



**UpBeat**  
**Mended Hearts Newsletter**  
**Chapter #130 – December 2025**  
**Olympia, WA**

**It's Great  
To Be Alive  
And  
To Help  
Others!**

**Meeting Notice**

**Program: Christmas Luncheon**  
**Date/Time: Thursday, December 11, 12-2pm**  
**Location: Jacob Smith House**  
**4500 Intelco Loop SE**  
**Lacey, WA**

**Upcoming Dates**

**Dec 4-Board Meeting**  
**Dec 11- Christmas  
Luncheon**  
**Merry Christmas!!**



**President's Message**  
**Michael Blonden**



Our annual Holiday luncheon is set for December 11th from 12 pm to 2 pm. The meal, referred to as dinner by our caterer, will feature a variety of delicious food and provide a wonderful opportunity to socialize with fellow members. This year, we will have the music group Jingle Bones as our entertainment.

In January, Suzanne Upfield, MSN, will speak to our group about Heart Failure at our new meeting location: MyMedSupplies, 6149 Martin Way E, Lacey, WA 98516. With twenty-five years of experience in cardiac medicine, Suzanne is a highly knowledgeable speaker.

While not wishing to cause undue concern, it is crucial for members to attend this meeting. According to the CDC, heart failure is a significant global health issue with increasing prevalence, especially among aging populations and those with underlying cardiovascular conditions. Currently, one in four Americans will develop heart failure during their lifetime. We strongly urge you to join us for this important discussion.



## President's Message (Continued)

### Michael Blonden

Here are a few modifiable risk factors for heart failure:

- High Blood Pressure: Chronic high blood pressure forces the heart to work harder, weakening the heart muscle over time.
- Coronary Artery Disease: This condition narrows or blocks the arteries supplying blood to the heart, reducing blood flow and potentially leading to heart failure.
- Diabetes: High blood sugar levels can damage blood vessels and nerves that control the heart, increasing the risk of heart failure.
- Obesity: Excess body weight strains the heart and is associated with other risk factors like high blood pressure and diabetes.
- Smoking: Tobacco damages blood vessels and reduces oxygen in the blood, increasing the risk of heart disease and heart failure.
- Excessive Alcohol Consumption: Long term heavy drinking can weaken the heart muscle, leading to heart failure.
- Sedentary Lifestyle: Lack of physical activity can contribute to obesity and other health issues that increase heart failure risk.

In other news, our hospital visitors will be receiving new polos after using the same ones for years. Three new visitors will begin training after the start of the year, and we need at least three more visitors to bring the total to a dozen. We see over a thousand patients at the hospital each year. The more heart experiences shared, the better for our Chapter. Remember, visiting not only helps patients but also benefits you. We recently distributed fliers promoting our Chapter at the hospital and within the community, including our website.



## Mended Hearts Chapter #130 Christmas Luncheon



**Date: Thursday, December 11, 2025 Time: 12:00pm - 2:00pm**

**Location: Jacob Smith House, 4500 Intelco Loop SE, Lacey, WA**

**Menu: Turkey Breast Roast with Cranberry Orange Relish, Mashed Potatoes with Gravy, Herbed Bread Stuffing, Steamed Seasonal Vegetables, Salad, Dessert, and live entertainment by Jingle Bones.!**

**Register on our website by November 30, or signup with President or Treasurer at meetings. Fees can also be paid to officers at the meeting. Mail a check to Mended Hearts Chapter 130 for \$22 per person by December 4. The Chapter pays for more than half of the luncheon expenses to make your cost reasonable.**

**Mail Payment for luncheon to:  
Mended Hearts Chapter #130  
PO Box 5551  
Olympia, WA 98509-5551**



## Did You Know?

Welcome to December in the Pacific Northwest! And on Sunday, December 21st, the Winter Solstice arrives bringing the shortest daylight hours of the year. So how should we view this coldest, wettest, darkest month of the year? Don't despair! Let's find some light!

December brings its own quiet beauty—misty mornings, evergreens standing tall, and holiday lights brightening long evenings. But for many older adults, especially those managing health challenges, the darker, colder days can take both a physical and emotional toll. Dialing your clock back an hour does give you that extra hour of sleep but at the expense of disrupting your circadian rhythm plus it can negatively affect heart health. Those shorter daylight hours that may affect our internal clocks, can lead to fatigue, lower mood, and disrupt sleep. Cold temperatures can stiffen joints, raise blood pressure, and make outdoor activity less appealing.

Still, there are simple ways to protect our health and lift our spirits. First, embrace daylight whenever it appears. Even 10–15 minutes near a bright window or a short walk on a dry morning can help regulate mood and boost energy. Many people find light-therapy lamps helpful during this time of year.

