

American Heart Association  
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**JUNE**  
2005

# Aorta Reporter

The Mended Hearts, Inc. Atlanta Chapter #81  
Founded 1951 Chartered 1973

It's Great to be Alive and Help Others!

*It's Great to be Alive—and to Help Others*

Dedicated to the Memory of Dr. Paul Ambery

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## **PATRICK JANSEN, Executive Director of Cardiac Services WellStar Health System**

**"How to Build a Cardiac Wing  
from the Ground Up"**

**Tuesday, June 21, 2005, 7:30 p.m.**

**SAINT JOSEPH HOSPITAL AUDITORIUM (ONE FLOOR BELOW LOBBY LEVEL)**

***FREE PARKING AVAILABLE***

Drive past the HOSPITAL front entrance and watch for the CANCER CENTER parking deck on the left opposite the main entrance to the CANCER CENTER. Ring the button at the parking deck entrance and tell the attendant who answers that you are attending the Mended Hearts meeting and the gate will be opened.

Remember — If you're reading this, you're invited!!!  
(and we do it all for you; please come, learn & meet many other MENDED HEARTS)

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## **PRESIDENT'S NOTES**

### **I'M CALLING IN SICK BECAUSE...**

If you need new excuses to call in sick to work, here are a few pretty weird ones:

- I was sprayed by a skunk.
- I tripped over my dog and was knocked unconscious.
- My bus broke down and was held up by robbers.
- I was arrested as a result of mistaken identity.
- I forgot to come back to work after lunch.
- I couldn't find my shoes.
- I hurt myself bowling.
- I was spit on by a venomous snake.
- I totaled my wife's jeep in a collision with a cow.
- A hitman was looking for me.
- My curlers burned my hair, and I had to go to the hairdresser.
- I eloped.
- My brain went to sleep, and I couldn't wake it up.
- My cat unplugged my alarm clock.
- I had to be there for my husband's grand jury trial.
- I had to ship my grandmother's bones to India (note: she passed away 20 years ago.)
- I forgot what day of the week it was.
- Someone slipped drugs in my drink last night.
- A tree fell on my car.
- My monkey died.

*Doug Steingraber*

## **CHAPTER NOTES**

Yes, sirree, it's June and you know what they used to say? Why, June is busting out all over, of course. June is also the issue each year that we focus on humorous (at least we think so) stuff. True, you might find something serious in this issue, but we strive for 99.99 percent nonsense. This June I also turn the big seven oh, and that ain't no joke! So much for the .01 percent.

Earlier this year, I mentioned a study on the effects of laughter. Subsequently, I saw some additional reporting on the study that was presented at the American College of Cardiology annual conference. For years, researchers have known that stress has a detrimental effect on blood vessels, including the coronary arteries. This study indicates that laughter has the opposite effect, causing the inner linings of blood vessels to expand, allowing increased blood flow. An earlier study reported that people who laughed on a regular basis had fewer heart attacks, compared to people who were less likely to see humor in their everyday lives.

These studies only shore up what we have surmised all along; i.e., that laughter is the best medicine. This is the basis for our inclusion of light-hearted stuff in every issue. Dr. Sidney Smith, a cardiologist at the UNC School of Medicine, says, "Humankind was given a sense of humor for a reason. Time and time again, physicians see that patients with a positive outlook seem to do better."

I know I often sound like a broken record on this subject, but I try my best to also practice what I preach. I don't care if people that I come in contact with every day laugh with me or at me. Even in my visits to patients at Emory, I remind each one to keep a positive outlook, to keep smiling, and to always look for humor in every possible way. After all, we are the fortunate ones! Patients just a day or so out of surgery often supply the humor. One patient wore a button that read, "I'd rather be over the hill than under it." Another had this to say, "Any day above ground is a good day!" One told me that he asked his surgeon before surgery if after he would be able to play the violin. When the doctor said, "Why, yes," the patient came back with, "Well, that's great because I never could play it before!"

Years ago when we gathered our production crew together to fold, sort, and label each issue of the Aorta, Bernie Kristall always had a few good jokes to keep us entertained. I remember one in particular: A man hit by a car was lying in the street injured. A Good Samaritan took off his coat and, placing it under the injured man's head, inquired if he was comfortable. "I make a living," said the injured man.

