

Good morning.

I'm Don Gatzke, the dean of the UT Arlington School of Architecture, and the current president of AIA Fort Worth.

My professional relationship with Sandy and Paul began almost immediately upon my arrival at UT Arlington in 2003, and grew into a true friendship well beyond the professional relationship but one based on my highest regard for their quality of character.

Sandy and Paul. Paul and Sandy. It really is impossible to think of one without the other. They lived together, worked together, raised a family together, shared their passions, and unconditionally supported each other in their individual endeavors. They were a team of two; I don't know of any other partnership that was so much a single entity. If you saw one of them, the other was usually also in the room, unless a separate professional obligation or community engagement needed to be attended to.

But Sandy by herself was a force of nature within AIA, the design community of Fort Worth –and the state of Texas. Her diminutive size and beaming smile could be deceptive when the tsunami of her determination swept away whatever obstacles blocked her path. When Sandy decided that Fort Worth AIA needed to revive its defunct annual tour of homes as a way to raise the profile of architecture in our community, she devoted countless hours of her time, chairing the committee for three exhausting years, before finally handing off the responsibility just in the last few months.

She was an organizer extraordinaire, and no detail was deemed too inconsequential to warrant her thoughtful attention. She strong-armed reluctant architects, coerced homeowners to open their homes to the public....she was relentless. But there was always that smile.....

Her devotion to our AIA chapter was truly limitless and she gave generously of her time and her energy. She served as president, and was almost always on the executive committee, she chaired the program committee multiple times, and the design awards committee, among others. While Paul chaired the organizing committee for the 2013 Texas Society of Architects convention in Fort Worth,

Sandy was the lead whip in getting the sponsorships that made it the most successful state convention ever.

She was a director of the Texas Society of Architects from 2010-2014, all the while maintaining a successful professional architectural practice with Paul, primarily focused on regional and community based projects—which included the Berry Street Initiative which she chaired for its 17 years of existence, Central Cities Redevelopment Committee, among others—and she famously took on Walmart for its lack of urban sensitivity.

Soon after I began working at UTA, Sandy, as chair of the AIA Fort Worth design awards committee, invited me to serve on the jury for the design awards. In fact, I think it was the first time I had met her. One of the projects presented to us was Bass Hall. Now, at the time, as a newcomer, I was unaware of some of the controversial aspects of that project within the design community and I argued, successfully, that any building adorned by colossal sandstone angels blowing golden trumpets out over the street deserved an award for what I suspected was a highly popular feature within the community. I do believe Sandy was aghast, and I suspect she was now questioning my architectural bona fides, but eventually she forgave me—although I suspect she never forgot it.

Her commitment to the UT Arlington School of Architecture, her alma mater, was inspiring, and her devotion to student architects and the student leadership was engaged and enthusiastic. Last year, during a dinner at Paul and Sandy's house, she spent over an hour grilling me on the finer points of professional licensing procedures for recent graduates, until Paul and my wife's eyes glazed over, but she had to know and understand every last detail. Our friendship notwithstanding, she was never shy about telling me exactly what she thought needed attention in the education of the next generation of architects. She was also particularly attuned to the issues of women who were following her into a profession that is still heavily male dominated and undiversified.

After putting herself through school as a young mother, she was acutely aware of educational costs and the dedication needed to finish an architectural degree and, typical of Sandy's can-do attitude, what she saw as a problem was turned into an opportunity. Several years ago she had the genius idea of establishing the annual AIA Fort Worth Sporting Clay tournament, which of course she chaired, even this

year, and when completed will have realized over \$300,000 in endowed funds to support student scholarships in architectural study at UT Arlington.

Fort Worth, guns, friendly competition, what could be better? It's a quintessentially Texas experience. But in the spirit of what COULD be better, last year a barbeque cook-off was added which this year grew to be one of the major features of the event, including celebrity judges, one of whom was Sandy's niece, Katie, a true Texas barbecue aficionado.

Last month, the AIA board voted to name one of the shooting clay scholarship funds in Sandy's honor, the American Institute of Architects Fort Worth Dean's Excellence Endowment in honor of Sandra S. Dennehy. I would hope this small gesture pleased Sandy, as nothing could ever adequately recognize her unparalleled contributions to the Fort Worth and Texas architectural communities and her dedication to the students at UT Arlington.

Sandy was larger than life. She was tenacious, innovative, bold, a natural leader. Her work ethic was extraordinary. An unabashed liberal in ultra conservative Texas, her principles guided her life, and her belief in the betterment of society, and her dedicated efforts in making it better, are a lasting legacy. But this is the essence of her—you never got the sense from her that any of her commitments and passion for others—for us—was ideological, clearly not theological, and for sure, never self-serving. She was just the finest example of how we all should live in the world.

But at the end of the day, she was our treasured, underappreciated, friend, and her passing will leave a large void in our hearts for a very long time.