

HEAR/SAY

Hearing Resources

A Division of Ear Nose & Throat Center

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NEW WEB SITE WILL BE A HELP TO YOU!

Welcome to our Spring 2009 edition of *Hear/Say*. We have lots of exciting information for you to read about in this issue.

Hearing Resources has a new and improved website! Here is the address that we hope you will remember because you will want to visit the site often:

www.myhearingresources.com.

Simple - right? Just add "my" in front of "hearing resources," make it into one word and you'll connect with the best hearing-related website in West Michigan!

The site is, first of all, **educational** and in-

cludes an award-winning video that is chock full of information about ears, hearing loss and digital hearing aid technology. This video answers many of your most commonly asked questions regarding hearing.

The site is also very **visual** -- picturing and profiling the five professional audiologists on our staff.

Pictures of both office locations and maps showing how to get to them are also on the site.

The site is **interactive** and allows you to print off copies of "A Guide to Better Hear-

ing" -- a brochure that you can read and give to a friend or loved-one. You can also connect with the Hearing Resources office to schedule an appointment, order batteries and/or other hearing-related accessories, or ask a question.

Our new website is **dynamic** and will always be a "work in progress." You'll soon be able to see a section on special events and promotions -- so you will want to check back with us often.

Please check it out and tell your friends and family members about this new and important internet resource that tells what you need to know about ears and hearing.

The Choice - and Convenience - are Yours -- Southeast or Southwest!

You may already be aware that Hearing Resources (along with parent ENT Center) has two offices at which you may see its staff members. The main office is located at 655 Kenmoor SE, while the new Southwest office in Byron Center is located in the Saint Mary's Southwest Center situated just south of M6 at the Byron Center Road exit. Each office is open from 8:30 AM until 5 PM Monday through Friday.

So if you're a resident of one of the Southwestern or Western suburbs, it is likely more convenient to schedule your appointments at the Southwest Office. Both Robyn

and Allison have hours in this office. Also in this office is our new full-time receptionist, Blanca Hulsebus. Blanca had been a part-time employee with the ENT Center but since February of this year has also assumed the responsibility of receptionist for Hearing Resources.

If you are having a small problem with your hearing aid or need to purchase supplies, you may drop in at the Southwest office and Blanca will be happy to give you assistance.

This same offer (of assistance) also applies to the Kenmoor office where Marie will be happy to help you.

Which Phone is Best? Which Cell Phone is Best?

In the past, hearing on the telephone has been a major complaint from hearing aid wearers. T-coils and improved technology have greatly helped to solve that problem. With the popularity of cell phones in recent years, however, hearing on the phone can become an even greater challenge.

Given the impact of telephones on modern life and communications, it has become more important than ever to understand and deal with changes in the telecommunications field that will lead to better and more satisfying phone communication.

When shopping for a **“land line” phone** you wish to use with your hearing aid, be sure the phone use does not cause screaming feedback noise when you hold the phone up to your hearing aid. If feedback occurs you may want your audiologist to adjust your aid to be used on an acoustic or t-coil setting.

In order to speak on the phone using the t-coil setting you may have to push a button on your hearing aid, or you may want to purchase hearing aids with an **automatic telephone adjustment**.

Another option with your home phone is to use the **speaker setting**. This allows you to hear the conversation without holding the phone up

to your ear and thus allows you to hear the voice coming over the phone with both ears simultaneously.

This is actually ideal as our brains are “wired” to interpret speech best when input is coming into both ears at the same time and speech clarity and understanding is much improved.

What about **cell phones**? Since they are very mobile and more often used in public environments, it can be especially challenging to find the phone that works for you, the hearing aid wearer. As few cell phones have a t-coil function, feedback is often a problem. The use of the speaker setting on your cell phone in a public location will avoid the feedback issue. However, this makes your conversation anything but private. Unless you want everyone to know what your phone call is about, the use of the speaker setting is best utilized at home and not in the middle of the mall.

Recently hearing aid manufacturers have made it possible for you to hear your cell phone conversations directly in your hearing aids, eliminating feedback and privacy issues.

The Phonak Corporation, for instance, has several models that, along with an accessory receiver worn around the neck (under your shirt or

blouse), allow you **hands-free, wireless** blue tooth cell phone conversations. The sound arrives in both ears simultaneously from your cell phone, located in your pocket or purse. It's truly amazing in terms of speech clarity and understanding! (Ask one of our audiologists for a demo.) Get more info when you click on Phonak under “digital hearing aids” on our website.

