



The Ticker Talker

Mended Hearts Diablo Chapter 254

*Dedicated to inspiring hope in heart disease patients and their families*

[www.MendedHearts254.org](http://www.MendedHearts254.org)

September

2008

*Mended Hearts Annual*  
***BARBEQUE***  
*and Pot Luck Picnic*

**Saturday, September 20, 3:00 p.m.**

Heart-healthy Barbequed Chicken  
prepared Anna Lee and her Gourmet chef

Please bring a salad, a side dish,  
or a dessert to share - your choice

**Door prizes ★ Games ★ White Elephant Sale ★ Raffle**

Great prizes from Trader Joes and Rocco's Ristoranti & Pizzeria

Raffle tickets \$1 each or 6 for \$5

*Bring your friends and family. Everyone Welcome*

*Get better acquainted with each other*

*sharing good food and fun.*

**Bortin Home, 117 Los Altos Ave., Walnut Creek**

Directions: Ygnacio Valley Road to San Carlos, to Los Altos Ave.,

first street in from Ygnacio Valley

## President's Message— Al Johnson

Hope everyone had a great summer! It is September and what better way to end the summer than with our Chapter's Annual Picnic. Please mark your calendars and save the date—Saturday, September 20. Beverly Bortin is again graciously hosting it at her home. Hospitality Chair Jo Ann Johnson and her Picnic Committee are busy making plans for the event. You will not want to miss the picnic. Kim and I hope to see you there.

On a more serious note, in my *President's Message* last month, I spoke to you about the upcoming Chapter elections in February 2009 and stressed the importance of members nominating themselves (*or someone else*) for one of the upcoming available positions:

- President
- Vice President/Program Chair
- Secretary
- Visiting Chair, and
- Newsletter Committee (3 volunteers recommended)

To date, I have only heard from Nancy Baker. Nancy stepped forward and volunteered to fill the American Heart Association Liaison position which Kim currently holds. The Chapter has over 100 members. Surely, there must be some of you who can volunteer and fill these critical positions. The Chapter's livelihood and future viability is at stake. I am very serious about this. Without a Chapter, our Visiting Volunteer Program is in jeopardy and with it our goal of inspiring hope to the heart disease patients we visit at Kaiser Walnut Creek hospital. As I stated at July's General meeting and in last month's *President's Message*, Kim and I will work with and help mentor the new Officers.

During the next couple of months, the Chapter's Nominating Committee (Anna Lee, Beverly Bortin and Kim Johnson) will be following up with



Road, last house on the left.

you. Their goal will be to encourage you to step up and volunteer for one of the leadership positions. Please seriously consider doing so. The Chapter needs you!

I want to also take this opportunity to thank the following members:

**Anna Lee, Treasurer and Publicity Chair.** A few months ago, Anna took on more responsibility by assuming the Treasurer's position. She does a great job maintaining the Chapter's finances and website ([www.mendedhearts254.org](http://www.mendedhearts254.org)). Have you looked at the website lately? If not, definitely check it out. Anna has also accepted more responsibility and is in training to become a Visiting Volunteer. Thank you, Anna!

**Beverly Bortin, Newsletter Editor.** Besides doing a fantastic job on our newsletter *The Ticker Talker* each month, Beverly also manages to find time to put together a couple of other organization's newsletters. Beverly is also taking on more responsibility and has almost completed her Visiting Volunteer training. Thank you, Beverly!

**Jo Ann Johnson, Hospitality Chair.** Thank you to Jo Ann and her husband, Don, (as well as **Wayne and Wanda King**) for their help in making sure we always have plenty of refreshments for our monthly General meetings. Don and Jo Ann are Visiting Volunteers. Wayne is also on the Visiting Volunteer Telephone Committee and Wanda is on the General Meeting Telephone Committee. Thank you, Jo Ann, Don, Wayne and Wanda!

**Norm and Marlene Johnson.** Thank you to Norm and Marlene for ensuring the conference rooms are set up and ready for our General meetings. We would not be able to manage without their help. Thank you, Norm and Marlene!

**B.J. Boone, Membership Chair.** Thank you to B.J. for helping with membership and following up with heart patients by telephone as a member of the Visiting Volunteer Telephone Committee. I also appreciate her stepping forward and leading

June's General meeting while Kim and I were out of town. Thank you, B.J.!

