

STATE OF THE ART

Hearing reaches new highs at Grosse Pointe Audiology

By John Minnis

In 1996, John Ahee was successfully treated for a brain tumor. But while 15 years later he still boasts a clean bill of health where the tumor is concerned, he found he had lost hearing in his right ear and a significant loss in his left ear — which is not uncommon. “One of the side effects of high-dose radiation is loss of hearing,” Ahee says.

He went down the street to Grosse Pointe Audiology, where Dr. Ginny Lezotte fitted him with a hearing aid for his left ear and a microphone for his right. Both are Bluetooth equipped. While the left-ear device receives and amplifies sound, the right-ear microphone broadcasts the sound it receives to the left-ear device via Bluetooth technology.

Bluetooth technology saved Patrick and Diane Johnson’s marriage. Patrick is deaf in one ear and hard of hearing in the other. Diane has just the opposite problem. Her hearing is hypersensitive. Dr. Jaclyn Sommerville fitted Patrick with a Bluetooth-capable hearing aid. He can now communicate with Diane and watch the game ... with the TV volume off. “Oh, I tell you, this is amazing technology,” Diane says. “It is wonderful.”

Darrah Porter became hearing impaired in the 1980s. He visited hearing clinics in several states. No one could do much for him ... no one except Dr. Lezotte at Grosse Pointe Audiology. She fitted Darrah with Bluetooth-enabled hearing aids, a Bluetooth communication interface (iCom) and an FM transmitter. His wife, Joan, often wears the transmitter around her neck so she can talk freely to her husband from across the room or in the car. Darrah can also watch TV and listen to CDs via Bluetooth, and Joan is none-the-wiser. “It has been a godsend,” Darrah says.

These happy outcomes are due to advanced technology at the disposal of skilled and knowledgeable doctors of audiology. Dr. Lezotte opened Grosse Pointe Audiology on Mack in 2002 after serving on staff at Henry Ford Health System. Dr. Sommerville joined her in 2007. Audiologists undergo six to eight years of schooling and are trained to do more than fit hearing aids. “Audiologists are concerned with improving overall quality of life,” Lezotte says.

As technology improves and miniaturizes, so do hearing aids. In fact, the new Lyric device can be placed deep in the ear canal by an audiologist and left there for months at a time ... ideal for the celebrity or high-profile corporate executive.

While the devices may get pricey, they come with a two-week home trial followed by a two-month evaluation and money-back guarantee. Twelve-month, interest-free financing is available, and in some cases, the state of Michigan may cover the cost of hearing aids for those currently employed. Exams are covered by most insurances, including BCBS, Medicare and Medicaid. “There really is no reason not to try hearing aids,” Lezotte says. “Once you know what you’re missing, it’s hard to go back to not hearing again.”

Customer service is the key. “At Grosse Pointe Audiology, the audiologists and staff are very responsive,” Joan Porter says. “We’ve been to three states. Grosse Pointe Audiology is the best.” John Ahee agrees. “I consider Grosse Pointe Audiology one of the best customer service teams I can think of.” That means something coming from an Ahee! ☒

For more information, visit gpaudiology.com.



John Ahee, left, of edmund t. AHEE jewelers, and Darrah Porter, above, are but two of Dr. Ginny Lezotte’s very satisfied hearing patients at Grosse Pointe Audiology. Here she explains the use of an FM transmitter to Porter. Photos by John Minnis