



UPBEAT
Mended Hearts Newsletter
Chapter # 130 – August 2026
Olympia, WA

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

Meeting Notice

Program: Chapter Picnic

Date/Time: Thursday, August 13, 5-7 PM

**Location: Tumwater Historical Park
777 Simmons Rd. SW
Tumwater, WA**

Upcoming Dates

Aug 6-Board Meeting

Aug 13-Chapter Picnic

President's Message
Michael Blonden

Patients with heart disease will now be visited by our Visitor Team in the Short Stay Admission Discharge Unit (SADU). Thank you to the new visitors who have enabled the team to connect with more heart patients at St. Peter Hospital. As we continue our visits, we would greatly benefit from an additional dozen volunteers.

If you are interested, please consider joining our Visitor Team. When visitors introduce themselves and ask patients whether they have heard of Mended Hearts, we hope to hear "Yes!" increasingly often.

This month, we will gather for our annual potluck picnic at Tumwater Historical Park—a wonderful opportunity to enjoy our favorite dishes and socialize with other members. Gift drawings will be held for attendees.

Looking ahead to September, we will welcome Dr. John Waggoner from Providence Cardiology for another engaging question-and-answer session. Please start thinking about questions related to your heart health and treatment. We will meet at Lacey City Hall from 6 to 8 p.m.



Mended Hearts Chapter Picnic

DATE: Thursday, August 13

TIME: 5 - 7:00PM

LOCATION: TUMWATER HISTORICAL PARK, 777 Simmons Rd. SW

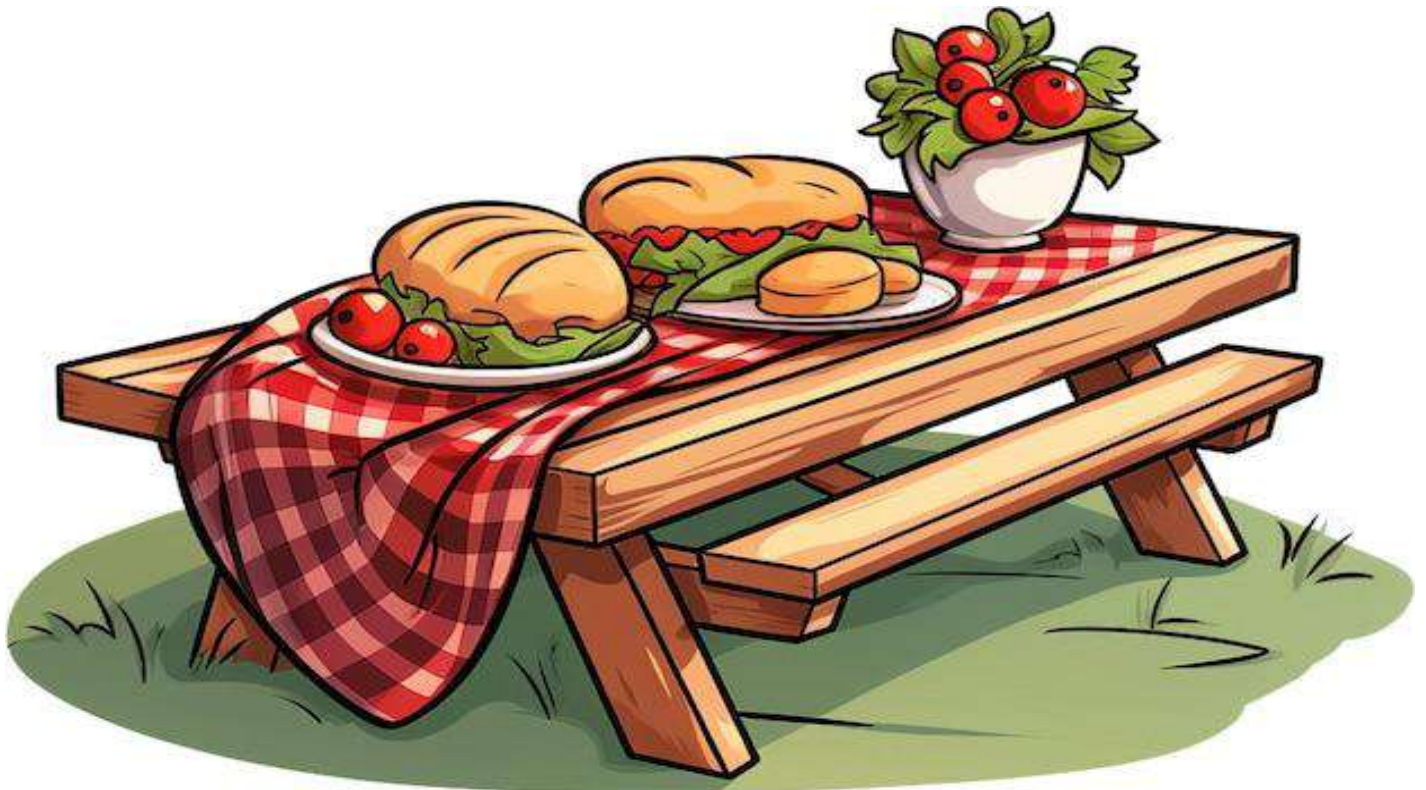
Beverages , Paper plates, Utensils, & Napkins are provided by Chapter

