

## Perfect Pitch

*by Kenita Gibbins*

My DNA says that I can hear when someone goes off-tune in spite of the fact I can't sing at all. I don't know what good this gift from God does for me other than irritate when my perfect pitch goes into action. I never tell someone in our church choir after service, "Did you know you missed a note?" I've always known I can do this, but I didn't think it mattered.

I pick up all kinds of noise, like if my husband rubs his leather shoes together or he tap, taps his fingers. Since he doesn't hear himself, then he doesn't like to be told noise drives me nuts. When George got his first pair of hearing aids, the audiologist gave me a list of dos and don'ts on how I should react to his disability. I scanned the checklist. I looked into the doctor's eyes and said, "The list doesn't include he must wear his hearing aids." I consider it disrespectful when he doesn't put his ears on. I describe his aides in this manner.

More recently, the office where he goes for audio checkups obtained a new audiologist. The doctor invited me to sit in before George's exam. He asked me how I liked the hearing aids. I answered okay if he wears them. The doctor told George what I'd been saying that wearing the aids is essential. George also has low vision. Two senses compromised can be very dangerous toward triggering the onset of dementia. After that conversation, George has been excellent about wearing his hearing aids. Our sixteen-year-old grandson also had known this information when he needed hearing aids. This kid is so happy he can now hear.

It seems strange to me that I have the patience to burn if I lead a tour at the art museum with a signing expert. If a visitor needs this service, it must be requested in advance, and then the signer can join a regular public tour. I'm thankful I'm learning to respect people with all kinds of problems. Yesterday I was with six- and seven-year-old children. English wasn't their first language, and they were speaking in very low voices, afraid they would make a mistake. I had to ask them to repeat.

Our ears keep us connected to our surroundings. Yay for perfect pitch!