Until he moved to Naples, Frank Adiutori decided going to a dentist.

Now, he smiles about it.

His dentists are his friends—and he has been their patient for more than 30 years.

“In the past, I would just avoid going to the dentist, missing cleanings because I just didn’t want to deal with the pain,” Adiutori said. “I might even say there was such a big difference to want to go to the dentist, versus being terrified of going.”

Boe is just one of the many long-time patients of the Boe, Page & Page Dental Group in Naples, which celebrates its 35th anniversary this year. After his first pain-free visit, Adiutori, now 60, was hooked for life.

“My experience with dentists before that time was always pain and suffering,” he said.

The local dental practice, opened by Steven Boe and Stephen Page on March 10, 1980, is still at its first and only location in the Westlake Professional Center off Castello Drive. But the office has grown as the business and the city have grown around it over the decades.

After graduating with honors from the University of Florida College of Dentistry, the two young dentists, now in their 60s, started their business with one other employee in a 600-square-foot office, sharing one desk. At the time, the Naples area had fewer than 50 dentists, they said.

“We met them all,” Page said.

Adiutori, a former Naples physician who retired about a decade ago, said he only discovered the dental practice because Page, who was his neighbor, told him about it.

Naples resident Carolyn Shaw, 71, stumbled on the practice another way. About 25 years ago, she came knocking on the door in pain with a broken tooth after another dentist in the same office complex told her he couldn’t see her for two weeks. Boe saw her the same day, she said, and she has been a loyal patient of his ever since.

“The thing that impresses me most about him is that he doesn’t do unnecessary work, which so many dentists do,” she said.

Over the years, he’s pulled her wisdom teeth, put in crowns and replaced her fillings. She’s seen the same dental hygienist for regular cleanings at least 20 years, and Boe’s assistants all call her by her first name, which she likes.

“You just feel like you are visiting a family member, instead of a doctor,” she said. “It’s an extremely comfortable, friendly atmosphere and very professional.”

Today, the dental offices span 4,440 square feet, having grown by more than seven times. The practice has 15 employees and state-of-the-art technology, offering a much broader range of services, from cosmetic dentistry to sleep apnea devices to Botox treatments.

Stephen Page’s son Christopher joined the practice in June 2008, giving it a trio of dentists.

Christopher, 32, also graduated from UF’s College of Dentistry. He offers general dentistry, as well as more specialized services, such as Invisalign orthodontics and dental implants, and handles most of the services for children. He’s computer savvy, helping the practice stay current with the latest technology trends.

Growing up, Chris said he didn’t understand what his dad did at work, and the dental office was just a place where he could run up and down the halls and get into the treasure chest to find prizes.

In college, he was leaning toward the medical field, but after working in a hospital he found it wasn’t for him. He chose dentistry because he loves to work with his hands, and to work closely with his patients, giving him a chance to get to know them and hear their life stories, he said.

All three dentists give back to the community by offering their services for free to needy residents in Collier County through the Neighborhood Health Clinic.

Over the decades, the procedures and materials used in dentistry have changed so much it’s startling.

“I don’t think we do anything now that we did in dental school. Everything has gotten better,” Boe said.

“All three dentists give back to the community by offering their services for free to needy residents in Collier County through the Neighborhood Health Clinic.”

Plain film X-rays have been replaced by digital X-rays, which are more comfortable and provide more detailed information more quickly, which can be shared with patients on monitors to help them better understand their conditions and treatment options.

So why has the business stood the test of time?

“No. 1, we enjoy what we do,” Boe said. “We’ve always made it a high priority to make it an enjoyable work environment.”

Several employees have worked for the duo of dentists—who remain the best of friends—for more than 20 years. Their office manager and accountant Carol LeBoueuf has been there for more than 35 years. She remembers when they allowed her to bring her now-grown babies to work and took turns feeding and burping them, and how they gave her the flexibility and support she needed to start her own accounting firm, located in the same building.

“They’re great guys to work for,” she said.