

# Restored Sight

After suffering with blurry vision for years due to dry eyes and cataracts, this patient now sees 20/20. In addition to seeing clearly, she's also free from the inconvenience of wearing corrective lenses.

Jan Reber is an active woman. In addition to working as a home health nurse, she is a member of the Songs of the Coast Chorus, part of the Sweet Adelines International barber-shop-style harmony group.

She also has Graves' disease, a thyroid condition that can affect the eyes.

"Graves' disease needs to be monitored because you can end up with dry eyes to the point where your lids won't close," explains Jan.

However, she hadn't seen an eye doctor in quite some time, even though she knew what the autoimmune disease could do to her eyesight, and so she set out to find a doctor with whom she would be comfortable. A local advertisement led her to Dr. Ge.



Q. JOCELYN GE, MD, PHD

Q. Jocelyn Ge, MD, PhD, a board-certified ophthalmologist, is the medical director of Premier Eye Clinic in Port Orange, a full-service, patient-oriented facility that combines compassionate and personalized care with advanced technology.

"Jan first came to see me in May 2009. At that time she was having some problems with her contact lenses," explains Dr. Ge.

"I've worn eyeglasses since the seventh grade and contact lenses for the past twenty-five years," shares Jan. "My eyes were so uncomfortable with contacts in because they tended to dry my eyes out. I'd end up taking the lenses out in the evening and wearing glasses."

Dr. Ge diagnosed her with dry eye syndrome and started the treatment with artificial tears to make Jan's eyes more comfortable. She also changed

her contact lens prescription.

During the eye exam, the doctor discovered that Jan's natural eye lenses were cloudy, a sign of cataracts. A cataract obstructs the passage of light through the eye. Typical symptoms of cataracts include clouded, blurred, or dim vision, increased difficulty with vision at night, fading or yellowing of colors, sensitivity to light and glare, and frequent changes in eyeglass or contact lens prescriptions.

After hearing Dr. Ge's diagnosis, Jan realized she was already experiencing symptoms related to the cataracts.

"Driving at night was a problem," recalls Jan. "Oncoming car lights were so bright. The glare hurt my eyes."

In fact, it almost stopped her from singing with her beloved choral group.

"We practice on Monday evenings and I didn't feel safe driving for any distance after dark.

"I was having to beg rides from other members."

## Treatment and solutions

Less than a year after switching contact lenses, Jan's eye problems worsened.

"Last March, Jan came to see me, saying that her eyes were in pain all the time with the contact lenses," notes Dr. Ge. "Her eyes were drier, causing an intolerance to the contacts.

"Additionally, she also told me she could not see as clearly as she used to. I found that her vision was worse because the cataracts had progressed."

However, Jan wasn't quite ready for cataract surgery.

To help relieve Jan's dry eyes, which would also allow her to continue wearing contacts, Dr. Ge suggested an office procedure called *punctal occlusion*. The procedure involves inserting synthetic plugs in the puncta, or beginning of the tear ducts (small openings in the corners of the eyes through which tears drain). Plugging the puncta increases the

Jan's vision is now 20/20 thanks to cataract surgery and her new ReSTOR lenses. She's thrilled that she no longer has to wear glasses or contact lenses.



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amount of tears available to bathe the front part of the eye by decreasing the amount of tears that drain away.

Although her eyes felt more comfortable after the punctal occlusion, Jan's blurry vision and glare-related problems remained.

"At that point, it was the cataracts making Jan's eyesight worse, not the dry eyes," explains Dr. Ge. "No matter what we did about the contacts, she was not going to have clearer vision."

Jan decided it was time to do something about correcting her vision problems once and for all. "It just got to the point where my symptoms were too uncomfortable for me to live with.

"I went back to Dr. Ge and told her, *Okay, let's go. Let's do the cataract surgery.*"

## A sight to behold

Jan's right eye was the first to be treated. Its natural lens was replaced with an artificial intraocular lens implant called ReSTOR. This type of lens gives cataract patients good vision at all ranges: near, middle, and far.

"Jan had twenty-twenty vision the first day," reports Dr. Ge.

"I was astounded by the difference," shares Jan. "Before the surgery, I had to grab my glasses as I got out of bed in the morning or put my contacts in. Now, I don't."

Jan was so pleased with the results from the first surgery that she was eager to have the same lens implant placed in her left eye.

"I kept bugging Dr. Ge. I really wanted it done."

She got her wish four weeks later.

Besides giving her crystal-clear vision, another positive effect of Jan's cataract surgeries is how differently she sees colors now.

"Colors, especially light ones, are so much brighter," explains Jan.

White is the most noticeable to her.

"I always thought the walls inside my home were peach," confides Jan. "In fact, the last time I had them painted, I told the painter, *Use the same peach color that's*

*on them now.* I remember he gave me a funny look but I didn't think anything of it until after the surgery."

It turns out the walls have always been white.

Six months after undergoing cataract surgery, Jan's vision remains 20/20 in both eyes.

Dr. Ge emphasizes that patients with cataracts and/or dry eye syndrome should not suffer in silence or learn to live with poor vision.

"Both dry eyes and cataracts are treatable conditions. With the newer technologies and surgical techniques available, patients can improve the quality of their lives and resume whatever they love to do.

"They will be able to enjoy life a lot better."

Jan couldn't agree more. With her newfound vision, she's able to comfortably drive at night, which means she no longer has to ask for rides to choral rehearsals.

"I was driving on my own within one week. I enjoy that, that's for sure."

In addition to enjoying her renewed ability to drive and clearer view of the world, Jan is also pleased with Dr. Ge and the staff at Premier Eye Clinic.

"Dr. Ge is very attentive. Each patient receives individualized care. And, Dr. Ge has a tremendous crew. From the receptionist to the technicians, everyone is so friendly and nice.

"I recommend Dr. Ge to everybody that I see." **FHCN**

## Committed to YOUR Vision

Dr. Ge and the staff of Premier Eye Clinic look forward to meeting readers of *Volusia Health Care News*. The office is located at **3641 South Clyde Morris Blvd., Suite 500**, in Port Orange, phone **(386) 788-6198**.



Jan Reber



Q. Jocelyn Ge, MD, PhD, received her medical degree from the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine and her PhD from the University of California. She completed her internship at the University of Tennessee Medical Center and her ophthalmology residency at the Tulane University Hospital and Clinics in New Orleans. In 2005, Dr. Ge was one of the ten ophthalmologists in the US who received the prestigious American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery (ASCRS) Foundation research grant. She is active in research and has presented her results at major national conferences, including the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO), ASCRS, and the American

Academy of Ophthalmology. Most recently, she received the American Medical Association's Physician Recognition Award with Commendation. She is certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology.

Visit Premier Eye Clinic on the web at [www.PremierEyeClinic.com](http://www.PremierEyeClinic.com).