

# HEARING

## YOUR BEST



Information From Associated Audiologists, Inc. – “Hearing Your Best for Life”

Vol. 12, Issue 3

## Associated Audiologists, Inc. Expands to Manhattan, Kansas

In September, Associated Audiologists, Inc. expanded beyond the Kansas City area, purchasing Audiology Associates, an existing practice in Manhattan, Kansas. Samuel A. Gillespie, Au.D., FAAA, who has seen many of our Kansas City patients during his externship and first year of practice, has relocated to Manhattan to serve the area full time.

“I am really excited to be taking care of our Manhattan patients,” Dr. Gillespie says. “The advances in hearing aid technology now make it possible for us to help a wide range of individuals. Because I am dedicated to serving this community, I can provide our patients with the diligent follow up and hearing rehabilitation necessary for the best hearing results.”

**The practice’s office is located in the lower level of Building A at Manhattan Medical Center, Suite 101A, 1133 College Avenue, 785-539-7361.**

Dr. Gillespie also sees patients at the audiology clinics at Family Health Center of Morris County, 604 N. Washington, Council Grove, Kansas; at Nemaha Valley Community Hospital, 1600 Community Drive, Seneca, Kansas; and at the Washington Clinic, 302 East Second Street, Washington, Kansas.

During his externship, Dr. Gillespie had the opportunity to specialize in the latest hearing aid technology, hearing

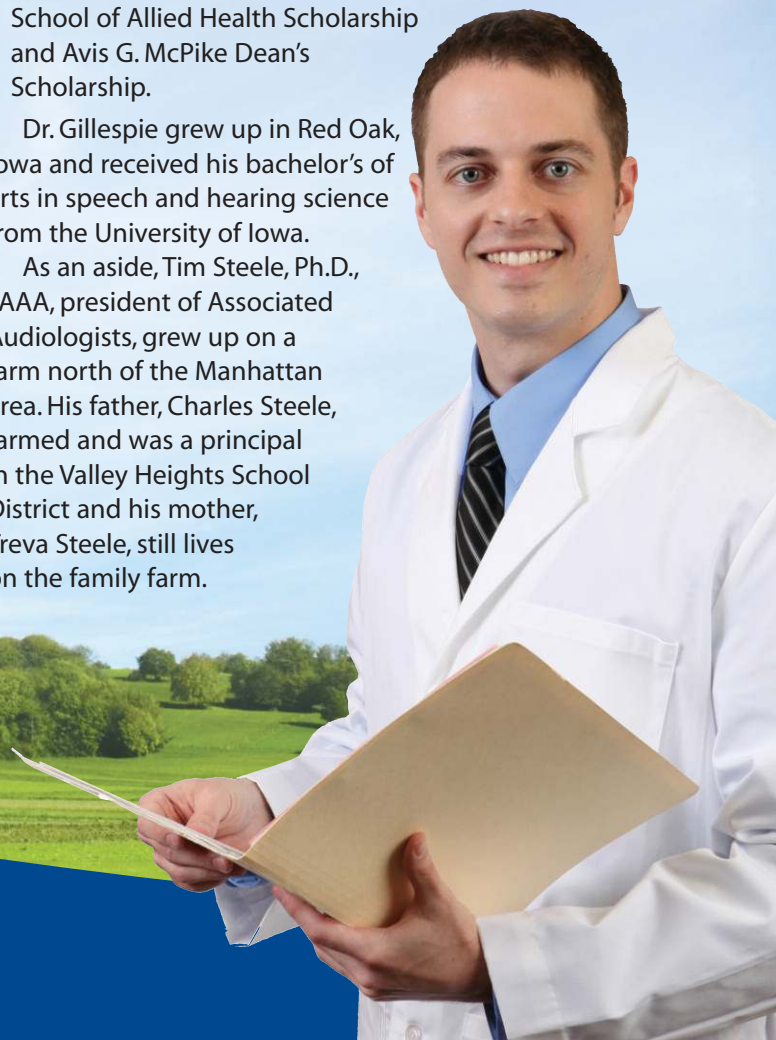
rehabilitation and tinnitus. His educational and professional associations include:

- > Doctorate of Audiology, University of Kansas-Medical Center
- > Fellow of the American Academy of Audiology
- > Certificate of Clinical Competence in Audiology (CCC-A) from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
- > Member, Kansas Speech-Language-Hearing Association
- > Member, Kansas City Society of Audiology
- > University of Kansas-Medical Center, School of Allied Health Scholarship and Avis G. McPike Dean’s Scholarship.

