

INFORMATION FROM

Associated Audiologists, Inc. *"Hearing Your Best for Life"*

## Associated Audiologists Helps Former Patriots Quarterback Hear His Best

Steve Grogan has packed a lot of living into 66 years. A stand-out high school athlete from Ottawa, Kan., he went to Kansas State on a football scholarship, where he was the starting quarterback his junior and senior years.

Following graduation, Steve was selected in the fifth round of the 1975 NFL Draft by the New England Patriots, where he spent 16 seasons as the team's quarterback.

But along the way, Steve was exposed to some loud noises that likely damaged his hearing. Growing up, he mowed yards and enjoyed hunting. "No one wore hearing protection back then," Steve said.

About the same time he joined the Patriots, professional football teams began building indoor stadiums. "At practices, they would blast the sound of a jet over the speaker system so we could get used to the roar of the crowd," he said. "I'm sure all those things combined, plus aging, have damaged my hearing."

After retiring from the Patriots, Steve's career turned to motivational speaking, as well as managing his own sporting goods company.

"I spent a lot of time at charity functions or in crowds at events," he

said. "Eventually, it became more and more difficult to hear. I got pretty good at lip reading. I would nod my head and see the person's lips move, but it was frustrating not to hear everything that was being said. I know I missed out on a lot of important conversations."

Some of those conversations happened at home. "I really had trouble hearing my wife, Robbi," Steve admitted. "High pitches were totally gone. She would tell me something, and I would have to ask her to repeat herself again and again. That gets frustrating."

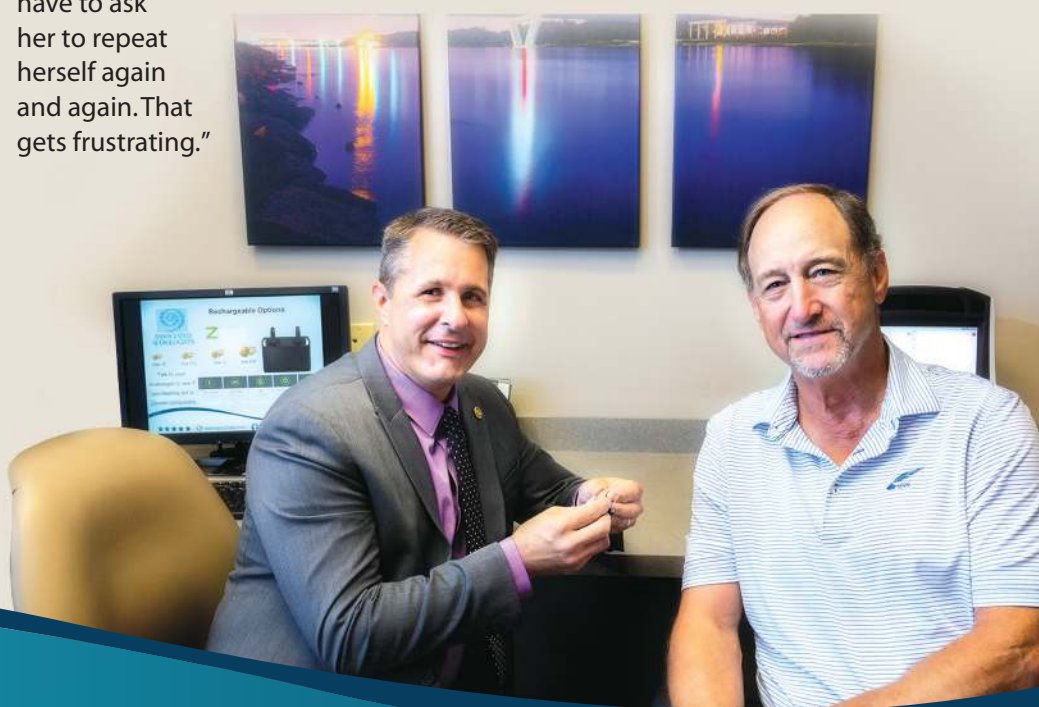
Several years ago, a Boston-area practice fit Steve with hearing aids, but he was reluctant to wear them. "They did help me hear better in crowds, but other than that, I didn't wear them like I should have. Eventually, they ended up in a drawer."

