



UpBeat
Mended Hearts Newsletter
Chapter #130-February 2026
Olympia, WA

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

Meeting Notice

Program: Cardiac Surgeries and Procedures
Date/Time: Thursday, Feb 12, 2pm
Location: MyMedSupplies
6149 Martin Way E. Lacey, WA 98516

Upcoming Dates

Feb 5-Board Meeting
Feb 12-Chapter Mtg

Happy Heart Month!



Mended Hearts™

Cardiac Surgeries and Procedures
Speaker-Steven Rodriquez, MSN



I attended the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio for my MSN and am board-certified as an Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner. I have an extensive background in advanced heart failure, cardiac transplant, as well as pulmonary hypertension and have a specific interest in coronary revascularization, valve repair and replacement, and minimally invasive thoracic surgery. In my free time I enjoy camping, hiking, and coaching various sports with my family.

Steven Rodriquez, MSN

President's Message

Michael Blonden

Diane Caputo and Ann Monaghan will meet with the Cardiac Nursing Staff at St. Peter Hospital in February to introduce our Chapter and encourage patient participation, especially with new nurses joining the heart patient staff. We continue to look for new hospital visitor volunteers from our membership.

At our February meeting, Ann Monaghan and I will host a discussion to gather feedback on future meeting topics.

At our February meeting, we will feature Steven Rodriquez, MSN, a nurse practitioner specializing in Cardiac Surgery who will be talking about a variety of cardiac surgeries and procedures.

The chapter website has fewer pages and a simplified content. The home page features three research studies for members (some funding is available-see our website). The three studies are:

1. Females with high LDL-C or Lp(A) and arteriosclerotic disease.
2. Individuals with a heart attack in the past 5 years and high cholesterol.
3. Females with cardiomyopathy in the last 5 years.

The "Meeting Page" on the Chapter Website, has the speaker photo, bio, zoom link, PowerPoint if provided, and meeting summaries. If you want to join our chapter meeting on Zoom, you can go to the website for the link. There isn't any need to receive an email for using Zoom to attend the meeting. The newsletters are similar. We have posted years of monthly newsletters. The newsletters are on the same page of the website each month with an update by early each month.

I will contact members interested in purchasing a Mended Hearts Jacket to confirm size and payment. If others are interested, please contact Michael Blonden via phone or email. See website for further details.

Thank you for volunteering to bring snacks to the chapter meetings. It was great to see new members at the January meeting, and I hope to see additional new members at our future chapter meetings.

Did You Know (DYK)

Feb 2026

DYK long before doctors wore white coats or carried defibrillators, people were already trying to bring others back from the brink. As far back as the 1700s, rescuers experimented with methods that ranged from the clever to the downright strange. Some tried rolling people over barrels. Others used warm air, vigorous rubbing, or (believe it or not) blowing tobacco smoke into the lungs. While these methods didn't quite do the trick, they showed that people refused to give up on one another.

Fast forward to the 1950s. Researchers discovered something remarkable—mouth-to-mouth breathing actually worked. It could provide oxygen to someone who had stopped breathing, and it worked better than machines available at the time. This was a big deal. For the first time, everyday people—not just doctors—could help save a life using nothing but their own breath. The idea spread quickly, and training programs began popping up around the world.

Around the same time, another breakthrough occurred. Doctors realized that pressing rhythmically on the chest could keep blood flowing when the heart stopped beating. Chest compressions, it turned out, were just as important as breathing—maybe even more so. When mouth-to-mouth breathing and chest compressions were combined, CPR as we know it was born.

By the early 1960s, the American Heart Association officially endorsed CPR, and a lifesaving standard was set. For the first time, ordinary citizens were empowered to act in emergencies and many did. The 1970s and 1980s brought CPR to the masses. Training videos appeared in schools, workplaces, and community centers. You might remember learning CPR in a church basement, a high school gym, or a company break room.

Did you know beginning in the 2013-14 school year, Washington state mandated that CPR instruction must be included in at least one health class necessary for graduation? Then came one of the most unexpected CPR teaching tools of all time: music.