Dr. Gillespie grew up in Red Oak, Iowa and received his bachelor’s of arts in speech and hearing science from the University of Iowa.

As an aside, Tim Steele, Ph.D., FAAA, president of Associated Audiologists, grew up on a farm north of the Manhattan area. His father, Charles Steele, farmed and was a principal in the Valley Heights School District and his mother, Treva Steele, still lives on the family farm.

**To schedule  
an appointment with Dr. Gillespie,  
call our Manhattan office, 785-539-7361.**



# HEARING YOUR BEST



## Hear Here...

By Tim Steele, Ph.D., FAAA, President,  
Associated Audiologists, Inc.

Each of the audiologists at Associated Audiologists has their own personal story about why they became an audiologist. My great grandmother had severe to profound hearing loss, which had a big impact on me as a small child and was one of several reasons why I pursued a helping career in audiology.

Even though I work with people every day who are experiencing and living with hearing loss, there are still situations that can be humbling. Such was the case this past spring when my four year-old nephew, Cameron, was diagnosed with a profound, permanent hearing loss in his left ear. I found myself, like his parents, going through similar emotions of denial, confusion, anger, and even grief. His devoted parents have sought my recommendations for additional testing and medical consultation. They are still considering the intervention options and monitoring his development and education very closely.

This entire experience has been a good reminder to me of several important issues. First, it is normal to experience frustration and even sadness with hearing loss. I was fighting back tears when Cameron's mom cried about the confirmation of his hearing loss. Second, it's critical to work with the right professional when you experience hearing loss. In today's world of big box retail, one-stop shopping, and strip mall healthcare, it's easy to forget that hearing loss is complex and can require medical intervention. Working with an educated, trained, experienced, and compassionate audiologist is your best strategy for receiving the quality care that hearing loss requires. In some cases, your audiologist may recommend seeking medical intervention for treatable or more serious conditions. The marketing of hearing aid products has distorted reality—using the comprehensive services of a highly qualified audiologist is still the most important factor in determining how successful you will be with hearing aids.

Cameron will be just fine. We've started with a solid foundation of diagnosing and understanding his hearing loss. As a team, we have a plan for monitoring the hearing loss and his progress. Because his parents sought out the most competent medical team, they will make well-informed decisions about the best treatment and intervention. I'm glad I can be a part of his journey.

## Dr. Smith Fine Tunes Leavenworth Man's Hearing

When Edward M. Hays, a retired author and speaker from Leavenworth, Kan., began to notice a gradual decline in his ability to hear, he decided to do something about it sooner, rather than later.



"My physician recommended I see Dr. Smith," Hays says. "I thought, I wear glasses so I can see more sharply, so it only seemed logical that I should wear hearing aids so that I could hear better too."

Though Hays is retired, he leads an active life that requires he hear the nuances of conversations. "I provide pastoral counseling three to four times a week and it's important to be able to hear my clients' voices. Because they are typically higher, I was having an especially difficult time hearing women's voices."

After Dr. Smith performed a comprehensive hearing evaluation

and diagnosed his problem, she fit Hays with two mini behind-the-ear, open-fit digital hearing aids. "When I got my new hearing aids, I could hear everything!" Hays says.

Dr. Smith worked with her patient to fine-tune his hearing aids to his specific needs. "I went to see Dr. Smith several times to have my hearing aids adjusted," Hays adds. "She is a magnificent audiologist! She is always very gracious, and an excellent listener. We are fortunate to have her here in Leavenworth."