Stay gently active. Indoor stretching, chair exercises, or walking laps at a local mall keep muscles warm and the heart engaged. This may be a perfect time to start a yoga class whether online or in person. (After all, there were 48,547 yoga & pilates studios in the US as of 2023 so probably lots more now.) Many local gyms have classes to keep us limber. To counter seasonal stress, dial back expectations. The holidays need not be perfect to be meaningful. Choose simple pleasures: warm soups, phone calls with loved ones, cozy reading, or holiday music. Deep breathing or mindfulness before bedtime can ease worries and improve sleep.

Finally, stay connected. Isolation grows easily during dark months, but a weekly meet-up, support group, or virtual chat can brighten the season more than you might expect.

December may slow us down—but with intention, warmth, and community, it can still be a month of comfort and renewal plus the promise of a brand New Year!! Enjoy!!



# Avoid Holiday Safety Hazards

Christmas is a time to celebrate, spend time with family and friends, and to relax. But, it's also a time when safety should be on your mind because the holiday season brings a unique combination of hazards into the home.

## Christmas Light Safety



1. Make sure the holiday lights are meant for outdoor use. Lights made for outdoor use are designed to withstand cold and wet conditions. The tag near the plug will specify whether lights are made for indoor or outdoor use.

2. All cords and lights should be intact. Frayed cords and cracked light bulbs are more likely to cause a fire.

3. Never leave lights on overnight. Be sure to turn off the light before retiring for the night.



## Christmas Tree Safety

1. If using a real tree, water often. A tree that dries out causes a fire hazard. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reports that one of every 31 reported home fires in the holidays is caused by a Christmas tree fire and results in death.

2. Keep the tree away from heat. Trees, unlike humans and animals, don't need to be kept warm during the winter months. This only dries the tree out and increases the risk of fire. Keep it away from the fireplace, space heaters, even living room lamps.

3. Use tree lights specifically designed for indoor use.

## Candle Safety



1. Use battery operated window or tree candles.

2. If traditional candles are a must, be very careful about placement. Place them on sturdy, non-flammable surfaces, away from decorations, curtains, the Christmas tree and anything else that could catch fire.

3. Do not burn candles when no one is in the room.

## Welcome New Members

**Jaydee Abeita**

**Robbie Blas**

**Carol Chase**

**Robin Clements**

**Dennis Christman**

**Tamara Crane**

**Robert Donahue**

**David Grimm**

**Joe Jauquet**

**David Kramer**

**Marie Magsayo**

**Patricia Mickel**

**Judith Montgomery**

**Michael Newby**

**Susan Nieves**

**Anita Oyler**

**Jennifer Richards**

**Sheena Sallee**

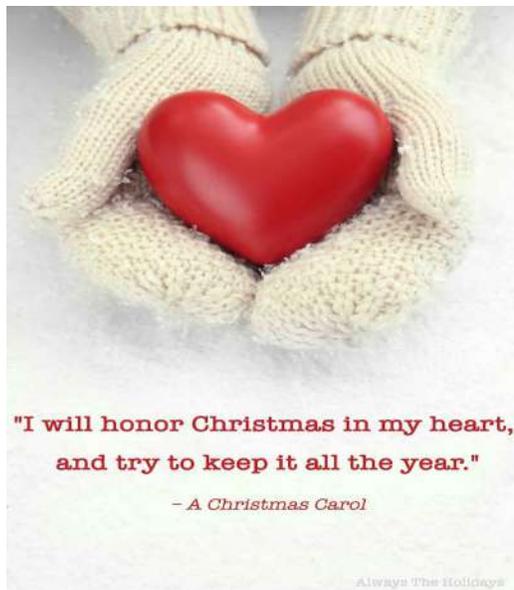
**Sandy Shoultz**

**Ian Smith**

**Barbara Young**



## Christmas Quote



Did you know a Qualified Charitable Distribution is a way to donate money from your IRA to The Mended Hearts Inc. Chapter 130 and reduce your taxable income? The Donation can be used to satisfy your Required Minimum Distribution and you can exclude that amount from your taxable income.

Contact your IRA trustee so the trustee will have time to complete the transaction before the end of the year. Contact Bob Sherwood at 360-438-3873, if you have any questions.

## Chapter Board Meetings

Chapter Board Meetings are open to all Chapter Members. We are currently meeting via ZOOM. If you are interested in attending, contact Michael Blonden at Mblonden@msn.com for ZOOM link.

If you are feeling great and would like to help others, why not make a donation to our Chapter (Mended Hearts of Thurston County). Mail donation to:

**Mended Hearts Chapter 130  
PO Box 5551  
Olympia, WA 98509-5551**

**Every Dollar Helps. Thanks!!**

## Chapter #130 Officers

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**Chapter 130 Website Address:**  
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**Mended Hearts National Website:**  
<https://mendedhearts.org/>

**To Make suggestions, go to  
Suggestion link below:**  
[Suggestion Box](#)

**Facebook Webpage Address:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/Mendedheartsthurstoncounty>