*Nancy Baker, Sunshine Chair.* Nancy does a great job following up and providing "cheer" to members who are not feeling well. I appreciate her for stepping up and volunteering to fill the American Heart Association Liaison position. Nancy is also a Visiting Volunteer. Thank you, Nancy!

*Marv Weaver, Publications Chair.* Marv is very quiet and works behind the scenes ensuring our Chapter's Membership Roster and *The Ticker Talker* newsletter mailing list is up to date. Marv provides the mailing labels so members are able to receive the newsletter each month. In addition, a little known fact that few members know about is Marv is one of the founding members of our Chapter. Thank you, Marv for being there and helping us at our General meetings with the technical aspects of setting up the projector and computer!

*Tim Correia, Randy Finn, Jim Miller, and Marietta Poldrack, Visiting Volunteers.* Our Chapter is fortunate to have Tim, Randy, Jim, and Marietta as part of the Visiting Volunteer team. Tim and Randy stay very busy working at their

full-time jobs but still manage to find time to visit heart patients. Tim is a faithful and dependable Visiting Volunteer for a number of years. Jim is our Chapter's world traveler. When he is not traveling, he plays an important role in visiting heart patients. Marietta Poldrack recently became a Visiting Volunteer. She visits heart patients at Kaiser Antioch hospital. Marietta is currently the sole Visiting Volunteer at Antioch and is looking for more volunteers to help her with the visiting. All of the Visiting Volunteers enjoy sharing their experiences with other heart patients and helping them to understand there is quality of life after being diagnosed with heart disease. Thank you, Tim, Randy, Jim, and Marietta!

*Judy Briemle, Val Compton, and Polly Walton, General Meeting Telephone Committee.* Prior to our monthly General meetings, Judy, Val and Polly (and Wanda King) telephone members to remind and encourage them to attend the meetings. They do a great job. Thank you, Judy, Val Polly, and Wanda!

*Until next month, "It's great to be alive and to help others!"*

## **Mended Hearts Member, Lucy Lo, Teaches Tai Chi**

The Tai Chi class Lucy Lo teaches at Acalanes Adult Education began on September 8 and continues until December 18. This is a beginning class for all ages and will develop balance, leg strength, posture and stress reduction through slow, non-impact exercise. The Course Catalog can be found at [www.acalanes.k12.ca.us](http://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us). The class is given at the Del Valle Campus at 1963 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek. It's not too late to join. The class is offered Monday through Thursday.

Members and friends have shown great interest in Lucy's Tai Chi classes. She has taught them as a volunteer for the past eight years.

## **Recent heart surgery patients and others who are considering membership in Mended Hearts Diablo Chapter 254:**

**W**e hope you enjoy reading our Chapter's *The Ticker Talker* newsletter. In it, you will find interesting articles about our members, heart related articles as well information about our monthly General meetings. Visitors are welcome to attend our meetings.

For those of you who have undergone a heart condition or procedure or know of a relative who has, we hope you seriously consider joining our organization, Mended Hearts, Inc. Mended Hearts, Inc. is affiliated with the American Heart Association.

## THE MOST IMPORTANT WORK OF MENDED HEARTS IS VISITING PATIENTS AND GIVING THEM HOPE AND ENCOURAGEMENT

You, too, can be a visitor. You are given training, and your first three visits are with an experienced visitor to get you started. More visitors are always needed. Those who visit find it heart warming, and a great way to help others.

At the present time, Marietta Poldrack is the only visitor at the Antioch Kaiser Hospital. She can use help. If you live in East County, consider joining her. In August, she visited nine patients and two of them had a spouse present.

At Kaiser Walnut Creek, there were 32 hospital visits, 30 patients were seen and one visit was with family only. The visitors were Nancy Baker, Beverly Bortin, Tim Correia, Randy Finn, Al and Kim Johnson, Don and JoAnn Johnson, and Jim Miller.

### Oysters Are the Real Pearls of the Sea

They are one of the great treasures of the sea. Many love oysters. Others hate the sight of them. If you are one of the former, what better way to take the chill off an autumn's eve than to enjoy a lunch or supper accompanied by a warming hearty oyster stew.