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"...I wear glasses so I can see more sharply, so it only seemed logical that I should wear hearing aids so that I could hear better too."

— Edward M. Hays

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**To schedule an appointment with Dr. Smith at our Leavenworth office, call 913-682-1870.**



# Enjoy the Sounds of the Season

You'll want to hear your best for the second annual charity concert to benefit The Mission Project, a local non-profit organization helping young adults with disabilities like Down syndrome and autism live and work on their own with minimal support; and First Downs for Down Syndrome, which raises money for The Kansas City Down Syndrome community, in partnership with the Kansas City Chiefs Offensive Line.

Entitled "On a Winter's Night," the concert features Jim Brickman and the Kansas City Symphony

**Join Associated Audiologists in supporting  
this unique holiday concert!**

**When:** Friday Dec. 7, 2012, 8 p.m.

**Where:** The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, Helzberg Hall



For ticket information visit [www.kcsymphony.org](http://www.kcsymphony.org) or call 816-471-0400.

## Special Patient Event

Learn What Lyric Can Do  
at a Complimentary  
Lyric Consultation

**When:** Wednesday, Nov. 28  
and Thursday, Nov. 29

**Where:** Associated  
Audiologists, Inc.  
Prairie Village  
Office Center  
7301 Mission Rd.  
Suite 140

Call 913-262-5855 to make  
your Lyric appointment today.

### COMING ATTRACTIONS

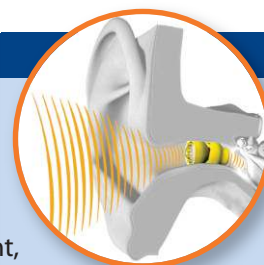
## Lyric II

Associated Audiologists was the first Kansas City audiology practice to offer Lyric, the first 100 percent, invisible, extended-wear hearing aid. This newest generation of Lyric is designed to fit more individuals, more comfortably.

Lyric can:

- > be worn effortlessly when talking on the phone, sleeping, exercising and even showering, for up to four months at a time without changing batteries\*;
- > completely disappear so no one can see the device; and
- > provide natural sound quality in quiet and noisy environments.

\* Individual replacement needs vary. Lyric is water resistant, not waterproof, and should not be completely submerged under water. Lyric is not appropriate for all patients.