Please bring a dish according to your last name.

Food: A-H: Main Dish I-P: Side Dish Q-Z: Dessert

Directions to picnic: From I-5 heading south, take exit 103. Go to Custer Way (the first light) and turn left. Cross the bridge and turn right on Boston street which winds down around the old Brewery to Deschutes Way. Turn right on Deschutes Way to Grant Road or the Crosby House. (If you go under the freeway, you have gone too far.)

From I-5 heading north, take exit 103 which puts you directly onto Deschutes Way. Go straight, pass Custer Way and look for Grant Street on the right. That's Tumwater Historical Park at the bottom of the hill. Come and have fun!



DYK August 2026 Hydration:

A Simple Habit That Keeps Your Heart Happy When the summer heat arrives, your heart has to work a little harder to keep your body cool. Staying well hydrated is one of the easiest ways to support heart health, especially for older adults, who are naturally at greater risk for dehydration. Drinking enough fluids helps maintain healthy blood volume, supports circulation, regulates body temperature, and may reduce the strain on your heart during hot weather.

While water remains the best choice, there are plenty of refreshing ways to meet your daily fluid needs. Caffeine-free iced herbal teas—such as hibiscus, peppermint, or chamomile—are delicious alternatives that hydrate without the stimulating effects of caffeine. They also provide naturally occurring antioxidants that support overall wellness, making them a heart-smart choice on warm summer days.

For an extra burst of flavor and nutrition, add fresh lemon slices to your water or iced tea. Lemons are an excellent source of vitamin C, a powerful antioxidant that supports healthy immune function and helps protect cells from oxidative damage. Lemon-infused water may also encourage healthy digestion and support normal metabolism. Combined with a balanced diet and regular physical activity, staying hydrated can be one small step toward maintaining a healthy weight.

Good hydration also benefits your digestive system—often called the body's "second brain." Nearly 90% of the body's serotonin, commonly known as the "happy hormone," is produced in the gut. While gut produced serotonin mainly regulates digestion rather than mood directly, a healthy digestive system communicates continuously with the brain through the gut-brain axis. Supporting gut health with proper hydration, fiber-rich foods, fruits, and vegetables contributes to overall wellness and may positively influence emotional well-being.

This summer, think of every glass of water, herbal iced tea, or lemon-infused drink as an investment in your health. Small daily habits can make a meaningful difference, helping your heart pump efficiently, your digestive system function smoothly, and your body stay cool and energized. So, pour yourself a refreshing drink, relax in the shade, and toast to a healthier heart—one sip at a time. Cheers!!

Staying hydrated



Heart Failure and Diabetes: A Powerful Connection

Suzanne Upfield, RN (Author)

Ann Monaghan, Mended Hearts Health Officer

Many people are surprised to learn that diabetes and heart failure are closely linked. Having diabetes significantly increases the risk of developing heart failure, while people living with heart failure often have diabetes as well. High blood sugar levels can damage blood vessels and the heart muscle over time, making it harder for the heart to pump blood effectively.

