

Knowledgeable, committed specialists open a world of sound

Ron Finn noticed the onset of his hearing loss about five years ago, when he had to ask people to repeat themselves whenever he was in a noisy environment.

For Ron, that was a lot of repeating.

Ron is a one-man band, providing dance and easy listening music for the over-50 crowd. Background chatter and restaurant noise are part of his work environment.

"I denied the obvious for about a year," Ron admits, "but then something happened that I couldn't ignore. I'm a single man, and one night I was talking to a pretty girl in a noisy

Audibel Hearing Center

John D. Moore, BC-HIS • Jim Karrh, HIS
Peter Curlender, HIS

restaurant. I realized I couldn't hear 70 percent of what she was saying. *This is serious*, I told myself, and as soon as I could, I had my hearing tested."

That test confirmed Ron's hearing loss, but when the hearing care specialist fit Ron with state-of-the-art instruments to compensate, Ron was dissatisfied.

"I was treated like a part on an assembly line," states Ron. "I purchased the highest-quality instruments available at the time, because in my work I need to hear all the nuances in the music. Those instruments didn't provide me with the subtleties of sound, and when I approached the hearing care provider who had sold them to me, he wasn't able to adjust them to provide significant improvement. He also wasn't too interested in my instruments after he made the sale."

Ron admits that he felt lost, then disillusioned, and then a bit angry. His hearing aids represented a substantial financial commitment, and they didn't work for him. He

out. "They also invest in the hearing instrument specialist who will service those devices over time. When the specialist has no dedication to customer service or lacks the ability to service the instruments properly, the patient's return on that investment is reduced.

"Ron came to us with tremendous technology, but his instruments weren't delivering the natural sound they were capable of and that he required."

A large part of the successful fit and function of hearing aids, explains John, is in the skill and dedication of the hearing instrument specialist in matching the instrument's programming to the patient's needs.

"You can have 10 different practitioners program the same set of hearing instruments, and you'll have 10 different results in sound quality," says John. "It's a matter of how well the practitioner can communicate with the patient to understand his or her listening environments and sound processing needs. Those are the factors that guide us to the

modifications in programming and fit that can help patients hear better.

"Ron's instruments required an old-school modification in the mold that fit into his ear. Once that was solved, it only took a few more visits to fine-tune the programming of his instrument, and his years of frustration were over."

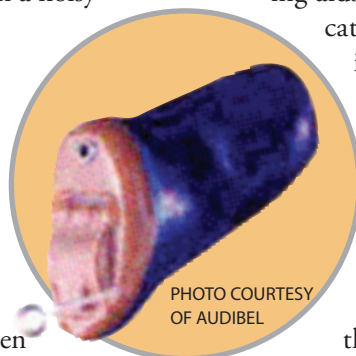


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Ron remembers what it was like watching John approach the problem instruments. "John's a genius," he proclaims. "He plugged my instruments into the computer, and he looked at the screen the way I look at my music when I perform an arrangement. He didn't even have to ask many questions to identify the problem with my instruments: They were only programmed to about 40 percent of their capacity. He adjusted the fit of my ear mold, and I had an immediate improvement; when he began manipulating the settings of my instruments' program, it improved still more.

"I want to put the word out on this: You can have the best hearing instrument in the world, or the best car, or whatever, and if you don't have it serviced by someone who really knows how to do it, that best product is still worthless."

Ron was so satisfied with the performance of his instruments following John's adjustments that he bought a third instrument from John, identical to his other instruments, for a back-up.

"Thanks to John," Ron states, "I'm hearing with the clarity that I'd missed for years." **FHCN**—Billie S. Noakes

Better hearing for you!

Find out if your hearing problems can be eased with one of the many models of state-of-the-art hearing instruments available at Audibel Hearing Center. Please call (561) 743-0806 for the office located at **935 Military Trail, Suite 101**, in Jupiter or (772) 286-2044 for the office located at **2848 South Federal Hwy.** in Stuart to schedule a consultation and to find the answers to your questions regarding hearing loss, hearing testing, and the proper fitting of hearing instruments.

SELECT HEARING SPECIALISTS CAREFULLY

"Ron's situation is a perfect illustration of the importance of dedication and experience in providing patients with proper hearing correction," notes state-licensed hearing instrument specialist Jim Karrh.

"It takes about 90 minutes to evaluate and select a hearing instrument," Jim points out, "but servicing the hearing aid will involve many hours of time over the life of the instrument. Most patients can't afford to replace their instruments every time the technology changes, and technology changes rapidly.

"To really be of service to our patients, then, hearing instruments specialists need not only to keep current with innovations but also to stay familiar with older technology so patients continue to benefit from the instruments they already have," says Peter Curlender, HIS.

Jim recalls one man who came to him and Peter with older instruments that were not working properly for him.

"We could have sent them back to the factory for a remake," allows Jim, "but it wouldn't have been cost effective to put so much money into old technology when better technology was available at a similar cost. Also, the patient wanted to keep his old instruments working. So we did. We worked on them several times, despite my concerns that the components would simply wear out one day. When our client was finally satisfied that we had both the willingness and the knowledge to keep his old instruments working, then he bought new instruments."

It's an amusing story, but it also shows how important it is to maintain familiarity with older technology for patients who still rely on it, while staying up to date with technological advances.

At the Audibel Hearing Center in Stuart, John, Jim, and Peter have the experience, training, and commitment to do both.

"I am a huge fan of professional organizations that help provide hearing care professionals with information about these advances," remarks John.

In Florida, one of those organizations is the Florida Society of Hearing Healthcare Professionals (FSHHP), and John co-chairs the Education Committee for its membership.

"FSHHP regularly schedules seminars to introduce us to new technologies or new approaches to hearing correction," he informs, "and during our annual convention, held this year in Clearwater, we had an opportunity to visit the booths of a variety of manufacturers and see what features are on the horizon."

Among the newest features are instruments that are so intuitive that they are virtually feedback free.

Other instruments are designed to record the patient's listening environment and the program chosen for use in that environment. Based on those environments and preferences, the instrument suggests changes in programming to provide maximum clarity.

"Keeping current with these leading-edge innovations means we can quickly help our patients take advantage of the best technology that hearing instrument science has to offer," notes John. "And our long experience with technologies that span several generations of hearing instruments ensures that our patients will always find the help they need in making sure their hearing aid investment continues to be a good one."



MUSIC TO HIS EARS.
Ron says his quality of life is greatly improved now that his hearing instruments are properly adjusted and maintained.

PHOTO COURTESY OF RON FINN

sought for answers on the Internet, wrote letters to manufacturers, and talked to people about his predicament.

Finally, a professional in the hearing care industry strongly suggested that Ron contact John D. Moore, a board-certified hearing instrument specialist with Audibel Hearing Center in Stuart.

"I honestly wasn't sure if John would see me," Ron admits. "He didn't fit me with these instruments and had received no compensation. My instruments were under warranty, so John's practice wouldn't be charging me for servicing my instruments, either. But I contacted his office, and he invited me to schedule an appointment."

Right connection

Ron's experience isn't unusual, says John.

"When patients invest in hearing instruments, they invest in much more than the devices themselves," he points