But recently, Steve decided to give hearing aids another try, this time with Associated Audiologists.

"Robbi sees Dr. Steele and has been very pleased with all he's done for her, so she encouraged me to see him, too," he said.

*Continued on page 5*

Dr. Tim Steele with former Patriots Quarterback, Steve Grogan.



# Hearing Your Best



## Hear Here...

*By Tim Steele, Ph.D., President and CEO,  
Associated Audiologists, Inc.*

At bedtime prayers my youngest daughter Kate asked, "Daddy since you're an audiologist, can you fix Lilly's ear? It came off." After a super busy Monday, I wanted to say "no," but so many of my patients over the years have reminded me how quickly these days pass by.

So this is as close as I'll come to "ear surgery," but Kate was so happy that I sewed her toy rabbit's ear back on. Lilly used to be white, but I had to use grey thread because of all the love she's had over 10 years with Kate.

We adopted Kate in 2008 and it seems like yesterday. We had been to Calcutta, India with Dr. Jim Wise and Heart to Heart International in 1996. After visiting the orphanages organized by Saint Teresa of Calcutta, we felt the first calling to adopt. Years later, Julie and I took foster-to-adopt classes, and the next thing we knew we had our forever baby, Kate.

Associated Audiologists serves patients and has employees touched by adoption. This is why we support organizations like YouThrive, which is a local non-profit helping young people who are just transitioning out of foster care in Kansas.

We also support the Red Scarf Project, which provides knitted red scarves to college-aged youth who have transitioned out of foster care. Due to the generosity of our staff and patients, we've been able to provide more than 200 handmade scarves since we began working with the Red Scarf Project.

As of June 2019, 7,598 Kansas children and approximately 13,000 Missouri children, through no fault of their own, were in state custody and placed in foster care. Each year, almost 1,000 of these young people age out of the system without any family support.

As president and CEO of Associated Audiologists, it's my privilege to help support good organizations in our community that help young people. As



The Steele family



Dr. Steele carefully repairs Lilly's ear.

Kate's father, I'm sure glad I was able to help mend her toy rabbit, but it's sad that so many children don't have that support.

Here's a big "thank you" to all of you who help us support organizations like the Red Scarf Project and YouThrive. It truly takes a village.



## New Eastern Jackson County Clinic Now Open

**This new clinic will provide easy access for patients from the Independence, Lee's Summit and Blue Springs areas.**

Travis Hopkins Williams, Au.D., and David Nissen, Au.D., are the audiologists dedicated to serving this clinic. They also will continue to care for patients in our Overland Park and Prairie Village clinics.

Our new Eastern Jackson County full-service clinic is staffed Monday through Friday and offers:

- > State-of-the-art diagnostic hearing evaluations
- > Ear wax removal
- > Advanced digital hearing products featuring Bluetooth technology, artificial intelligence and machine learning from the world's most respected manufacturers, all backed by unparalleled service
- > Real-ear hearing aid verification technology
- > Tinnitus evaluation and management
- > Urgent hearing aid service and repairs
- > Budget-friendly technology and payment options
- > Insurance benefits coordination

### **Associated Audiologists Eastern Jackson County**

*Cliffview Professional Building  
4721 S. Cliff Ave., Suite 201  
Independence, MO 64055  
(Near 291 and 40 Highways)*

**If this new location is more convenient for you, call 816-642-2626 to schedule an appointment.**

# Fall Safety

Falls are the number one cause of injuries and deaths from injury among older Americans, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

In fact, every second of every day in the United States an older adult falls.

Often, falls are caused by dizziness or balance disorders, such as benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV), a common condition we can diagnose and treat at Associated Audiologists. But winter, with icy and slick conditions, can make falling an even greater risk, no matter what your age.

Here are some suggestions from the National Institutes of Health to help you prevent falls.

## Outside:

- > Take small steps to maintain your center of gravity.
- > Keep your hands free to help with balance.
- > Use a cane or walker if needed.
- > Wear rubber-soled, non-slip shoes for the best traction.
- > Watch where you step. Look out for "black" ice, and walk on grass when sidewalks are slick.
- > Throw ice melt, salt or kitty litter on icy sidewalks for traction.