I found the following in the South Jersey Deviler and with their permission: Things you don't want to hear when regaining consciousness:

- "Hey Lou, unzip the bag on that one. I thought I saw it move!"
- "What do you mean we injected the wrong patient?"
- "You may as well toe tag this one now. He'll never make it!"
- "Wow, I wouldn't want to go through life lookin' like that!"
- "Blink once for yes, twice for no."
- "Better send the ambulance back; he's not all here!"
- "Hey Charlie, I'll betcha' ten bucks this one kicks the bucket!"
- "The family asked that we pull the plug now!"
- "Put this patient in quarantine, nurse!"
- "I don't understand it...the operation was going so well."
- "How about that! That bear nearly ate his entire leg!"
- "Well...I'm not really a doctor."
- "Hold the patient; this is going to hurt like hell!"
- "Damn, I never saw one come in this bad!"
- "Doctor, this isn't the patient that wanted the sex change!"
- "Igor, hand me the scalpel before this one wakes up."

- “Did the doctor say that she would look like this afterwards?”
- “Holy mackerel! It ripped his love-life right off!”
- “Take care of the others. This one doesn’t have any insurance.”

Remember there is no July issue but in the meantime, enjoy life, keep smiling, and pass it on to others. God willing, we’ll see you here in August.

*George Waterhouse*

A lecturer, when explaining stress management to an audience, raised a glass of water and asked, “How heavy is this glass of water?” Answers called out ranged from 20g to 500g. The lecturer replied, “The absolute weight doesn’t matter. It depends on how long you try to hold it.”

“If I hold it for a minute, that’s not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I’ll have an ache in my right arm. If I hold it for a day, you’ll have to call an ambulance. In each case, it’s the same weight; but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes.”

He continued, “And that’s the way it is with stress management. If we carry our burdens all the time, sooner or later, as the burden becomes increasingly heavier, we won’t be able to carry on. As with the glass of water, you have to put it down for a while and rest before holding it again. When we’re refreshed, we can carry on with the burden.”

“So, before you return home tonight, put the burden of work down. Don’t carry it home. You can pick it up tomorrow. Whatever burdens you’re carrying now, let them down for a moment if you can. Relax; pick them up later after you’ve rested. Life is short. Enjoy it!”

And then he shared some ways of dealing with the burdens of life:

- Accept that some days you’re the pigeon, and some days you’re the statue.
- Always keep your words soft and sweet, just in case you have to eat them.
- Drive carefully. It’s not only cars that can be recalled by their maker.
- If you can’t be kind, at least have the decency to be vague.
- If you lend someone \$20 and never see that person again, it was probably worth it.
- It may be that your sole purpose in life is simply to serve as a warning to others.
- Never put both feet in your mouth at the same time because then you won’t have a leg to stand on.
- Nobody cares if you can’t dance well. Just get up and dance.
- Since it’s the early worm that gets eaten by the bird, sleep late.
- The second mouse gets the cheese.
- When everything’s coming your way, you’re in the wrong lane.
- Birthdays are good for you. The more you have, the longer you live.

- You may be only one person in the world to some people, but to one person, you may be the world.
- Some mistakes are too much fun to only make once.
- We could learn a lot from crayons. Some are sharp, some are pretty, and some are dull. Some have weird names, and all are different colors, but they all have to live in the same box.
- A truly happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery on a detour.

Have an awesome day and know that someone has thought about you today...I did.

*Jill Wilkins*

## **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

To receive the most benefit from your membership, make it *YOUR* Mended Hearts chapter.

*\*David Duarte*

## **LET’S VISIT AWHILE**

Attention Saint Joseph Hospital visitors!! This is not one of the June jokes! All of the patients we used to visit in 3 East have been moved to a new ward on the same floor—3 Southwest. When you come off the elevator at the third floor, go straight ahead and then bear left when you can. It’s not easy to find at first. Our visitors’ book and other materials are in a cabinet marked “Mended Hearts” across from room 391. We no longer have to attend the volunteer update program, which has been moved to May from July. We do have to get the TB test. Please do this in June.