The good news is that managing diabetes can help protect your heart. Regular physical activity, heart-healthy eating, taking medications as prescribed, and keeping blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels under control can all reduce the risk of complications. Newer diabetes medications have also been shown to help lower the risk of heart failure hospitalizations for many patients.

If you have diabetes, talk with your healthcare provider about your heart health. Likewise, if you have heart failure, be sure your care team is monitoring your blood sugar and screening for diabetes when appropriate. Working together, patients and providers can take important steps to improve health, quality of life, and long-term outcomes.

You can copy the following web address and paste on your web browser address space, and you will be taken to a web page with more information on Heart Failure and Diabetes:

https://www.cardiosmart.org/docs/default-source/assets/worksheet/diabetes-and-heart-disease-what-you-need-to-know.pdf?sfvrsn=4a5898e5_2

CardioMEMS: Helping Patients Stay Ahead of Heart Failure

Suzanne Upfield, RN (Author)

Ann Monaghan, Mended Hearts Health Officer

For many people living with heart failure, staying healthy means recognizing changes before symptoms become serious. The CardioMEMS™ HF System is a small, implantable sensor placed in the pulmonary artery that allows healthcare teams to remotely monitor pressure changes in the heart and lungs. These pressure changes often occur days or even weeks before a patient notices symptoms such as shortness of breath, swelling, or fatigue.

Patients take a quick daily reading from home, and the information is securely transmitted to their heart failure care team. By identifying trends early, providers can often adjust medications and treatment plans before a hospitalization is needed. Studies have shown that CardioMEMS can help reduce heart failure hospitalizations and improve quality of life, offering patients greater peace of mind while remaining active in their communities.

Here in the South Puget Sound Region, heart failure teams continue to use innovative technology like CardioMEMS to help patients stay healthier, safer, and connected to their care from the comfort of home.

A Small Gland May Hint At How You Are Aging

Tucked behind the breastbone sits a gland most people never think about -- the thymus. New research suggests it may reveal something about how well a person is aging.

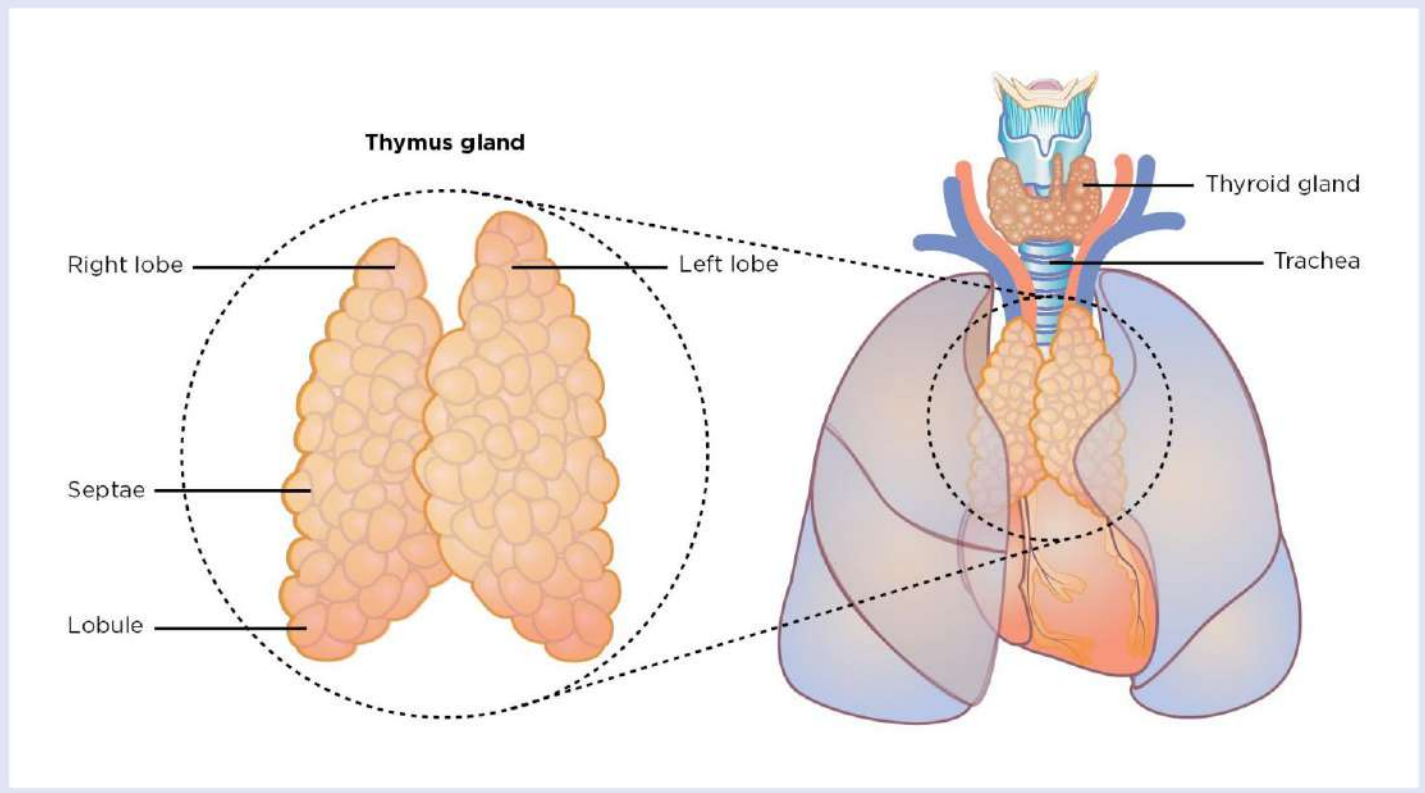
The thymus helps train the immune system early in life, then slowly shrinks and fills with fat as the years pass, until by late adulthood only a small patch of working tissue may remain. According to a study reported by ScienceDaily in June 2026, researchers at Mass General Brigham used artificial intelligence to examine routine CT scans from tens of thousands of adults, scoring how healthy each person's thymus appeared.