## Inside:

- > Keep rooms free of clutter, especially floors.
- > Wear flat or low-heeled shoes.
- > Do not walk in socks, stockings, or slippers.
- > Be sure rugs have skid-proof backs or are tacked to the floor.
- > Be sure stairs are well lit and have rails on both sides.
- > Put grab bars on bathroom walls near the tub, shower, and toilet.
- > Use a nonskid bathmat in the shower or tub.
- > Keep a flashlight next to your bed.

- > Use a sturdy stepstool with a handrail and wide steps.
- > Add more lights in rooms.
- > Buy a cordless phone or cell phone so that you don't have to rush to the phone when it rings and so that you can call for help if you fall.

There are also many new technologies available to help in case of a fall. For example, some hearing aid technology now utilizes fall detection. There are also neck-worn alerting systems in case of a fall or emergency that can be utilized. If you have dizziness, vertigo, imbalance, or a history or fear of falling, you may benefit from a comprehensive equilibrium evaluation.

**To request an appointment with Danielle Dorner, Au.D., our dizziness and balance specialist, please call 816-442-7831, or talk with your physician about a referral.**

**We offer testing at our Overland Park and Northland Clinics.**







## How to Deal with Challenging Listening Environments

Because you have a hearing loss, you likely have more difficulty understanding speech in challenging listening environments, like noisy restaurants or at parties, even when you are wearing your hearing aids.

There often are three main barriers to improved understanding for anyone with a hearing loss:

### 1. Distance from the sound or signal of interest

The range at which you can hear will decrease when you have hearing loss. As the distance from a speaker or signal of interest increases, your ability to listen to and understand that sound decreases. Sitting closer to the sound source, as well as reducing barriers and distractions, will help improve your understanding and reduce listening effort.

### 2. Background noise

Background noise challenges everyone, but it is even more challenging if you have hearing loss or asymmetrical hearing where one ear has different hearing than the other. It becomes increasingly harder to hear when background noise is as loud as the sound you want to hear. Audiologists refer to this as the signal-to-noise ratio.

When possible, eliminate or reduce the background noise. Try to position yourself so that the noise is behind you, and not coming from the same direction as the sound you want to hear.

Communication partners should face one another and be sure there is good lighting. This can support visual and facial cues and can improve your understanding of what's being said because it provides context.

### 3. Reverberation

Reverberation is the persistence of sound in a room after the original sound has stopped, like an echo. A room with good acoustics is designed to decrease reverberation, making it easier to hear. The amount of reverberation depends mainly on the size of a room or space and the surface materials used in the room.

Large rooms with high ceilings, flat, hard surfaces and open floor plans are difficult listening environments for anyone with hearing loss. Look for an area with softer furnishings that absorb sound, like carpet and rugs, versus tile or hardwood floors. These will reduce reverberation and make listening and understanding easier.

### How Hearing Aids Help

Hearing aids can improve your ability to understand what's being said in these challenging listening environments.

According to the Hearing Industries Association, hearing aids built with artificial intelligence (AI) or machine learning can detect your environment and learn your preferences for listening.

For example, when seated in a noisy restaurant with a friend or spouse, hearing aids with AI can automatically shift to provide more comfort or more clarity to help you perform your best. For areas that you frequent, the hearing aid can remember your preferred settings and automatically adjust when you enter that location.

And if you need even more help hearing in difficult listening environments, assistive listening devices can help. These can include devices that stream sound directly to your hearing aids via Bluetooth or FM technology. These accessories can help when watching TV, talking on the phone, or listening to music.

Other assistive listening devices include personal amplifiers, infrared systems and induction loop systems. Each of these has a specific function and even if you already wear hearing aids, they may be able to help give your hearing the added boost you need by reducing the factors mentioned above that make hearing in noise more difficult, especially by improving the signal to noise ratio.

# FM Wireless Technology

Today's hearing aid technology does an excellent job of improving speech understanding. However, even the most powerful hearing aids have limitations, especially in noisy places or at a distance.