Ancient Greeks believed that Aphrodite, the Goddess of Love, sprang from the ocean on an oyster shell. It was the Greeks who first linked oysters to the power of love.

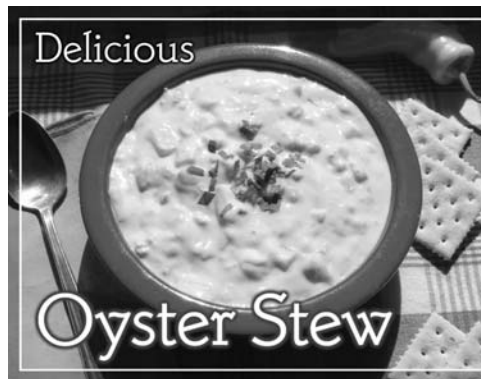
Some Romans actually bought oysters according to their weight in gold. At one point, they launched ships full of slaves to harvest them from the English Channel.

Oysters are nutritionally well-balanced, containing protein and carbohydrates. They are recommended by the American Heart and Lung Association for inclusion in a low-fat diet.

Oysters are also rich in vitamins, containing

B1, B2, B3, and vitamins C and D. Four to five oysters contain the body's daily needs for iron, copper and magnesium.

### OYSTER STEW



### RECIPE

- 1 pint fresh oysters or one 8-ounce can
- 1 four-ounce can of condensed milk
- 3 cups milk
- 4 tablespoons of butter or margarine
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 teaspoons of corn starch
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 2 dashes of nutmeg

Place all the ingredients in the top of a double boiler or in a one-quart pan. Heat slowly over a medium heat, stirring constantly. Don't let it boil.

Ladle the hot stew into four bowls. Add oyster or regular crackers if you like. It's great as a light fare with your favorite sandwich or wrap.

- From Pages

### Small, Bright-colored Produce Is a Good Choice

It appears that each fruit and vegetable is destined to have just a certain amount of nutrients. When they get bigger, they are less nutritious ounce for ounce, than the same type of carrot or apple in a smaller size. That's particularly true when it comes to antioxidants, according to a University of Texas researcher who also says smaller, brightly-colored fruits and vegetables are your best choice.

**\*\* HOW SAFE ARE SLEEPING PILLS?**

\* Sleeping pills help millions of people with insomnia — but for some, a good night's sleep can turn into a nightmare. In this excerpt from a Health After 50 newsletter article, David Neubauer, M.D., Associate Director of the Johns Hopkins Sleep Disorders Center reviews the risks of sleeping pills.

You may have heard that the sleeping pill Ambien (zolpidem) has been linked to odd and potentially dangerous behavior — users don't just sleepwalk, they drive, make phone calls, eat large amounts of food, and strip off their clothes, all while "asleep."

In response to these reports, the FDA has ordered the manufacturers of Ambien — along with manufacturers of over 10 other popular sleeping pills — to add a warning to product labels about these risks.

If you're using sleeping pills to combat insomnia, the recent reports and subsequent warning required by the FDA may seem threatening. Yet David Neubauer, M.D., Associate Director of the Johns Hopkins Sleep Disorders Center and the author of *Understanding Sleeplessness* (Johns Hopkins University Press), says, "These dramatic sleeping pills side effects are really quite rare."

In addition, not all the sleeping pills on the FDA's list are equally as likely to cause side effects. "The FDA attached this warning to a very wide range of medications that work in different ways. For example, Rozerem (ramelteon) affects melatonin receptors in the brain and doesn't cause memory difficulty, nor are there reports of its causing these kinds of strange behaviors," Dr. Neubauer says. However, it has not been available

as long as the other sleeping pills, so rarer side effects may not have yet come to doctors' attention.

\* **BOTTOM LINE ADVICE ON SLEEPING PILLS:** To lower your already low risk of experiencing side effects from sleeping pills, Dr. Neubauer advises that you take no more than your prescribed dose of medication, avoid alcohol when using sleeping pills, and, most important, take your medication when you're already in bed.

People taking sleeping pills should keep in touch with their doctor for regular reevaluation of progress and should also tell their doctor about any side effects that occur. And keep in mind that sleeping pills may not always be the solution to sleeplessness. Insomnia may be related to an underlying and/or undiagnosed medical condition such as depression, chronic pain, Alzheimer's disease, or digestive problems. In some instances, treating an underlying disorder may put an end to sleepless nights.

