



The First 60 Years: Our Foundation for the Future

1951 January: post-heart surgery patients, Doris Siliman, Keith Otto, Alphonse Santomassimo and Elizabeth Wilkinson, started a “support group,” at the suggestion of Dr. Dwight Harken. They called themselves, “The Mended Hearts.”

The patients said: ***“It’s great to be alive!”***

Dr. Harken added: ***“...and to help others!”***



Dr. Dwight E. Harken

1953 June: Mended Hearts had its First Annual Meeting in Boston, Massachusetts. There were about 50 attendees.

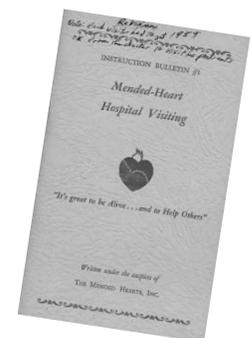
1954 Mended Hearts first accredited visitor was Lee Bowden. Ida Chartkoff was the second.

1955 Mended Hearts was incorporated in 1955 in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. A constitution and Bylaws were adopted.

1956 MHI received tax exempt status for an organization “operated exclusively for charitable and organizational purposes.”

Mended Hearts had its 4th annual meeting/convention. They sold the first souvenir book and the convention became self-supporting.

The first hospital visiting booklet was developed that had “*rigid rules*” for visiting. The first page required two physician signatures.



1958 Mended Hearts chartered its first chapter outside of Massachusetts—Chapter 29, in Nashville, Tennessee.

1960 The “Instructional Bulletin #2, Mended-Heart Home Visiting” booklet was created for visiting heart patients at home.

The first Newsletter Committee was established.

1963 **President Lyndon B. Johnson** was presented with an Associate Membership and pin.



1964 The first Finance Committee was established.

The first Mended Hearts National office opened at Carrie Hall Nurses' Residence at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital. Mr. Saul Ages of Ottawa, Canada donated money to pay for the office for three years. The first paid worker at the office worked 12 hours per week. Three years later, the office closed.

1967 National dues were raised from \$2 to \$3, and MHI had its first *balanced budget*.

The red rose became the symbol of Mended Hearts. It stands for the love and courage of all mended hearts.

1969 The first Organizational manual was developed. It required 10 active members for a chapter to form. The manual concludes, ***“We must all remember that [The] Mended Hearts, Inc. is an affiliation of persons throughout the world who share a common bond. The national organization exists only because we have this affiliation - a number of chapters united with one goal - To Help Others. [The] Mended Hearts, Inc. is YOU and all your members. Do not let your members feel this is just a Boston or Houston Group or any other individual group running the show. Without your help, and all chapters like yours, the national organization could or would not be able to exist.*”**

Mended Hearts Advocates—Life insurance companies began to refuse to accept valve replacement surgery patients. Drs. Harken, DeBakey, Cooley, & Kantrowitz showed this surgery was **“life-giving life insurance in the best sense of the word.”**

1970 The first research project Mended Hearts was involved in was with College of Physicians & Surgeons, Columbia University in NY. About **2,000** Mended Hearts participated. This project **showed there is indeed good life after heart surgery.**

Smoking was declared bad for your heart. Smoking was banned at all Mended Hearts meetings.



NO SMOKING



1971 Mended Hearts produced the first **Heartbeat** magazine.

1973 To help with growth, six regions were established: Northeastern, Eastern, Southeastern, Midwest, Southwest, Western Pacific

Insurance companies were looking at self-help organizations and how they could affect them. Top psychologists studied 50 participants. Ellnor Gammage represented Mended Hearts. At that time, Mended Hearts was the **2nd oldest self-help organization**. Alcoholics anonymous was the oldest.

1974 Mended Hearts national emblem was registered.

May/June Reader's Digest published an article on the work of Mended Hearts.

1975 Mended Hearts was on its first national television broadcast, *Over Easy*, that featured the organization.

National executive secretary, Beverly Weiss, was appointed, and the national office was re-opened. She stated, ***"I hope the reopening of the Home Office here in Boston has been a giant step toward progress and the awakening to the fact that The Mended Hearts, Inc. is an organization that is no upstart group here today and gone tomorrow; but a vital, strong, healthy organization with roots and strength to function in a business-like manner."***



More Mended Hearts Advocacy: Insurance companies wanted to stop issuing driver's licenses to heart patients. **Mended Hearts got a \$1 million government-funded study going with 1,000 patients that showed heart surgery patients were safer drivers** than those refusing surgery.

Seven-year-old, Eric Frohn, Chapter 76, Jackson, MS was granted visiting privileges and featured in *Heartbeat* visiting children with a stuffed Snoopy hand-embroidered by his mother.

1978 San Diego chapter accredited 9-year old Brandy Rae Wiedenbuff who had heart surgery: 1968 pulmonary artery bonding and 1974, VSD closure.

1979 The Mended Hearts home office moves to Dallas.
The American Heart Association donates space.



1980 The AHA Presents Mended Hearts with a plaque marking one year under the same roof. Dr. James Schoenberger, President of the AHA, states, ***“Even as doctors look to the physical wounds of the patients, Mended Hearts tends to the patient’s emotional needs by their visits. Those who are ill need both ministrations. To ensure they do receive both in the future, we (AHA) pledge to you (MH) all possible cooperation. The plaque is a mark of that pledge.”***

1980 Research proves value of Mended Hearts. Sister Patricia Miller, University of Nebraska College of Nursing, conducted a study. She found that ***Mended Hearts members return to work sooner and in greater numbers than patients with similar conditions who did not have the advantage and support of the organization.***

1981 **Visits top 100,000!**

1982 The national emblem was updated and required to be on all materials with ®.



Annual dues were increased: individual dues to \$10,
family dues to \$15

President’s Cup Award and Newsletter Award were started.