I would like to introduce Monroe Smith, our super visitor at Piedmont Hospital. Monroe is also the visiting coordinator for Piedmont. He visits every Wednesday. Those of you who know Monroe will not be surprised to learn that he is a member of the ROMEO CLUB!! As I understand it, ROMEO stands for REAL OLD MEN EATING OUT!!!

*Herb Jardine*

## **HOSPITAL VISITING REPORT**

During the month of April 2005, we recorded 132 hospital and telephone visits at Emory University Hospital, Crawford Long Hospital, Saint Joseph Hospital, Atlanta Medical Center, Piedmont Hospital, and Grady Hospital.

## JUNE CARDIO-VERSARIES

1969	Frances Hall
1979	Paul Finkel
1980	Dixie Jardine
1984	Barbara Carroll
1994	John Rutledge
1995	Doris Hughes
1996	Beverly Wilson Henry McShan
1998	Barbara Massey
1999	Bonnie Shellebarger Martha Dickerson
2000	James Scaglione
2001	Cora Miles
2003	Ken Wencil William Hall
2004	Deborah Glisson-Gavlick Carina Johnson



### **DON'T FORGET!**

No July meeting or newsletter.  
Watch for news of the next meeting  
in the August issue of the  
Aorta Reporter.

## **SATELLITE MEETING INFO.....**

### *Marietta Satellite*

First Tuesday of the month – 6:30 p.m.  
Kennestone Hospital Rehab Center (behind the hospital)  
Call Doug Steingraber at 770-926-0157 for information.

### *Piedmont Satellite*

(Note Meeting Date and Time Changes)  
Second Thursday of the month – 6:30 p.m.  
Piedmont Hospital – Cardiac Rehab

Call Joann Gorell at 404-605-3283 for information.

### **WHAT'S YOUR SIGN?**

On a septic tank truck in Oregon: “Yesterday’s Meals on Wheels.”

On a septic tank truck sign: “We’re #1 in the #2 business.”

Sign over a gynecologist’s office: “Dr. Jones, at your cervix.”

At a proctologist’s door: “To expedite your visit, please back in.”

On a plumber’s truck: “We repair what your husband fixed.”

On a plumber’s truck: “Don’t sleep with a drip. Call your plumber.”

Pizza shop slogan: “Seven days without pizza makes one weak.”

At a tire shop in Milwaukee: “Invite us to your next blowout.”

On a plastic surgeon’s office door: “Hello. Can we pick your nose?”

At a towing company: “We don’t charge an arm and a leg. We want tows.”

On an electrician’s truck: “Let us remove your shorts.”

In a non-smoking area: “If we see smoke, we will assume you are on fire and take appropriate action.”

On a maternity room door: “Push. Push. Push.”

At an optometrist’s office: “If you don’t see what you’re looking for, you’ve come to the right place.”

On a taxidermist’s window: “We really know our stuff.”

In a podiatrist’s office: “Time wounds all heels.”

At a car dealership: “The best way to get back on your feet — miss a car payment.”

Outside a muffler shop: “No appointment necessary. We hear you coming.”

In a veterinarian’s waiting room: “Be back in five minutes. Sit! Stay!”

At the electric company: “We would be delighted if you’d send in your payment. However, if you don’t, you will be.”

In a restaurant window: “Don’t stand there and be hungry; come on in and get fed up.”

In the front yard of a funeral home: “Drive carefully. We’ll wait.”

At a propane filling station: “Thank heaven for little grills.”

At a Chicago radiator shop: “Best place in town to take a leak.”

## AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION CONNECTIONS

Oops! These medical record blunders were taken from actual patient records:

- The skin was moist and dry.
- The patient was in his usual state of good health until his airplane ran out of gas and crashed.
- The baby was delivered and handed to the pediatrician, who breathed and cried immediately.
- I saw your patient today, who is still under our car for physical therapy.
- The patient lives at home with his mother, father, and pet turtle, who is presently enrolled in day care three times a week.
- She is numb from her toes down.
- The patient suffers from occasional, constant, infrequent headaches.
- Patient was alert and unresponsive.
- When she fainted, her eyes rolled around the room.
- By the time he was admitted, his rapid heart had stopped, and he was feeling better.
- Patient has chest pain if she lies on her left side for over a year.
- On the second day, the knee was better and on the third day, it had completely disappeared.
- The patient has been depressed ever since she began seeing me in 1983.
- The patient is tearful and crying constantly. She also appears to be depressed.
- Discharge status: Alive but without permission.
- The patient refused an autopsy.
- The patient expired on the floor uneventfully.
- Patient has left his white blood cells at another hospital.
- She slipped on the ice and apparently her legs went in separate directions in early December.
- The patient had a rash over his truck.

This news report just in: “Doctors at a hospital in Brooklyn, New York, have gone on strike. Hospital officials say they will find out what the doctors’ demands are as soon as they can get a pharmacist over there to read the picket signs!”

Seen on a nurse’s bumper sticker:

**ER RN — pass me now, see me later!**

*Vanessa G. Garrity  
Volunteer and Communications Coordinator*

## NUTRITION NOTES

### IS THIS DIET FOOD?

As a dietitian, I hear many negatives about “health” foods and how terrible they are. I have heard healthy fiber rich cereals described as eating wood or bits of twigs. Low fat and fat-free butters, mayo, or salad dressing compared to the taste of plastic or worse. Clients’ and friends’ mock disgust at suggestions for healthy alternatives to meats or diet recipes. However, it is always interesting when you slip a “diet” product into their meal or snack disguised as a regular food. This is always a source of entertainment to me — of course, I am a dietitian!

One such unsuspecting guinea pig was an old boyfriend of mine who constantly complained of all the “fake food” in my apartment. He hated my soy milk, light salad dressing, light ice cream, reduced-fat peanut butter, high fiber bread, two percent cheese, and mixed green salads. He did not understand how I could stand anything but real whole milk, Caesar dressing, white bread, or plain old iceberg lettuce. What I did not understand was how he never could tell the difference if I fixed him cereal with soy milk or grilled cheese with fiber bread and two percent cheese. He rarely noticed he was consuming large quantities of reduced-fat chocolate ice cream—unless he scooped it out himself. I, unbeknownst to him, saved his body from much cholesterol, trans fat, fat grams, and calories. Plus, it added a bit of amusement for myself.

Another friend of mine, who was an avid cook, had a similar experience. As she was preparing a tofu dish, one of her friends walked into her apartment and started eating what he assumed was chicken. Toward the end of his meal, he said, “This is really good, but is this a different kind of chicken?” She laughed as she told her friend, who always claimed his distaste for tofu, the truth about the plate of chicken he had just finished off.

It makes me wonder why there is such a prejudice against health foods. Are Brussels sprouts and spinach as bad as you think? Does skim milk really taste like dirty water? Or does that high fiber cereal truly taste like sawdust? Maybe these foods might not be so bad if tried with an open mind. I say give the Brussels sprouts a chance—you might like them!

*Kristin Cox RD, LD  
Clinical Dietitian, Atlanta Medical Center*

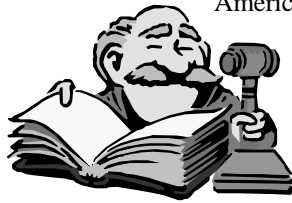
### ONLY IN AMERICA...

do people order **double** cheeseburgers, **large** fries, and a **Diet** Coke.

do we buy hot dogs in packages of ten and buns in packages of eight.

do drugstores make the sick walk all the way to the back of the store to get their prescriptions while healthy people can buy cigarettes at the front.

## DISORDER IN THE COURT



These are from a book called Disorder in the American Courts and are things people actually said in court, word for word, taken down and now published by court reporters who had the torment of staying calm while these exchanges were actually taking place.

Q: Are you sexually active?

A: No, I just lie there.

Q: What is your date of birth?

A: July 15th.

Q: What year?

A: Every year.

Q: What gear were you in at the moment of the impact?

A: Gucci sweats and Reeboks.

Q: This myasthenia gravis, does it affect your memory at all?

A: Yes.