Did you know disco can save lives? Turns out, chest compressions work best to a steady beat about 100 to 120 beats per minute. Songs like "Stayin' Alive" by the Bee Gees fit the bill perfectly. Today's CPR guidelines focus on strong, steady compressions and encourage people to act quickly rather than worry about doing everything perfectly. Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), once rare and intimidating, are now common in airports, gyms, and community spaces—and they talk you through every step.

Did You Know (Continued)

Did you know beginning in the 2013-14 school year, Washington state mandated that CPR instruction must be included in at least one health class necessary for graduation?

Even better, now CPR is no longer seen as something only “professionals” can do. Now grandparents, neighbors, friends, bystanders and even students have all become everyday heroes. For those of us in heart support groups, CPR isn’t just history—it’s personal. It represents preparation, community, and the belief that every moment matters. Many people reading this have benefited from decades of heart research, improved emergency response, and the courage of someone who knew what to do. And here’s the uplifting part: studies show that bystander CPR dramatically improves survival, especially when started quickly.

That means knowledge truly is power—and sometimes, it’s lifesaving!

New medication may control hard-to-treat hypertension

An experimental oral medication for hard-to-treat hypertension is one step closer to approval. According to Fierce Biotech, drugmaker AstraZeneca released new data from Phase III clinical trials that showed significant reductions in average nighttime blood pressure readings among trial participants compared to a placebo. Elevated nighttime blood pressure is associated with increased risk of heart attack, stroke, and other cardiovascular events.

Welcome New Chapter Members

Sultan Allan	Donald Baldwin
Clion DeAraujo	Jane Doumit
Karen Erickson	Linda Machado
Glenn Marshall	Patrick Myers
Adella Reagle	Gregg Savajian
Diana Wakefield	Glenn Wells
Vicia Woods	Alan Youngblood

February is Heart Month

All About Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)

You've probably seen them mounted on walls in offices, schools, and public buildings, but do you really know what they're for? They're called automated external defibrillators, or AEDs sophisticated medical devices that just about anyone can use to provide lifesaving assistance to people in cardiac arrest.

According to the American Red Cross, sudden cardiac arrest is one of the leading causes of death in the United States, with more than 350,000 cases each year. Defibrillation is the only way to restore regular heart rhythm, and readily accessible AED devices allow laypersons to intervene and buy time until first responders arrive. And during cardiac arrest, that extra time matters -- each minute without defibrillation reduces the odds of survival by about 10 percent.

How AEDs work

According to AED manufacturer Avive, AEDs consist of adhesive electrode pads that read the patient's heart rhythm and deliver controlled electric shocks if necessary, a processor to analyze heart rhythm data and determine if and when electric shocks are appropriate. There are several FDA-approved models on the market, and all of them provide voice and visual instructions to guide users through the process. While CPR/AED certification can be very helpful and make you feel more confident during an emergency, they are not required to use an AED.

How to get an AED



All fifty states require AEDs in certain public gathering places, though the specific regulations vary by jurisdiction. But even in spaces where AEDs are not required -- which often includes churches, private clubs, businesses, and residential areas -- they can still be installed and used to provide lifesaving assistance.

FDA-approved AEDs can be purchased through a number of manufacturers and organizations, and generally have a base cost between \$1,000 and \$3,000 plus extra for any accessories. Individuals can generally purchase devices with pre-tax HSA dollars, and businesses can write off the cost as a business expense. Individuals, churches, nonprofit organizations and schools may also be able to fully or partially fund the purchase of AEDs with grants through a variety of charitable organizations and government programs.

Chapter #130 Officers

Heart Disease Awareness Month



Did you know...

- One out of every four deaths is caused by heart disease
- Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States
- Someone has a heart attack every 42 seconds

Prevention:

- Heart healthy diet
 - Don't smoke, eat fish and whole grains
- Exercise regularly
 - Aim for 150 minutes of moderate exercise
- Keep blood pressure under control



If you have any questions, comments or concerns please contact Bird Physical Therapy at 785-331-0106



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Chapter 130 Website Address:
<https://mendedheartsthurstoncounty.org/>

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>

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
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Every Dollar Helps. Thanks!!