In these cases, state-of-the-art wireless microphones can help boost performance and bridge the understanding gap. This is where Roger FM wireless technology comes in.

This portfolio of microphones and receivers features multibeam technology. They are able to pick up the voice of a speaker, then wirelessly transmit it to the listener's hearing aids, all while limiting the amplification of background noise.

By utilizing multiple microphones in six directions, speech from a 360° radius is calculated and compared. The direction with the best clarity is automatically selected. The result: speech understanding improves up to 61% in a group conversation in 75 dBA of noise compared to using hearing aids alone.

One of the most versatile mics is Roger Select. It's ideal for stationary situations where background noise is present, such as restaurants. It can be clipped onto your clothing, be worn around your neck or set on a table top. Roger Select also features wideband Bluetooth® for phone calls, and it can stream sound from TVs, music players, computers and more.



There are also table-top mics for the workplace, clip-on and pen mics available, depending on your listening needs.

If you're concerned about being able to hear friends and family this holiday season, ask your audiologist if this wireless FM technology could give your hearing aids a boost. In many cases, this specialized technology can be fit with specific accessories and adaptors to work with your existing hearing aid technology.



**These devices also make great gifts for hearing aid wearers!**

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At his hearing evaluation, Dr. Steele diagnosed Steve with a moderately severe to severe high-frequency hearing loss. That explains why he has trouble hearing Robbi.

Dr. Steele is working with Steve to find just the right hearing aid technology to improve his hearing loss. His goal is to find comfortable technology that helps him hear better in noisy environments, like restaurants or other social

gatherings, and to enjoy conversations with Robbi again.

"Steve has a tricky diagnosis," Dr. Steele said. "But it's important for him, and all our patients, to understand that finding just the right hearing aid technology is a process. We have better options than ever before, but we still don't have a cure for hearing loss. It's important to understand that we're limited by the individual's residual hearing."

As Steve continues on his journey to better hearing, he's glad he has Associated Audiologists to guide him.

"Associated Audiologists has done a lot for me," Steve said. "Everyone here is absolutely, unbelievably nice, from the time you walk in the door to the time you leave. They treat each patient with respect and kindness. I can definitely recommend them."

# Hearing Your Best

## STAFF NEWS

### Welcome!

Welcome to three new members of the Associated Audiologists team. **Carlotta Brass** is our new assistant accounting coordinator and **Kerry Magee** is the new Eastern Jackson County clinic administrative assistant.

**Steve Riddle** has joined the practice as our new chief financial officer. Previously, Steve was the director of finance and administration for Shelter KC, a non-profit in the Kansas City area also known as Kansas City Rescue Mission. He also has worked in corporate finance, accounting, and project management with DST Systems and Sprint.

Steve earned his bachelor's degree in accounting from William Jewell College and his master's in business administration from Rockhurst University. He is also a member of the Missouri Society of Certified Public Accountants (MSCPA).

### Hear2HelpKC Fundraiser

Associated Audiologists recently served as a sponsor for the 2nd Annual On Par for Helping Kids Hear FUNdraiser at Topgolf Sunday, Sept. 8, 2019! All proceeds went to help support Hear2Help and make a difference for local children who are deaf/hard of hearing.



### White Paper Published

**Stacey Baldwin, Au.D., Lisa Battani, Au.D., Sarah Schotte, Au.D., and Timothy Steele, Ph.D.,** CEO and President, Associated Audiologists, have written a white paper for the Academy of Doctors of Audiology. Their topic is the Changing Role of the Audiologist from Hearing Healthcare Provider to Hearing Loss Mitigation Counselor. The ADA will share the paper with its membership and an online webinar will be provided later.

### Congratulations!

**David Paul, Au.D.,** our audiologist with our Leavenworth Clinic, is currently serving in the United States Army Reserve and is assigned to the 7455 Medical Backfill Battalion in Topeka, Kan. He was selected for promotion to major by this year's promotion board. He has served in the Kansas Army National Guard and the United States Army Reserve for 19 years. His service includes a deployment to Iraq in 2008. Congratulations Dr. Paul and thank you for your service!