Staff Training Update

Last March two of our audiologists, Allison Pelton and Robyn Strangways, attended a hearing aid manufacturer's training conference put on by the ReSound Corporation.

In April, Dr. Susan Have-man-Kruyf attended the American Academy of Audiology national conference in Dallas, TX, along with 4,000 audiologists from North America and several other countries.

The event featured presentations, hands-on training and interaction with audiologists involved in research, manufacturing, design, education, training, health care, and geriatrics -- just to mention a few of the highlights.

The field of audiology progresses with lightening speed. Our desire is always to be at the forefront of what is going on in this industry so that we can better inform and serve our patients.

Bill Would Save \$

Hearing Resources would like to encourage all persons reading this newsletter (and especially those who use hearing aids) to take a moment to read up on the proposed legislation introduced to congress that, if passed, would give purchasers of hearing aids a substantial \$500 tax credit per hearing aid once every five years.

To read about this proposed legislation, please go to www.hearingaidtaxcredit.org on the Internet. It gives you all the information you need to know to support the passing of this bill. It also provides a letter template you may use to write (e-mail) your Congressional members to indicate your support of the bill's passing.

If passed, this legislation

NEW HEARING AIDS "RESTORES" HIGH-FREQUENCY AUDIBILITY

The most common type of hearing problem we encounter is the loss of the ability to hear high-frequency speech sounds. These critical high-frequency parts of speech account for 65% of speech clarity.

We often hear the comment, "I can hear, I just can't understand what is being said." Our staff is particularly enthusiastic about three new products from

would not only provide a financial benefit to those who are hearing impaired and purchase hearing aids, it would provide a stimulus to those persons (31.5 million in the U.S.) who need hearing instruments to radically change and improve their quality of life.

Thanks for your support.

Phonak. These hearing aids, the **Naida, Audéo YES** and the **Exélia Art**, have the ability to move inaudible higher frequency speech sounds to lower portions of the frequency range, thus making these important speech sounds audible to many with hearing loss.

This new technology called "SoundRecover" can often dramatically improve the clarity of speech, even for those with profound hearing loss!

You can further research these hearing aids yourself by going on line and clicking on the **Phonak** name under the "Digital Hearing Aids" category on our website, www.myhearingresources.com.

These products also feature wireless connectivity to cell phones, computers and other devices binaurally (i.e. both ears receive the speech at the same time).

Our audiologists are able to demonstrate these new hi-tech features for you when you come into the office for a hearing test or hearing aid evaluation or product demonstration.

HR Staff News . . .

Once again, we have happy news from our audiologist Allison and her husband Bob. Their son, Walker, who just celebrated his second birthday, will soon be joined by not one, but two siblings! Allison and Bob are expecting twins this summer!

The staff members at Hearing Resources and the ENT Center are all excited for Allison's family. While Allison is out on maternity leave, Susan, Robyn, Deb and Cecelia will be taking good care of her patients.

Because Allison will be out of the office in the summer, staff members who cover for her will be taking their vacations early this year. Robyn has seized the opportunity to travel to New Zealand where she will hike, camp and kayak throughout the country's scenic wilderness. Susan (along with husband Jerry) took a few days in April to visit her son in Texas, and then took the remainder of Spring Vacation relaxing at home with family and friends.

Ear, Nose & Throat Center

Hearing Resources

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Q & A's

Q. I am a serious musician and practice several hours a day. I know loud factory noises are harmful to hearing but what about my beautiful music?

A. Volume is measured in decibels. It doesn't matter if the dB is caused by a stamping machine or a symphony orchestra — at a certain level damage can occur to your hearing. The damage potential depends upon the dB level and the time of exposure. Generally 90 dB is the volume at which damage can begin to

occur and symphonic orchestras can register more than 90 dB.

Q. My husband is required by OSHA to wear hearing protection at the factory. I love music — should I borrow his ear plugs when practicing?

A. The typical industrial noise protection plug or muff reduces high frequencies more than low frequencies. This will distort the sound of the music you love by limiting the higher notes and overtones that give music its depth and beauty. There are wonderful musi-

cians' ear plugs available that will not distort the tonal quality of your instrument. HR audiologists can provide you with custom fit ear plugs designed for music lovers. We have made them for members of our city's symphony and for church organists. We are also the source for ear monitors for musicians working with electronic music amplifiers. Future years of musical enjoyment depend upon protecting your hearing today. For more information look up www.hearnet.com, a non-profit hearing information source for musicians and music lovers.