Joanie Allen, BA, COMT

**JOANIE ALLEN WRITES** that “Through the many opportunities to express kindness, understanding and empathy for the elderly population by helping them to manage vision problems, as well as the general population with discomfort or trauma and even children getting their first pair of glasses, I have been enriched and gratified many times over. The most basic understanding in this life, as demonstrated by Jesus himself, is the importance of people and what we can give and receive from each person we meet. It’s not the gratitude, it’s just the right thing to do.”

Joanie Allen, B.A., C.O.M.T., has a true heart for the care of ophthalmic patients. She began her career in ophthalmology in 1984 at Rummel Eye Care, P.C. in Prescott, Arizona. She remains at Rummel Eye Care today and serves as Surgical Administrator for OSC #0079. However, her journey has been multifaceted.

Through the Joint Commission of Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology, Joanie climbed the certification ladder. With Barbara Rhodes as a mentor and supportive friend, she became certified, first as a Certified Ophthalmic Assistant, followed by certification as an Ophthalmic Technician, and then as a Certified Ophthalmic Medical Technician. She continued in becoming a Certified Ophthalmic Surgical Assistant and recently, a Certified Ophthalmic Scribe. She holds active memberships in the Association of Technical Personnel in Ophthalmology and the American Society of Ophthalmic Registered Nurses (ASORN).

Joanie is committed to always putting the patient first in service and care. She is devoted to education and quality for the patient. She enjoys coordinating surgical patients through education and alleviating their fears. Since 1994, Joanie has served as a Quality Assurance Committee Coordinator and Chairperson, as well as a Compliance Coordinator. She is also a diplomat in the American Board of Quality Assurance and Utilization Review Physicians.

As a result of attending an ASORN class on low vision taught by ASORN members, Joanie helped organize an eleven week class series for her community. For over ten years “People Who Care” provides opportunities for low vision patients and their families to understand eye diseases and their management. She gives gratitude to ASORN Registered Nurses from the east coast for sharing their knowledge to help low vision patients. This wonderful class has recently lost its funding and is currently looking for new sponsors.

Joanie was born in New York City but soon, her large family moved to Arizona. She has many fond memories of a family visit to the newly opened Disneyland in California and the New York World’s Fair in 1963. Girl Scouting has been a life-long passion. She continues training Girl Scout leaders to keep the ‘art songs’ popular.

Medicine has always been an important part of her family. Her father is a cardio-thoracic surgeon and her grandfather was an eye-ear-nose-throat specialist (when the specialties were combined). It is understandable how the ongoing and expanding areas in ophthalmology charge and revitalize Joanie in her daily practice.

Joanie is recognized as co-editor of the *Surgical Assisting* textbook for ASORN. We look forward to sharing many of Joanie’s “ophthalmology stories” at future ASORN meetings.

Lorrie J. Durbin, RN, BSN, COMT, is a registered nurse/ophthalmic medical technologist and serves on the ASORN Insight Editorial Board. She lives in Decatur, Illinois and can be reached at ljdurbin@aol.com.