Everyone knows his name

Cue the “Cheers” TV theme song, “Where Everyone Knows Your Name,” and you’ve described Dwane Auch from Environmental Services. For 32 years, Dwane has called MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center his work home, and he says he’s enjoyed his time as a “member of this big family.”

In August of 1987, Dwane joined MercyOne after his experience as a patient and hearing positives about the organization as an employer. He joined the Environmental Services (EVS) department and continued his trade of washing windows.

“I’d just grab my bucket of dish soap and go over the side of the roof,” Dwane shares matter-of-factly. “I used to wash the windows on the old hospital before actually I came here to work.”

It was through his vocation and health that Dwane was introduced to the Sisters of Mercy. “Mercy had a good reputation and provided good service and care,” he said. “The Sisters took care of me in my room along with the nurses. You couldn’t ask for better care.”

Dwane’s work eventually brought him inside, where he would help with room setups and deliveries. He was also entrusted with helping orient new employees in EVS. “I helped get them acquainted with the building and our processes,” he says. “I was able to tell them how good it is to work here.”

Dwane also appreciated the confidence his supervisors had in him. Over the years, Dwane has experienced the significant change that is health care — from the Sisters, to new technologies for patient care, the East Tower and MercyOne West Des Moines Medical Center. “Change is great and needed to keep improving care for patients,” Dwane says. “Everyone needs to accept that good things come from change.”

As a long-time staffer, Dwane says he earned the name “Grandpa,” but he was a bit surprised by how closely people kept tabs on him. “It’s pretty nice when people look out for you and think about you,” he says. “If I was gone for a few days, the bosses told me people would call the office to see if I was all right. That was something — having people who care about you like that.”

After years of dedicated service, Dwane heard the call of his children, 13 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren. He’s looking forward to more time with them. MercyOne colleagues had a send-off this week to honor him.

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“It was a great 32 years and I enjoyed working here,” he said. “I have a lot of friends and I’ll be back to visit. You might see me on the walking track or grabbing some coffee.”

Thanks, Dwane, and we look forward to it.

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“...You wanna be where you can see — Our challenges are all the same — You wanna be where everybody knows your name.”
Interventional radiology is a rapidly growing area of medicine. MercyOne Des Moines Medical Center is fortunate to have a talented team of interventional radiologists, technologists and nurses who continually provide cutting-edge, life-saving treatments such as Y-90.

Y-90, also referred to as radioembolization, is a minimally invasive procedure that combines embolization and radiation therapy to treat liver cancer. Tiny glass beads (1/3 the width of a human hair) are filled with a radioactive isotope (Y-90) and funneled in through a catheter directly to the tumor site.

Dr. Alan T. McDaniel, interventional radiologist says, “Y-90 has revolutionized cancer treatment allowing us to offer an effective solution to patients whose options were previously limited.”

Y-90 isn’t considered curative, but it can extend the lives of patients with inoperable tumors and improve their quality of life. This procedure can be critical for patients who are not currently candidates for other treatments, including surgery or transplantation. In other words, people exactly like former patient, Joe.

Joe received two Y-90 treatments, about a month apart to shrink his massive tumor, and keep it in check so he could continue with daily life. The Y-90 treatments allowed him valuable time to keep moving forward to his ultimate goal – to be healthy enough to undergo a liver transplant. On Nov. 8, 2017, Joe received a living-donor liver transplant from his son, Joe Jr.

Joe and his wife, Loretta, are both thankful to all the MercyOne health care professionals they encountered along the way, especially the interventional radiology team that delivered the Y-90 treatments, which allowed Joe to still be with us today.

Read Joe's full story on MercyOne.org.