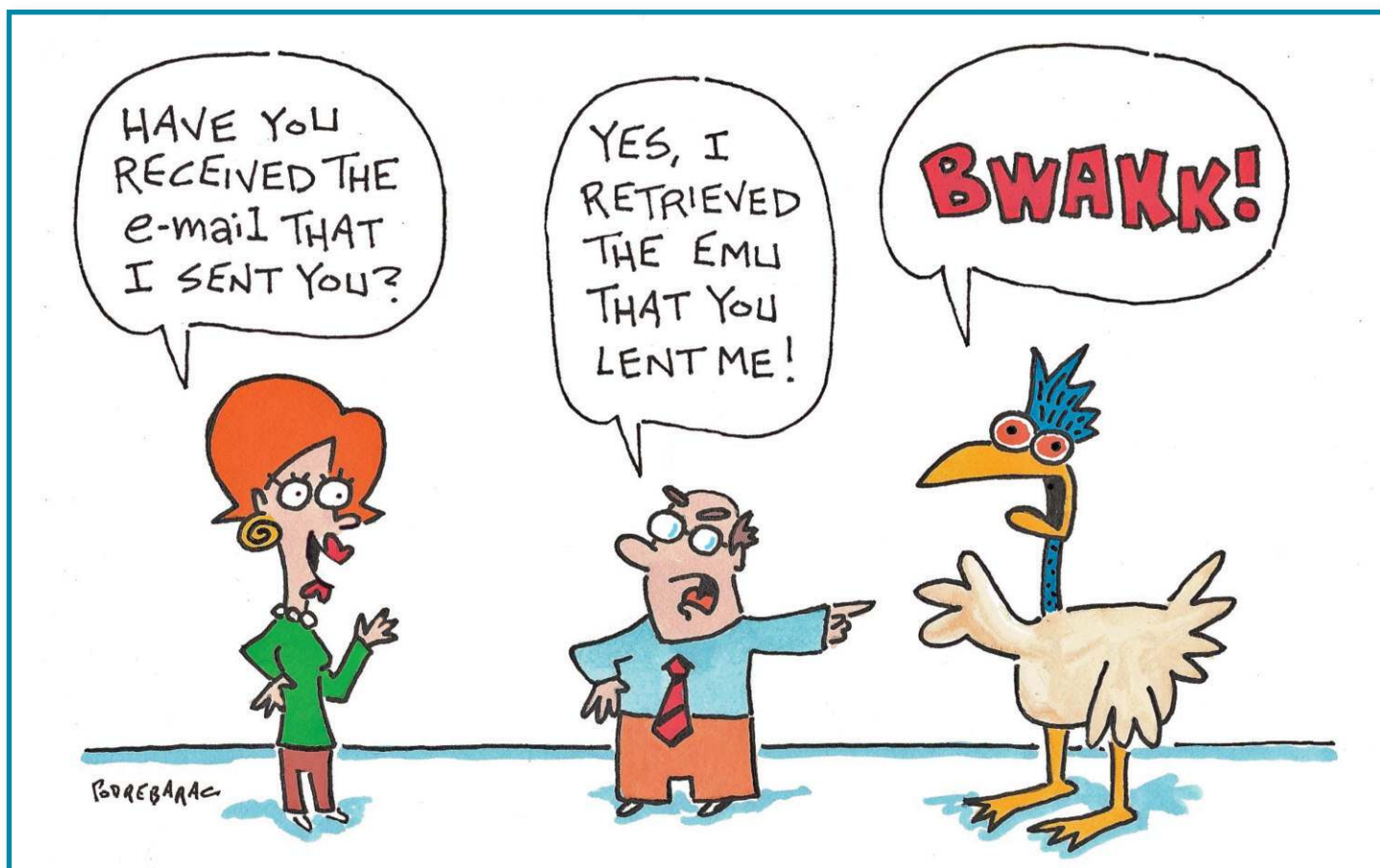
# HEARING YOUR BEST

## Staff Retreat Focuses on a Life of Significance

Associated Audiologists recently hosted an all-staff retreat at The Culinary Center of Kansas City.

The day started with a special presentation by Dan Stalp, an author and trainer with Sandler. He worked with the Associated Audiologists team to provide an inspirational morning focused on leading a life of not simply success, but rather of significance.

A presentation by City Union Mission followed. Then staff participated in a team-building activity, preparing meals to be donated to City Union Mission. In keeping with the day's theme of serving and helping others, the Associated Audiologists team prepared enough meals to feed approximately 500 people!



Is it time to get your hearing checked?



# Tinnitus and Stress May Increase During Holidays

The holidays can be a stressful time for anyone, but may be particularly so if you have tinnitus, or ringing in your ears.

“**K**eeping stress levels down and inducing relaxation may help you better cope with your tinnitus, promote better sleep, improve your concentration ability, and reduce anxiety/tension,” says Laura Flowers, Au.D., FAAA, Associated Audiologists’ tinnitus specialist. “There is a strong connection between tinnitus and your stress level. Tinnitus can increase stress, and high stress can increase tinnitus.”



Here are some tips from Dr. Flowers to help you reduce your stress and tinnitus this holiday season, and throughout the year.

## Reducing Stressors:

- > List all the areas in your life where there is conflict, excessive worry, uncertainty, or other stress. Concentrate on fresh ways of resolving these issues.
- > Delegate some of your duties to others and/or realign your standards.
- > Seek the help of a relevant professional. For example, a financial guidance counselor could potentially reduce financial concerns.
- > Communicate how you feel with a close friend, family member, or counselor. This can be another stress reliever.



