



Doug Edwards: confessions of a big spender!



With degrees in engineering and business, Doug Edwards was perfectly trained for his job here at Lincoln Hospital — the enviable task of Professional Shopper.

"I get paid to spend someone else's money," laughs Doug, our very own Purchasing Supervisor. "Every day is like Christmas. I get boxes from the UPS and Fed Ex man and lots of mail."

And the bills? "They go to someone else."

Does it get any better than this?

"It can be a fun job, but on the occasions where somebody needs something yesterday and didn't bother to tell me until today, well, let's just say those aren't good days."

Doug and his wife Annette came to Davenport over 13 years ago when she was hired as the hospital CFO. "When we moved here, I was selling shoes at Sears. I looked for a job here and the only thing open was a part time stocking clerk position. I took it thinking it might work into something someday."

Work into something it did — a job in surgery.

"I saw the opening for a surgical tech and thought it sounded interesting," smiles Doug. "I didn't think I'd get it, but the next thing I knew I was scrubbing in." Trained on the job, Doug was the lead tech for five years while continuing his duties as the stocking clerk.

"I liked surgery. It was really fun and interesting, but I didn't like being on call and I definitely wanted one full-time job."

The full time job came when then Purchasing Supervisor Pat Heaphy retired.

Now, Doug is up to his armpits in paperclips, band-aids and surgical tape.

"You name it. I buy it," he says with a grin. Doug knows the best suppliers and prices for hundreds of items from toilet paper and dish towels, to surgical instruments and bed pans. "Short of food and drugs, I buy it all."

And in large quantities. Doug figures he purchases upward of 300 cases of Latex gloves each year. "I have no clue how much I spend in a year, but I can estimate that just the basic stuff like band aids, IV solution and such is around \$250,000. That doesn't include the big ticket stuff."

Not only does Doug order the supplies, he researches and prices them out, distributes and tracks all items. "And I've only had a computer for the past seven years."

When Doug inherited the purchasing department, all information on every necessary item was kept on a 3x5 index card. "I still have them," he admits. "They come in handy when I have to order something we haven't had to purchase for the past ten years."

As for the computer, Doug says it's invaluable. "Especially being hooked up to the Internet. I can research and order on-line, track my orders and make substitutions. It saves so much time."

Time is something Doug doesn't always have a lot of. "I have no shortage of deadlines."

What makes him so good at his job? "To do this, you have to be organized, tidy and flexible. You need to be able to scramble without letting it get to you and get along with people."

Does he like to shop when he gets home? "No," he admits. "That's my money."