Dr. Paul

**Katie Petrosky, Au.D.,** our audiologist with our Northland Clinic, received the bronze award for best audiologist in the Northland based on the Gladstone Dispatch and Liberty Tribune's Best of the Northland reader poll.

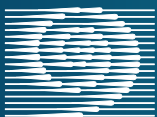


Dr. Petrosky

**Bailey Base** and **Kelly Worth** are the recipients of the audiology research scholarship awards sponsored by Associated Audiologists. The awards were presented at the Kansas Speech and Hearing Association conference.



Pictured with the winners from Associated Audiologists are Drs. David Paul, Linda Erickson and Travis Hopkins Williams.



ASSOCIATED  
AUDIOLOGISTS

We are on a mission:  
To improve lives through  
comprehensive audiology care.



# Red Scarf Reminder

Since 2015, our patients and staff have contributed more than 200 hand-made red scarves to the Red Scarf Project, a multi-faceted charity program that benefits foster youth once they "age out" of the system and go to college.

The organization accepts donations of hand-knitted or crocheted red scarves, which are given to the college-age students on Valentine's Day each year. This year, the organization encourages donations of infinity scarves, scarves for male students, and scarves made of lighter weight materials for students who live in warmer climates.

Scarves are due by Dec. 1, 2019, and can be dropped off at any of our seven clinics. If you miss the Dec. 1 deadline, don't worry. We'll continue to collect scarves throughout the year and will include yours with our next donation. Associated Audiologists also is assisting with this project by covering the cost of shipping for the scarves.

If you would like to help, but do not knit or crochet, you can send notes of encouragement that can be included with the scarves.

**For more information, call 913-498-2827.**

**You also can find project details and patterns at:**

**<http://www.fc2success.org/how-you-can-help/red-scarf-project/>.**



Find us on facebook.  
[www.facebook.com/hearingyourbest](http://www.facebook.com/hearingyourbest)



## Changing Wax Filters

Wax filters are small plastic screens designed to keep moisture and wax out of certain types of hearing aids. These devices are instrumental in keeping your hearing aids running at their optimal performance, but they do need to be changed periodically.

If the filter becomes clogged with moisture or debris, it will prevent sound from getting out of the hearing aids. We recommend you consider changing your wax filter once a month, or anytime your hearing aids don't sound like they normally do or stop working.

Filters come in several shapes and sizes which are specific to your hearing aids. Filters are available for purchase at any of our locations.

**If you need a review of how to change them, contact our office for more information.**

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Northland	Overland Park	Prairie Village	Shawnee Mission	Eastern Jackson County	Leavenworth	Manhattan
8350 N. St. Clair Ave., Suite 175 Kansas City, MO 64151 816-442-7831	12541 Foster St., Suite 220 Overland Park, KS 66213 913-498-2827	7301 Mission Rd., Suite 140 Prairie Village, KS 66208 913-262-5855	8800 W. 75th St., Suite 101 Shawnee Mission, KS 66204 913-403-0018	4721 S. Cliff Ave., Suite 201 Independence, MO 64055 816-642-2626	1001 Sixth Ave., Suite 105 Leavenworth, KS 66048 913-682-1870	1133 College Ave., Building A, Suite 101A Manhattan, KS 66502 785-539-7361

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information  
about hearing  
and balance  
health from your  
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## Hearing Your Best

# Use Benefits Now to Save on Hearing Aids

Have you been thinking about upgrading your hearing aid technology? If you act now, here are three ways to save in 2019:

- 1** Use dollars in your Flexible Spending Account (FSA) or Health Savings Account (HSA).
- 2** If you've met your insurance plan's deductible and have coverage for hearing aids, act now.
- 3** Take advantage of hearing aids as a medical expense if you itemize on your taxes.

Associated Audiologists works with more insurance plans than any other private practice in the region, including: Blue Cross/Blue Shield, United Healthcare, TriCare, Humana, Aetna/Coventry, Cigna and most Medicare replacement plans. Our experts can verify your coverage and help you fully understand your plan.

**Call the clinic where we see you to schedule an appointment today.**