- > Exercise regularly to keep yourself healthy, happy, active and relaxed. This can also change chemicals in your body produced in response to stress, which can also improve sleep.
- > Mute or turn off your phone when you want to relax.
- > Take a relaxing bath or shower to relieve tension.
- > Stretch periodically, especially if you sit for hours at a time.

## Time Management:

- > Inefficient use of time can be a significant source of stress. It can also contribute to a reduced ability to cope with your tinnitus.
- > A daily log of your waking hours may help you understand areas of inefficient time management.

- > Re-arrange your priorities and then re-order how you address them. Start with the tasks that are most important or the ones you likely procrastinate.
- > Use a schedule or diary to track your “to do” list. Cross off completed tasks as you go.
- > Plan ahead and keep your schedule flexible for the unexpected.
- > Prepare for the next morning the evening before.
- > Be prepared to wait. For example, take a book to an appointment.
- > Say no to activities or projects that you do not have the time for.

**For more information on tinnitus, contact Dr. Flowers at our Shawnee Mission office, 913-403-0018.**

# HEARING YOUR BEST

## STAFF NEWS



**Associated Audiologists sponsored two scholarships** at the Kansas Speech-Language-Hearing Association meeting this year. The scholarships were presented to audiology students performing clinical research. The scholarship winners were Fadi Najem, a student with the University of Kansas Medical Center, and

Rachel Cavanee, a student at Wichita State University. Sam Bittel, Au.D., FAAA, vestibular audiologist, also presented at the meeting and concluded his term as vice president of audiology for the organization.

**Dana Jacobson, Au.D., FAAA,** recently co-authored a book chapter, "Hearing Loss: Conductive and Sensorineural," with Mark Chertoff, a professor of Dr. Jacobson's. The chapter is included in the book "Translational Perspectives in Auditory Neuroscience" published by Plural. The chapter focuses on examining the relationship between the deficits hearing impaired individuals have in temporal (timing), frequency and speech processing and the physiologic changes hearing loss causes in the peripheral and central auditory system.



**Congratulations to Traci Ring, M.S., FAAA,** and her husband, Jeremy, on the recent birth of their daughter, Rhiannon Therese. Rhiannon joins big brothers Brennan and Cameron.

**Congratulations also are in order for Susan Smittkamp, Au.D., FAAA,** who filled in for Laura Flowers, Au.D., FAAA, while she was on leave. Dr. Smittkamp recently gave birth to a baby girl named Greta.

**Erica Smith, Au.D., FAAA, and her horse Grace,**

recently competed at the American Royal riding competition in the hunter division. They were judged on conformation, appearance, form and expertise in maneuvering over the fences and completing the course at an even pace. This was the pair's first time competing at the Royal and they took second and fifth places in the events they participated in.



**Welcome to three new members** of the Associated Audiologists administrative staff: Kelly Young, Manhattan office; Eileen Young, Shawnee Mission; and Pat Swain, Leavenworth.

- Kelly is originally from Lyons, Kansas and has two children, Nate and Ruby. She often participates in living history demonstrations with museums and festivals in the Manhattan area.
- Eileen moved to the Kansas City area in 1986 and currently resides downtown. Prior to joining the practice, she served as the manager of a Hallmark store in Independence Center. She has two adult children and enjoys reading and running 5K races.
- Pat lives in the Leavenworth area, as do her children and grandchildren. She is a native of Texas and also has lived in New Mexico. She moved to the Leavenworth area a little more than five years ago to be closer to her family.

## Tax Planning and Understanding your Health Insurance Plan May Save You Money



As 2012 draws to a close, now is the perfect time to review your end-of-the-year medical expenses.

As a reminder, hearing instruments usually qualify as medical expenses if you itemize your deductions. Hearing aids also are generally considered qualified medical expenses for flexible spending accounts.

Insurance benefits for hearing aids often change at the beginning of a new calendar year. Make sure you are aware of any changes your insurance plan may have related to possible hearing aid benefits before the year ends.

For complete information regarding the deductibility of hearing aids, qualified expenditures for your flexible spending account and your plan's year end, we suggest you contact your tax advisor and/or your flexible spending plan administrator. Our staff is also happy to provide product quotations and copies of receipts if needed.



