



## A hearing professional\* gives readers an earful

\*Steve Chargo has a Masters degree in Audiology and 25 years experience.

### CASE STUDY: Musicians combat out-of-shape hearing

**A** musician we'll call Chris feared revealing how difficult hearing had become. A screaming rocker? Wrong. She's a symphony violinist.

Rock musicians' hearing loss surprises few. But our violinist was surprised with the results of her hearing test. Says Steve Chargo of Plymouth, the hearing practitioner who took her call, "Chris had spent 12 years sitting next to the orchestra's brass section without knowing that trumpets can generate decibel levels right up there with power tools."

Audiologists measure intensity on the **decibel** scale. A reading of 95 decibels means your ears have been exposed to 10 times more sound energy than at 85 decibels. "Rock, jazz, and live classical music can easily exceed safe levels. Musicians endure sound that **requires** hearing protection in an industrial workplace," Chargo warns.

"We can definitely help musicians keep their assets," says Chargo. "Not with hearing aids, but with protection that could prevent future amplification."

At the hearing clinic Chargo owns with two partners, people like Chris ask for hearing tests to explain a problem or to stop damage. Chris did both. She had a professional hearing test, and she ordered custom musi-

cian's earplugs.

"Older plugs sounded unnatural and musicians complained—loudly. The new plugs use a filter that reduces all frequencies equally; so musicians hear everything with the same clarity and natural quality," Chargo explains.

Another advance offers musicians an electronic hearing accessory that accomplishes the same sound-filtering process as the ear plug. This device (so small it can be hidden in the ear) is the one that some musicians choose.

Chargo invites anyone with even a minor concern for a free hearing assessment at Affinity Hearing, which

offers a variety of hearing protection products, most major brands of hearing instruments and manufactures its own hearing aids.

**FILE THIS FACT: Music is noise, too.**



**Affinity Hearing offers complimentary and confidential hearing evaluations Sept. 13-16. Call 763-744-1190 for an appointment and directions.**

**"Musicians endure volumes that would require protection for an industrial worker."**

--Avril Dell

Avril Dell is a freelance writer