



OSF Saint Anthony's Physician retiring

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ALTON – After more than three decades of service to the community, Dr. Edward Blair, Internal Medicine physician, is announcing his upcoming retirement from OSF Saint Anthony's Physician Group.

His 'official' retirement date is early September.

Dr. Blair's medical career in Alton began in 1980, as he joined Dr. Larry Burch in the *Alton Internists* primary care practice on the campus of a much different looking Saint Anthony's.

"When we started, Saint Anthony's didn't have an OR, an ER, we didn't have labor and delivery," recalled Dr. Blair. "Being a small part of helping to build this into a full service hospital in the last 36 years has been so rewarding. Just knowing I was a part of that – and watching this place grow – is probably the thing I'm most proud of."

Former President and CEO of Saint Anthony's, Deacon Bill Kessler, says from the beginning, Dr. Blair's insight was invaluable to the Mission of Saint Anthony's.

"It is hard to imagine anything of good that we were able to achieve in which Dr. Ed Blair was not a valued contributor," said Deacon Kessler. "We all trusted his candor and ability to be an honest broker in our efforts to serve our patients, physicians, Mission Partners and our community."

It's a sentiment echoed by current OSF Saint Anthony's Health Center President Ajay Pathak.

"To say Dr. Blair will be missed is an understatement," said Pathak. "His long-standing dedication and commitment to our entire community is evident by the manner in which he cares for our patients. Dr. Blair's leadership helped shape OSF Saint Anthony's Physician Group into what it is today."

His long-time friend and colleague, Dr. Burch, noted Dr. Blair's considerable impact on the community.

"I have known Ed for over 40 years and was a partner in practice with him for 30 years," remarked Dr. Burch. "I have always found him to be an excellent physician, an honest human being and a good friend. But most of all, he was *always* on time. The medical community will surely miss his expertise and diagnostic acumen. I wish him the absolute best in his well-deserved retirement."

Dr. Blair says retirement will be an adjustment, but one he's looking forward to. He and his wife Barb have three grandchildren all under the age of three. The Blairs' retirement agenda includes plenty of family time, travel and time on the golf course and slopes.

When the day in September comes, and Dr. Blair hangs up his stethoscope, he says he will be ready for this new station in life, but it still won't be easy to walk away.

When asked what he would miss the most, the doctor took an emotional pause before answering.

"The patients," he said.

Dr. Blair's patients can still make appointments with other primary care physicians at OSF Saint Anthony's Physician Group by calling (618) 462-2222.