**\*\* The Sleeping Pills That Made the FDA Warning List:**

- \* Ambien (zolpidem)
- \* Butisol (butabarbital)
- \* Carbrital (pentobarbital and carbromal)
- \* Dalmane (flurazepam)
- \* Doral (quazepam)
- \* Halcion (triazolam)
- \* Lunesta (eszopiclone)
- \* Placidyl (ethchlorvynol)
- \* Prosom (estazolam)
- \* Restoril (temazepam)
- \* Rozerem (ramelteon)
- \* Seconal (secobarbital)
- \* Sonata (zaleplon)

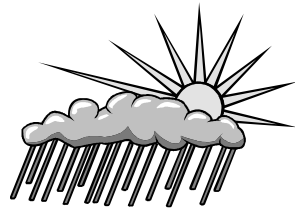
**Physical Activity Reduces Cancer Risk**

**For men:** Studies at UCLA and elsewhere show that physically active men have a lower risk of prostate cancer. Physical activity on a job that included walking and light labor was best.

**For women:** Those who are physically active over their lifetimes are at lower breast cancer risk. Researchers found that in women who were the most active, cancer risk decreased by 26 percent compared to those who were the least active.

**Everyone:** Many studies show exercise helps prevent cancers of the colon.

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# Sunshine Report

by Nancy Baker

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## NEWSLETTER

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Ticker Talker is published by Diablo, Chapter 254, California. Copies are mailed to members and friends, postage courtesy of the Hospital Gift shop, Walnut Creek, California

- The General Meeting of the Chapter usually takes place 10 times a year, on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month, at 1:30 P.M., subject to change.
- The Board meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 1:00 P.M. in the Lilac Building, on Main Street in Walnut Creek, one block south of Kaiser Hospital.

**ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO EVERYONE.**

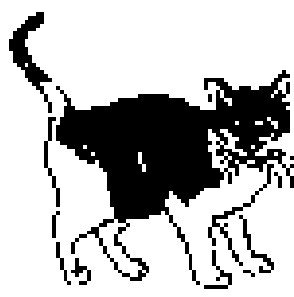
★ **Robert Ahart** - Robert's wife, Sandra, says they are doing great. They are on their way to visit their son and daughter-in-law and three grandchildren in Utah. On the way, they are staying at Lake Tahoe. They walk two to three miles every day. Robert plays Bridge three times a week and Sandra volunteers in the Health Education Dept. at Shadelands. Also, Sandra swims half a mile every day. They recently had their 53rd wedding anniversary and Bob admits that he cheated a little on his healthy eating - but then, haven't we all done that? Well, I know I have. Bob is the heart patient but Sandra is a good example of an encouraging spouse that chooses to live the healthy life, too.

★ **Hazel Horti** Hazel is one of our soon-to-be visitors. She has done the training to be a Kaiser volunteer. Now, she has three practice visits to do - with someone that is already visiting for Mended Hearts - and then she will be "on duty". We are so glad to have her decide to help us fill the days that are empty - when there are no visitors available to visit. Wouldn't you like to join Hazel and all the rest of the Mended Hearts visiting volunteers that give hope to those patients in the cardiac unit?

★ **Marianne and George Godfrey** - I got a good report from them. Marianne's cholesterol is way down and she has stabilized her weight. George is being an encouraging spouse, also.

★ **Beverly Bortin** tells me her oldest son and his wife have just moved back to the United States from Europe to live in Berkeley near their first grandchild, an adorable eight month old little girl. Who can resist a baby? Beverly is happy to have them home.

★ **Congratulations to all those whose Mendaversaries fall in September. May your health continue to improve.**



## Good for Your Heart: a Cat

Yes, it appears to be true. Owning a cat reduces your risk of having a heart attack. Researchers for the National Health and Nutrition Examination Study II found that people who don't own cats have a 40 percent greater risk of dying from a heart attack than cat owners do.

Researchers at the Minnesota Stroke Institute suggest that cats help reduce their owners' stress and anxiety. They found cat owners to be at a lower risk of dying from all cardiovascular diseases, but the difference was significant only for heart attack.

