



Fall 2008

Volume 12

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Better hearing. Doesn't that sound good?

HEAR & NOW

Patriot Center for Hearing Loss Newsletter



You're Never Too Old...or Too Young...for Better Hearing!

If you have been using the excuse of being too old to get hearing aids, meet Hettie Burch. At nearly 103 years old, she understands age has nothing to do with better hearing. She knows that she deserves to hear her best, whether she is 52 or 102! She started wearing her hearing aid just over a year ago. She tells us the desire to hear people better was the motivating factor to seek help for her hearing loss. Hettie enjoys working with her hands and spent many years as a seamstress. She now stays busy doing things around the house but stopped long enough to go to Myrtle Beach for the first time in her life last year. Imagine the wonder of seeing and feeling the ocean for the very first time! Hettie is looking forward to celebrating another birthday next month and we look forward to continuing to help her hear her best.



If you think hearing aids will make you look old, take a look at this cutie in his beautiful blue hearing aids. At seven years old, Blake Coffey may be young, but he is smarter than a lot of folks who are considerably older. He knows the importance of better hearing, referring to his hearing aids as his "ears". He wears them every day and uses a wireless device at school that essentially puts his teacher's voice directly into his hearing aids through a microphone that she uses. Blake enjoys school and says Science is his favorite subject. For fun, he likes to ride his bike or his scooter. His favorite book is *Henry and Mudge* and his favorite show on TV is *iCarly*. Blake says that he loves music, which is one of the things he likes best about his hearing aids. When asked about his most special day, Blake thinks back to shortly after he first got his hearing aids at only 18 months of age and heard the "buds" (birds) singing!



ON THE HOMEFRONT



On July 31, Tony's stepfather, George, passed away. He was 70 years old and died rather suddenly from an aggressive form of lung cancer. George lived with Tony's mother in San Antonio but enjoyed visiting East Tennessee. We were fortunate enough to have them visit about this time last year. His favorite thing to do while here was to simply sit on the front porch and enjoy a cup of coffee and just relax. When we heard he was sick, we arranged to go see him as soon as possible. We didn't realize just how little time was left. We are very grateful that we had a chance to see him one last time, and though I think he knew it, we got to tell him how just much he meant to us. We love you and miss you George!

On a much lighter note, we have a new baby at our house. No, it isn't a real baby. It isn't even the 4-legged, furry variety this time. This "baby" has 2 wheels and is a dream come true for my husband. He has been talking about getting a motorcycle for as long as I've known him and used to ride one years before we met. After successfully completing a Motorcycle Safety Course and getting his license this summer, Tony brought home an 800 lb beauty! Between the boon in baby boomers reaching middle age and the economy-minded gas-conscious, there are more and more motorcycles on the road. Some of them are our patients or their family members and one of them is my guy ☺ so please be careful and keep an eye out for them to help keep them safe.



Politics have never made for polite dinner conversation and I am certainly not one to get into a big discussion about it (for one thing, I have more questions than I do answers!) *but* this election year has got people talking and I think that is a good thing. Regrettably, I am a late bloomer, having only recently realized that voting is not just an honor and a privilege but an obligation; one that I have failed to understand or abide by in past elections. But I finally get it. We have the right to not vote but abstaining is a vote by default, just one you have no say in! In other words, your lack of a vote increases the strength of those who do vote, creating a majority opinion that may not be true. So I encourage you to make a decision and vote this November. If you believe in prayer, as I do, ask God for guidance. And remember to continue to pray for whoever gets elected, even if not the one you voted for.

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Frequently Asked Questions

1) Should I take my hearing aids out when getting x-rays? You should remove your hearing aids and leave them outside the room when getting x-rays, MRIs or CT scans. You do not, however, need to remove them for airport security x-rays. (the TSA website has some great tips for travelers with hearing impairment at www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/specialneeds/editorial_1380.shtm)

2) Are hearing aid batteries recyclable? This type of battery is not currently being recycled. Energizer and Rayovac both recommend hearing aid batteries be disposed of in the trash but not where they will be burned.

3) I have heard that cell phones might pose potential health risks. Can hearing aids cause any harm? Only if turn you them off when your wife is talking to you. Just kidding! Hearing aids are very safe and can protect you from potential harm by allowing you to hear approaching danger. The batteries in hearing aids are harmful only if swallowed, so we recommend you keep your hearing aids and hearing aid batteries away from children and pets.

4) Should I sleep in my hearing aids? We recommend you take your hearing aids out at night to allow your ears as well as your hearing aids a chance to air out a bit. If you feel you need them at night, consider taking turns by wearing your right one night, then the left. Or consider using alerting devices such as alarm clocks or smoke detectors that shake you awake, door bells and telephones connected to a bedside lamp that flashes, etc. Another thought is to get a dog. Sounds silly but they make great "ears" for you at nighttime. (if you know me at all, you know I'm always trying to find good homes for good dogs!)

5) How often should I wear my hearing aids? We recommend you wear them most of your waking hours, except when around loud noises during which time you should wear ear muffs or plugs. The more you wear your hearing aids, the more benefit you will notice. Before you had hearing loss, you were constantly hearing sounds around you. Wearing your aids even when home alone gives your brain a chance to adjust to all the subtle sounds you have been missing. When you are in a situation you *need* to hear better, your brain and ears have been prepared, so to speak, and are better able to tune out distracting noises and focus on the sounds you want to hear. A gentleman recently tried hearing aids and reported he did not notice much improvement but a check of his data logging, built into the aids, revealed that he had averaged one hour of wear per day for the past 2 weeks. It is not surprising that he did not notice significant benefit with so little usage. Think of it like this, you have full-time hearing loss so you need full-time hearing aids. If you are having trouble wearing your aids, let us know so we can help.