The Visiting program started to include **non-surgical patients**.

A Coordinator was appointed for visiting children and a committee was formed to consider sponsoring children’s cardiac camps.

Ten chapters reported active pediatric visiting programs.

1983 Regions were realigned to 8 regions.

Visitors were asked to use the term **“visit”** rather than “visitation” because of the religious connotation of “visitation.”

1984 Mended Hearts had its first futures conference.

Goals:

1. Increase membership knowledge of the functions of Mended Hearts Chapters and the duties of officers and chairpersons.
2. Reduce turnover of membership and increase the membership by offering our services to all heart related patients.
3. Expand the paid professional staff of Mended Hearts to increase support to Regional Directors and Chapters.
4. Improve the patient/family visiting program.
5. Make the general public aware of Mended Hearts.
6. Maximize the medical profession and hospital awareness and acceptance of program and its value to the heart patient.



- 1989** **Mended hearts approaches 100 chapters!**
- 1990** The American Heart Association began an annual grant to Mended Hearts.

The Mended Hearts PATH Pack was developed for visiting.

The Chapter Organizational Manual was rewritten.
- 1991** Mended Hearts was on the World Wide Web for the first time when a chapter in Ohio posted about Mended Hearts.
- 1992** An Endowment Fund was established with a monetary goal of \$250,000 by 2002, our 50-year anniversary.
- 1993** The Visitor Training Manual was developed to train Visiting Chairs.
- 1997** **Internet Visiting** was started with 40 accredited visitors.

The **National website** was created.

The first Mended Hearts telephone line was started with the motto: “Mended Hearts Listens”
- 2001** **The work of MHI is recognized by state legislature** by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth in Richmond,



Virginia. Also, the House Joint Resolution 270 commended the work of Mended Hearts.

2002 Mended Hearts National Spokesperson was Dan Reeves, Coach of the Atlanta Falcons.

The national emblem was developed that is used today.



Mended Hearts had its first partnership with a national pharmaceutical company, Merck. Merck funded mailing of MHI information to 60,000 cardiac physicians and created the first national radio and television promotions for MHI.



Mended Hearts gets a famous partner in golf legend, Jack Nicklaus. He started the “Do More for Your Heart” program to educate people to reduce heart attack risk. He also joined with Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories and Monarch Pharmaceuticals to raise \$100,000 for MHI—based on his performance in Senior PGA Tour events.

2002 Mended Hearts staff consisted of Mary Brink, Secretary; Bonna Kol, Executive Director; Krystn Vertz, Bookkeeper; Regina Dixon, Field Service Director; Cathy Clapp, Executive Assistant; Linda Beeson, Office Manager

2003 Mended Hearts made its first appearance at American College of Cardiology Scientific Sessions.

2004 Mended *Little* Hearts was formed with the support of national volunteer, Tita Hutchens. The first 6 MLH groups were:

- ♥ Fresno, CA 4/29
- ♥ Hollywood, FL 5/5
- ♥ Winston-Salem 6/14
- ♥ Spearfish, SD 6/28
- ♥ Toledo, OH 11/9
- ♥ Des Moines, IA 12/20



Tita Hutchens

Mended Hearts volunteer, Sid Harris, was honored by **President George Bush, Sr. in person!** He received an Outstanding Volunteer award from Forum Health Medical Center in Ohio.

2005 *Newsweek* published an article about Mended Hearts.

2006 LPGA Hall of Famer, Nancy Lopez and baseball legend Ray Knight join Mended Hearts.

US News and World Report published an article about Mended Hearts.

2007 MLH program expanded to 25 groups.

First MLH staff, Jodi Lemacks, was hired thanks to grant from Edwards LifeSciences



The first annual Leadership Training took place at MHI Annual Convention in San Antonio, Texas in August.

2008 **Visits top 200,000!**

Mended Hearts was recognized as a source for patients in the American Heart Association's announcement of new recommended treatment guidelines for heart patients.

Mended *Little* Hearts co-hosted Congenital Heart Lobby Day for the first time.

2009 Mended *Little* Hearts was represented on the Mended Hearts Board for the first time by Dale Briggs.



Mended Hearts partnered with SCAI to launch its Cath Outreach Program for cath lab visiting. This program is ongoing and in Phase 2.

The First Membership Growth Committee was formed.

Mended *Little* Hearts reviewed and edited, for parent readability, AHA's booklet, "If Your Child Has a Congenital Heart Defect" to help families with children who have heart defects. This is available in print and online.

2010 Mended *Little* Hearts worked with other congenital heart defect



organizations to get the Congenital Heart Futures Act passed into law which happened in March 2010.

2011 Mended Hearts aligned with the American College of Cardiology, signing a 5-year agreement.

Mended Hearts and Mended *Little* Hearts developed new accredited visiting materials, including a DVD, a visitor handbook, and a trainer's guide. A copy was sent to each visiting chair around the nation.

Mended *Little* Hearts elected its first member of the Mended Hearts Executive Committee, Susan Vanderpool.

The Congenital Hearts Futures Act was funded with \$2 million as a result of Mended *Little* Hearts advocacy efforts in conjunction with other organizations.

2012 Executive Director, Karen Caruth, was hired in February.

The first Mended Hearts and Mended *Little* Hearts speakers' bureau was formed.

A Caregiver Committee was created to focus on the needs of caregivers.

Mended Hearts and Mended *Little* Hearts celebrate the organization's **60th** convention!



Our Future is in Your Hands!