Q: And in what ways does it affect your memory?

A: I forget.

Q: You forget? Can you give us an example of something that you've forgotten?

Q: How old is your son, the one living with you?

A: Thirty-eight or 35, I can't remember which.

Q: How long has he lived with you?

A: Forty-five years.

Q: What was the first thing your husband said to you when he woke up that morning?

A: He said, "Where am I, Doris?"

Q: And why did that upset you?

A: My name is Susan.

Q: Do you know if your daughter has ever been involved in voodoo or the occult?

A: We both do.

Q: Voodoo?

A: We do.

Q: You do?

A: Yes, voodoo.

Q: Now, doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn't know about it until the next morning?

A: Did you actually pass the bar exam?

Q: The youngest son, the 20-year-old, how old is he?

A: He's 20.

Q: Were you present when your picture was taken?

Q: So the date of the baby's conception was August 8?

A: Yes.

Q: And what were you doing at that time?

Q: She had three children, right?

A: Yes.

Q: How many were boys?

A: None.

Q: Were there any girls?

Q: How was your first marriage terminated?

A: By death.

Q: And by whose death was it terminated?

Q: Can you describe the individual?

A: He was about medium height and had a beard.

Q: Was this a male or a female?

Q: Is your appearance here this morning pursuant to a deposition notice which I sent to your attorney?

A: No, this is how I dress when I go to work.

Q: Doctor, how many autopsies have you performed on dead people?

A: All my autopsies are performed on dead people.

Q: ALL your responses MUST be oral, OK? What school did you go to?

A: Oral.

Q: Do you recall the time that you examined the body?

A: The autopsy started around 8:30 p.m.

Q: And Mr. Dennington was dead at the time?

A: No, he was sitting on the table wondering why I was doing an autopsy.

Q: Are you qualified to give a urine sample?

Q: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

A: No.

Q: Did you check for blood pressure?

A: No.

Q: Did you check for breathing?

A: No.

Q: So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

A: No.

Q: How can you be so sure, doctor?

A: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

Q: But could the patient have still been alive, nevertheless?

A: Yes, it is possible that he could have been alive and practicing law somewhere.

## **THE VENT-RICLE**

A few days ago, a friend of mine went to the funeral of a cardiologist who was given an elaborate send-off.

A huge heart covered in flowers stood behind the casket during the service. Following the eulogy, the heart opened, and the casket rolled inside. The heart then closed, sealing the doctor in the beautiful heart forever.

At that point, one of the mourners burst into laughter. When all eyes stared at him, he said: "I'm sorry, I was just thinking of my own funeral - I'm a gynecologist."

A proctologist in the congregation fainted.

*Contributed by Herb Jardine*

## **SENIOR PERSONAL ADS**

Some "senior" personal ads seen in Florida newspapers. (Who says seniors don't have a sense of humor?):

**FOXY LADY:** Sexy, fashion-conscious blue-haired beauty, 80's, slim, 5'4" (used to be 5'6"), searching for sharp-looking, sharp-dressing companion. Matching white shoes and belt a plus.

**LONG-TERM COMMITMENT:** Recent widow who has just buried fourth husband and am looking for someone to round out a six-unit plot. Dizziness, fainting, shortness of breath not a problem.

**SERENITY NOW:** I am into solitude, long walks, sunrises, the ocean, yoga and meditation. If you are the silent type, let's get together, take our hearing aids out and enjoy quiet times.

**WINNING SMILE:** Active grandmother with original teeth seeking a dedicated flosser to share rare steaks, corn on the cob and caramel candy.

**BEATLES OR STONES?** I still like to rock, still like to cruise in my Camaro on Saturday nights, and still like to play the guitar. If you were a groovy chick or are now a groovy hen, let's get together and listen to my eight-track tapes.

**MEMORIES:** I can usually remember Monday through Thursday. If you can remember Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, let's put our two heads together.

**MINT CONDITION:** Male, 1932, high mileage, good condition, some hair, many new parts including hip, knee, cornea, valves. Isn't in running condition, but walks well.