People whose thymus stayed in better shape tended to fare better over time, the researchers reported, with links to healthier aging and to surviving cancer. Two people of the same age, the scans suggested, can have thymus glands that look decades apart, one youthful and the other worn.

The scans were ones patients already had on file, taken for other reasons, which made the study large without any new tests.

The researchers are careful to call this an association rather than proof, and they say more work is needed before a thymus "score" could ever guide an individual's care.

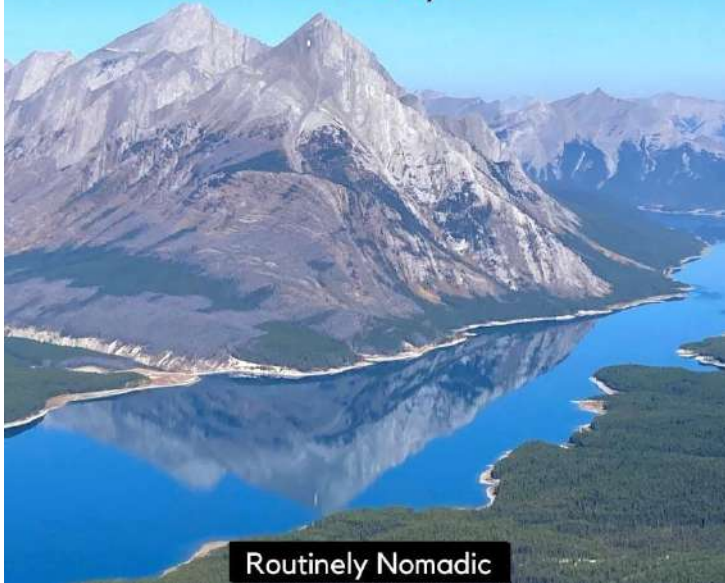
Fig 4. **Thymus gland**



August Quote

"August is a time of
growing up, of
forgotten forever's, full
of the sweetest intent."

- Meka Boyle



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 a 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!!

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Chapter 130 Website:
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<https://mendedhearts.org/>

**To Make Suggestions, go to
Suggestion link below:**

[Suggestion Box](#)

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