

Seen & Heard

EDWARD F. OGIBA

Siesta Key in Sarasota, Florida / I came flying out on August 4 in New York City in the final year of Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia's reign.

MY HEARING LOSS... My hearing loss started in the military and progressed until Ménière's disease left me deaf. Today I am totally grateful for the cochlear implant in one ear and a hearing aid in the other.

SAGE ADVICE FOR SOMEONE NEWLY-DIAGNOSED WITH HEARING LOSS... Find the right audiologist and give him or her the feedback they need to help you get the most out of your hearing devices. Join an HLAA chapter. Focus at communication strategies with your family, friends and co-workers so they know how to best help you hear them.

MY FUNNY HEARING LOSS MOMENT... When I got my cochlear implant, my vanity prevented me from wearing it to client meetings. But when I had to facilitate an all-day workshop for a board of 24 people I had no choice. After the meeting, a board member approached me and she said: "I will give you credit as this was the most productive meeting we have had in a long time. But you are the rudest person whom I have ever encountered in a meeting." I was mortified and said: "I am sorry, madam. What did I do?" She barked: "What did you do? How can you be so inconsiderate to carry on multiple conversations? Not once all day did you have the courtesy to turn off your cell phone." I checked to confirm my cell phone was off before I realized: "Do you mean this?" pointing to my implant. She gave a disapproving nod, snipping "you must be a phone freak to have one implanted." I laughed and told her, "This is a cochlear implant that allows me to hear despite my hearing loss." There was a chuckle from another board member as he apparently had told her it was an implant. She then expressed her embarrassment and apology, but I countered: "You have given me a wonderful gift. If you thought it was a phone, others might too, and regardless you have given me the courage to stop being such a bozo about wearing it."

WHEN I GREW UP, I WANTED TO BE... the starting second baseman for the Brooklyn Dodgers.

FAVORITE CHILDHOOD MEMORY: Ebbets Field at age five. I never saw grass greener.

FIRST THING I BOUGHT WITH MY OWN MONEY WAS... a '57 Caddy convertible.

PETS? Moka. She's a crazy Russian Bear Hound.

MUSICALLY INCLINED? I play a mean shower. With my hearing aids out, I can actually stand my own singing.

DO YOU SPEAK ANY LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH? Mon Français est pathétique, mais le langage est si romantique et la cuisine est si fabuleux. Il ne m'échoue jamais excepté toutes les fois que je suis servi les goûts d'un plateau de cendre sautéed. (Translation: My French is pathetic, but the language is so romantic and the food is so fabulous. It never fails me except when I have used the likes of "ash tray sautéed.")

YOU JUST WON A \$10,000,000 LOTTERY. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? CPR.

I WOULD LOVE TO MEET... Thomas Jefferson, the consummate multi-tasker.

FAVORITE COLOR? I used to say "blue." But after living in Martha Stewart's county for 16 years, I have been conditioned to say Araucana Teal or perhaps Aragon Sky.

FIVE PLACES I HAVE LIVED... Long Island, Manhattan, Toronto, Weston (CT), Sarasota.

WORKING NINE TO FIVE... an ad or Mad Man in Manhattan, again in Toronto, head of New Products Company in Toronto, again in Connecticut, development director for the Ear Research Foundation.

EVER MEET ANYONE FAMOUS? Prince Phillip, Barbara Streisand, Doris Day, Ricardo Montalban, Margaret Hamilton, Patricia Neal, Peter Ustinov—some of the few sane moments for me as a Mad Man.

Hearing Loss Magazine always delivers a warm hug of support, the inspiration to do more and the guidance from the legions of superheroes in hearing loss nation to blaze the way. Thank you, HLM.