## **CHALK ONE UP FOR THE OLD DUDE**

An older, white-haired man walked into a jewelry store one Friday evening with a beautiful young gal at his side. He told the jeweler he was looking for a special ring for his girlfriend. The jeweler looked through his stock and brought out a \$5,000 ring and showed it to him. The

old man said, "I don't think you understand, I want something very special."

At that statement, the jeweler went to his special stock and brought another ring over. "Here's a stunning ring at only \$40,000," the jeweler said. The young lady's eyes sparkled and her whole body trembled with excitement. Seeing this, the old man said, "We'll take it."

The jeweler asked how payment would be made and the old man stated by check. "I know you need to make sure the check is good, so I'll write it now, and you can call the bank on Monday to verify the funds, and I'll pick the ring up Monday afternoon," he said.

Monday morning, a very teed-off jeweler phoned the old man. "There's no money in that account."

"I know," said the old man, "but can you imagine the weekend I had?"

## **THE COLORECTAL SURGEON**

We praise the colorectal surgeon,  
Misunderstood and much maligned.  
Slaving away in the heart of darkness,  
Working where the sun don't shine.

Respect the colorectal surgeon,  
It's a calling few would crave.  
Lift up your hands and join us,  
Let's all do the finger wave.

When it comes to spreading joy,  
There are many techniques.  
Some spread joy to the world,  
And others just spread cheeks.  
Some may think the cardiologist  
Is their best friend,

But the colorectal surgeon knows...  
He'll get you in the end!

Why the colorectal surgeon?  
It's one of those mysterious things.  
Is it because in that profession,  
There are always openings?  
When I first met a colorectal surgeon,  
He did not quite understand.  
I said, "Hey, nice to meet you,  
But do you mind? We don't shake hands."

He sailed right through medical school  
Because he was a whiz,  
Oh, but he never thought of psychology  
Though he read passages.  
A doctor he wanted to be,  
For golf he loved to play.  
But this is not quite what he meant...  
By eighteen holes a day!

We praise the colorectal surgeon,  
Misunderstood and much maligned.  
Slaving away in the heart of darkness,  
Working where the sun don't shine!

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

We (I) would like to join Mended Hearts, Inc., Chapter #81

Atlanta  or Satellite: Marietta  Piedmont

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_

**DID YOU HAVE:**

Bypass Surgery  Balloon  Pacemaker  Heart Attack

Valve Surgery:  Mitral  Tricuspid  Aortic  Pulmonary

Other \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP: FAMILY  SINGLE

New member family dues are \$32.00 and new member single dues are \$22.00.  
Please make your check payable to:  
**The Mended Hearts, Inc., Chapter #81**  
Mail to: John Crosbie, Treasurer  
3401 Winter Wood Court  
Marietta, GA 30062-1247

RETIRED YES  NO

DATE OF CARDIAC EVENT OR SURGERY: \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership covers a twelve-month period from date of enrollment and includes:**

- Insignia pin
- Chapter newsletter
- Subscription to quarterly national magazine, *Heartbeat*

**Aorta Reporter**

A copy of *Aorta Reporter* is mailed for three consecutive months following your hospital stay or referral as a heart patient. It is our way of keeping in touch while you continue to recuperate. We enjoyed meeting you and hope you received some comfort and encouragement from us. Having lived the same experiences, we are willing to take time out of our lives because we want to share our experiences in your recovery. As you become active again, you and your family are invited to attend our Atlanta Chapter #81 or any other chapter meetings as guests. In getting to know us, we hope you will decide to join us in helping each other. Our 7:30 p.m. meetings are the third Tuesday of each month.

**Mended Hearts**

Mended Hearts is a nationwide support organization, affiliated with the American Heart Association, for individuals with heart disease, including persons recovering from heart attacks or open-heart surgery. Members give hope and encouragement to others by providing living proof that persons with heart disease can lead full, productive lives. Family and friends are also welcome to attend the free monthly sessions. For information, call 770-850-6945 or your local American Heart Association.

**Visit Chapter #81 at  
[www.mendedheartatlanta.org](http://www.mendedheartatlanta.org)**

**ATLANTA MENDED HEARTS, CHAPTER #81**

**678-385-2062**

c/o American Heart Association  
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