great opportunity to meet others who can provide encouragement as we all strive to have a successful recovery. Caregivers and family members are strongly encouraged to attend. Park in the Dowdle Center parking area and enter the building to Rooms B-C. Look for the Mended Hearts signs. We are excited about meeting again.

“From Heart Failure to Heart Success”

presented by our March speaker, Alicia Pettis.

1. Weigh yourself daily.
2. Take all medications as prescribed by your healthcare provider.
3. Follow your low sodium (salt) diet and limit your fluids.
4. Follow your activity program.
5. Notify your doctor with worsening symptoms./ Know when to get help.

(If you are interested in the full presentation, send an email to President Lindell Smith (lfsbsmith@comcast.net)

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 and an AHA cap from team members. If you are a heart disease survivor, red caps are available. If you are a stroke survivor, white caps are available.
Spring is prime time for asthma, allergies

Ah, the beauty of the spring, when trees and flowers bud and bloom. And we sneeze. Or wheeze.

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation estimates that 50 million Americans suffer from seasonal allergies. If you are among them, there is plenty you can do to keep symptoms under control.

Allergists at Temple University say the spring season is intense because trees ramp up their production of pollen. They release as much pollen as possible in spring so it can be spread by the wind.

Avoidance is one solution.

Pollen counts are higher in the morning. Don't jog or play golf early in the day and avoid going out after it rains. Raindrops kick up the pollen. If you have spent time outdoors, change your clothes and wash them. Keep your windows closed and consider a high-quality indoor air purifier.

When none of these avoidance techniques work, over-the-counter medications can help. Newer antihistamines such as Claritin and Allegra tackle the symptoms better and don't make you sleepy.

If you have severe allergies, consider getting a skin test or blood test to determine what you are allergic to. Once you know, you could undergo a series of allergy shots. They will ultimately work, but could take a year or more to notice the effects.

Pet ownership keeps you smart and happy.

Owning a pet for a long time keeps you sharper and happier, a study has found. People who own pets seem to keep a sharper mind compared to non-pet owners, according to a new study from the American Academy of Neurology.

The study used data on more than 1,300 adults who participated in the University of Michigan's Health and Retirement Study and found that long-term pet ownership was the most beneficial, according to CNN. The key to reaping the highest benefit: ownership of five years or more.

Animal companions don't necessarily have to be of the fluffy variety, either. While dogs and cats were the more prevalent pets in the study, people who owned birds, fish and reptiles saw benefits, too.

The study's authors say that they could only confirm an association, and more research is needed to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between pet ownership and better cognitive health. But the relationship between pet ownership and stress reduction has been well-established in numerous studies, and researchers believe that the physiological benefits of pet ownership, such as reduced blood pressure and lower cortisol levels, could impact cognitive health.
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.

April Birthdays
Arthur Nunes
Toccara Simpson

April Mendiversaries
Eric Lundquist
John Neely
Michael Schubert
Sylvia Townsley

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.

April Thoughts

WHAT'S UP DOC?
Debuted April 30, 1938, Warner Brother's Wascally Wabbit first appeared in the theatrical short "Porky's Hare Hunt." In 1940, he first uttered the famous words, "What's Up Doc?"

The promise of April Showers!

These mountains—
you are carrying, you were only supposed to climb.
Najwa Zebian
MEMBERSHIP FORM

DATE

☐ NEW MENDED HEARTS  ☐ NEW MENDED LITTLE HEARTS  ☐ NEW YOUNG MENDED HEARTS  ☐ RENEWAL

Name (Mr./Mrs./Ms.) ___________________________ Chapter/Group ___________________________ National Member ___________________________

Address ____________________________________________ Phone ___________________________

City / ST / Zip ____________________________________________________________ I want to be a 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 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 of the benefits of an Individual Member, PLUS
* Membership Pin
* Choice of ______MLH Drawstring Backpack or ______MH/MLH Notecards (10 pk)
* 5% off registration of any National (not regional) MH/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
* 10% off registration fees at National MH/MLH/YMH 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 of the benefits of a Family Membership, PLUS
* One Membership Pin per member
* Choice of ______MLH Drawstring Backpack or ______MH/MLH Notecards (10 pk)
* 5% off registration of any National (not regional) MH/MLH/YMH 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: ADDITIONAL CHAPTER/GROUP DONATION:

Membership Level ___________________________ $ ____________ Chapter/Group Name: ___________________________

Additional tax-deductible Donation to: ☐ Mended Hearts ☐ Mended Little Hearts ☐ Young Mended Hearts $ ____________

TOTAL TO NATIONAL $ ____________ 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.