# You Don't Have to Learn to Live with Dizziness or Balance Disorders

According to the Vestibular Disorders Association, almost everyone experiences a few seconds of spatial disorientation at some point. For example, you may have watched a 3-D movie in the theater and momentarily perceived the illusion of moving or falling as the images rushed past.

**B**ut one recent large study estimates that sensation is very real for approximately 69 million Americans who have some type of dizziness or balance disorder. According to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, an additional 8 million adults report a chronic problem with balance, while another 2.4 million report a chronic problem with dizziness alone.

Eighty percent of people age 65 years and older have experienced dizziness. For approximately 50 percent of these individuals, the problem is benign paroxysmal positional vertigo, or BPPV, the most common vestibular disorder. Overall, vertigo from a vestibular problem accounts for one-third of all dizziness and vertigo symptoms reported to healthcare professionals.

Frequent episodes of vertigo—whether lasting only for a few seconds or days on end—are a primary sign of a vestibular dysfunction, especially when linked to changes in head position.

By contrast, dizziness can be a primary sign of a vestibular disorder in addition to a broad range of cardiovascular, neurological, metabolic, vision, and psychological problems. It is also quite possible that a person may have a combination of problems, such as a degenerative vestibular disorder, along with a visual problem such as cataracts or a neurological disorder such as a stroke.

"Because of the many possible causes of dizziness and balance disorders, getting a correct diagnosis is critical to effective treatment," says Tammy Gonzales, Au.D., FAAA.

"You don't have to learn to live with this. We can help you," Dr. Gonzales adds.

Dr. Gonzales is the newest member of the dizziness and balance team at Associated Audiologists, Inc. A graduate of the University of Kansas-Medical Center, Dr. Gonzales has received specialized training in identifying and resolving the balance issues that affect her patients' daily lives.

She joins Sam Bittel, Au.D., FAAA, dizziness and balance specialist at Associated Audiologists. Together, they treat patients at the practice's offices on the campuses of Saint Luke's South Hospital and Shawnee Mission Medical Center.

**To schedule an appointment with Dr. Gonzales or Dr. Bittel, call our Overland Park office, 913-498-2827, or Shawnee Mission office, 913-403-0018.**



Join the conversation! Find us on facebook.  
[www.facebook.com/hearingyourbest](http://www.facebook.com/hearingyourbest)

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information  
about hearing  
and balance  
health from your  
audiologist.

# HEARING YOUR BEST

## Audiologists Provide Outreach Services to Communities

As an added convenience for our patients, Associated Audiologists provides services to several area living centers. Most recently, Stacey Baldwin, Au.D., FAAA, began seeing patients on site at **Tallgrass Creek**, 13800 Metcalf, Overland Park, the first Thursday of each month by appointment.

**To schedule an appointment with Dr. Baldwin, call 913-498-2827.**

### Other facilities we provide services at include:

- > **Town Village**, second Wednesday of every other month, call 913-498-2827 to schedule.
- > **Village Shalom**, third Tuesday of every month, sign up at Village Shalom.
- > **Brookdale Place** (previously Grand Court), fourth Thursday of every month, sign up at Brookdale Place.
- > **Grace Gardens**, schedule as needed, call 913-498-2827 to schedule.
- > **Delmar Gardens**, schedule as needed, call 913-498-2827 to schedule.
- > **Cedar Lake Village**, first Friday of each month, call 913-403-0018 to schedule.
- > **Lakeview Village**, second Friday of each month, call 913-403-0018 to schedule.
- > **Santa Marta**, third Friday of each month, call 913-403-0018 to schedule.
- > **Aberdeen Village**, fourth Friday of each month, call 913-403-0018 to schedule.
- > **Kansas School for the Deaf**, every other Tuesday during the school year, students contact Dr. Gail Sprecher.
- > **Shawnee Hills**, third Wednesday of every other month, sign up at Shawnee Hills.

**We look forward to meeting your hearing healthcare needs.**