



Mended
Little
Hearts

Providing Hope, Gaining Renewed Energy



by Dale Briggs,
Executive Vice President

Roughly a year ago, I met a young man at a heart walk. After meeting him, I started to notice that I was running into more and more young people with heart issues. After hearing about MLH, I approached our Mended Hearts membership about looking into starting a group. Now, just six months after we were chartered, we have without a doubt seen a new sense of interest in Mended Hearts from our membership.

Little people tend to bring about new interest and energy.

WAYNE
SIMMONS
Chapter 290
Anchorage, Alaska



The first thing I have to say about MH chapters and MLH groups working together is that it makes the job so much easier. Without the assistance of Chapter 100, MLH Glass City might not be here today.

The greatest gift they have given us is their time. Members of the chapter attend each meeting to help with the children and to welcome parents as they come through the door. I have been told many times that they look forward to these meetings to see the children that they have come to know so well.

At our MH chapter meetings we share what the group is, and we are seeing others start to get more excited about the possibilities this brings. When we went to the Toledo city council meeting on February 14th to accept our Proclamation for Congenital Defect Awareness Day, several members came to witness the festivities.

I think that working and interacting with our MLH families has helped give our MH chapter a boost of energy. They always have suggestions or ideas when I need some other opinions besides my own. It's something that is fun to be a part of, much like visiting our heart patients in the hospital. It makes both of us feel better about ourselves.

JILL SNYDER
Assistant Regional Director,
Central Region
Coordinator, Mended Little Hearts
Glass City, Ohio
Mended Little Hearts
Committee Member

The members of Chapter 28 feel that if you have a strong passion in a project, you can achieve results. We have that feeling about Mended Little Hearts. We have worked hard to help get the word out about Mended Little Hearts and to work with key people in the community to make it happen.

Many of our members have witnessed the same anxieties, fears and pain as these wonderful families. This has energized us to encourage and support this group. All the work and planning was well worth the effort. We often have the same feelings as when we visit patients and families: It's great to be alive and to help others. The Richmond MLH group has walked with us at Heart Walk, been seen on "Perspective" (a show on our local public broadcasting channel), attended our meetings and much more. As a chapter, we have enjoyed sharing events together with them.

We feel that we have done a lot to ensure that there is place in Richmond for children with heart defects and heart diseases and their parents to get the hope and encouragement they need.

JERRY GROSSMAN
Chapter 28
Richmond, Virginia



These three letters show the same things that I see when working with MLH of Central California. These parents, caregivers and children are wonderful. As Jerry Grossman has been overheard saying, "Working with these children makes you see not only how special they are, but how lucky we are. Knowing them puts a new perspective on our own medical conditions. I can honestly say that I cannot complain about my condition after meeting some of these kids."

For information on how to start a Mended Little Hearts program in your area, contact the Mended Hearts National Office at 888-HEART-99. ♥

Is your chapter looking for something to renew its energy? Do your meetings lack that extra "oomph" that you wish they had? Do you feel there is something more your chapter can do to reach out to heart patients?

If your chapter is like many chapters that I have come in contact with over my years of involvement with Mended Hearts, you probably answered "yes" to all three of these questions.

The nice thing is...I have an answer. Mended Little Hearts is renewing the energy within chapters all across the country. In my role as executive vice president, I am charged with overseeing this program. In my role as president of Chapter 92, I work hand-in-hand with a Mended Little Hearts program. I know firsthand how working with parents/caregivers of children with congenital heart defects and other heart diseases can rejuvenate the drive and provide a new sense of energy to a Mended Hearts chapter.

But, don't take my word for it. I have asked a number of Mended Hearts leaders involved with Mended Little Hearts programs on the local level to share their thoughts.