

Cerro Gordo bids Dr. Shackelford farewell

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"He said get me a cup of coffee and get out of the way. I'm here to see Carl." Olsen added, "We needed him and he knew that. I guess you could say he was super dependable."

Paula Fletcher worked for Shackelford during her college years as an entry level job says, "It was the best learning experience I ever had. Because I had never really worked anywhere, it was my first job. He would give me these little assignments and he wouldn't tell me how to do them." She added, "I had to figure it out and if I had questions I would ask and he would tell me, but I learned how to problem solve that way. It was just the best learning experience you could ever ask for."

Fletcher worked for Dr. Shackelford from 1974-78, and also painted the Peanuts, Precious Moments, and more murals in the rooms with Dr. Shackelford's daughter during her time there. The murals are still there. Fletcher ended with, "He was Doc, he was Doc to everybody, so if you lived in Cerro Gordo you would see Dr. Shackelford, that was a given."

Sandi Brandenburg worked as Shackelford's secretary starting in 1964 and is retiring along with him as well. Brandenburg added that not only was he a joy to work with, he treated five generations of her family. "He was one in a million. Many doctors do not know their patient's names and their families, but he did." She went on to add, "We always had a staff very dedicated to him because he was dedicated to us. Working together is key." She plans to retire and spend time with her grandchildren adding, "I don't think I could work for anyone else. There was never a dull moment, and he was fantastic. He is a very kind and generous person."

At the party, many came to offer their thanks for various situations "Doc" aided with. One woman spoke about how she was burnt badly from wax and Dr. Shackelford changed her dressings daily, and she to this day has no scars. Another case Shackelford brought up was a man that came to

him after his tractor's diesel engine overheated, and ended up leaking spraying over the radiator covering him in grease. Many stated he took care of generations of their families.

Shackelford himself noticed medicine has changed in the way of care, "Some of the change is better, some of it isn't better. You lose a personal touch." For him, looking at medical records before seeing a patient was not necessary "A lot of people I've met today, I have taken care of their families for 50 or 60 years. I didn't worry about electronic medical records, it was all up here." He went on to add, "And when you do that you see, you build up a lot of trust in your doctor. You make the important decisions, not always easy, and you move on with life. They trust you if you need to be referred. And there is nothing wrong with medicine today there are a lot of good things. Things have just changed."

Shackelford met his current wife, Donna, first as a patient. They recently married, 7 years ago after he lost his first wife ten years ago. They both recalled a story to me of him removing her tonsils, and they both were giggling like school children. They have a garden they plan to tend to more with his retirement, and as Dr. Shackelford states they are "newlyweds" so travel may be in the works.

Dr. Shackelford ended with, "That is life, it moves on, and life has been awfully good to me."

Dr. Shackelford also had a clinic in Arthur.



Dr. William Shackelford
Physician, Farmer, Land Developer

He has been our Doc for 62 years
He has an incredible work ethic.
Cerro Gordo is a better place
because of him.

