



## Flying High At Independence Hill

By Michelle Houriet, Executive Director  
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A couple of times per year, Independence Hill Retirement Community's military veteran residents are given the opportunity to fly in a 1940s Stearman two-seater biplane. Many veterans are familiar with this plane as a trainer during WWII. The plane, although easy to fly, is challenging to land, hence the saying, "It's easy to fly, but hard to land, so if you can land it, you've passed!"

These flights are made possible through the Ageless Aviation Dreams Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to seniors and U.S. military veterans who have always had a burning desire to soar like an eagle. The foundation's mission is to "give back to those who have given" by taking veterans back to a place in time when they felt invincible, ruling the sky as proud military aviators.

It has been such a joy to watch as many Independence Hill and Independence Village residents take to the sky, including Mrs. Weeter who was a radio woman with the Navy during WWII.

"It was a fantastic experience being up in the open air to see the world from that perspective," said Mrs. Weeter. "I would go again tomorrow! They didn't treat us like old people, just people."

The experience was extra special to Mrs. Weeter. During the war, her husband taught others how to fly, but never taught her. Now, as a resident of Independence Hill Assisted Living and in her ninth decade of life, she finally got the opportunity to fly.

For another resident, US Army First Lieutenant Bradshaw, the experience fulfilled his dream of flying. In high school, Bradshaw won flying lessons in a contest, but was never able to fly during his military service. And long time resident of Independence Hill Assisted Living, Major Marr, former USAF navigator and holder of the Distinguished Flying Cross, also absolutely loved being back in the plane. The Dream Flight pilot even let him take the stick for a while.

"This will be a great memory!" said Major Marr.



It is a special day when you can create new and exciting memories for seniors ages 70-100+. Making great memories is an important goal at Independence Hill. It's important for residents to try new things and keep the adventures of life coming.

Coincidentally, flying day also happened to land on Major Zwartjes' 95th birthday! He was thrilled to celebrate his birthday alongside the pilots, crew and others at Stinson Airfield. He even shared his birthday cake! The Major served 31 years in the USAF as a Radar Observer/Navigator and Night Fighter. His wife of 72 years encouraged him to go and is so glad she did because she loved how happy it made him, although she was biting her nails the entire time!

A special thanks to Ageless Aviation for giving Independence Hill residents this amazing opportunity of a lifetime. They make dreams come true!

Independence Hill Retirement Resort Community is located at 20450 Huebner Rd., San Antonio, TX 78258. For more information, call (210) 209-8956 or visit [www.independencehill.com](http://www.independencehill.com).



## How Hearing Loss Quietly Disrupts Lives

By David Ward, AuD  
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It's not uncommon for patients to come to our office with these common complaints. "I can hear just fine, I just can't understand what other people are saying," is something we hear quite often. Or maybe the patient's wife will say, "He just hears when he wants to." To which the husband responds, "That's because she is always talking as she is walking away from me."

Most hearing loss happens very gradually over many years. It can take place at such a slow rate that it's difficult to even measure a difference from one year to the next. The changes are so gradual that the person with the hearing loss does not even notice the change until something happens that makes them realize that they cannot hear what others can. Over time, people also forget what they used to be able to hear, assuming that their hearing now is normal.

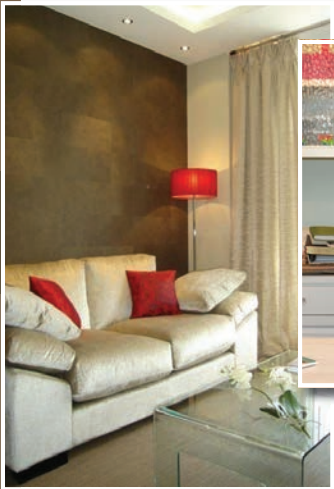
Most people lose their high-pitched hearing before their low-pitched hearing. The high pitches mainly affect the clarity of speech, while low pitches affect the loudness. This makes the person feel like everything should be normal because speech is about as loud as it has always been; unfortunately the clarity of speech is no longer what it used to be. This is also why family members sometimes feel that the person with the hearing loss is being selective about what they hear. Since some of the speech information is missing, the person has to guess as to what is being said. Sometimes they guess right, sometimes they guess wrong, and sometimes so little information gets through that they can't even make a guess.

As hearing decreases, people don't realize that they need to change the way they communicate. For example, the wife used to be able to talk to the husband while she was walking away, and he would hear her and respond appropriately...but that was 20 years ago. Now, because of his hearing loss, he can't understand what she is saying, and so he assumes that she talking to the dog, or to herself, and he tunes her out completely.

If this sounds familiar, then come see us at Everyone's ENT and Sinus Center where we can help you improve your communication through better hearing at home or wherever you may go.

To make an appointment or to learn more about Everyone's ENT and Sinus Center, visit [www.everyonesent.com](http://www.everyonesent.com) or call 210-647-3838.

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