



MAKE ART HAPPEN: To Honor, To Remember, To Celebrate

April 25, 2017



Corp's Sandy Ceppos (left) & his late husband, Doug Jones.

Many CBC'ers know that while by day [Sandy Ceppos](#) is CBC's HRIS/Benefits Administrator and by night he is an accomplished artist. But most don't know that last fall he created the painting of a lifetime as a tribute to his husband, Doug Jones, who was dying of cancer.

Sandy explained how the project came about:

Doug was diagnosed with advanced stage prostate cancer in July of 2015. By July 2016 we knew he was as he liked call it in the express lane to Heaven. Vicki Murray a retired CBC employee and her friends who went to high school with Doug decided they wanted to do something to honor Doug. Doug was class president at Millbrook High School and played defensive blocker on the football team. Doug remained close to his Millbrook

family through the years and through his florist business. Not just the students but former teachers and coaches. In September of 2016, I was contacted by the pastor of my church whose sister went to Millbrook with Doug about creating an art piece for our worship center paid for by Doug's Millbrook classmates. At first it was going to be a surprise, but I was caring for my Doug and working full-time, so I had to be accountable for my time. There was no way I could create 10' x 15' art piece without Doug knowing.

Sandy got to work on a design. He originally thought about painting a sunset with washes of warm colors, soothing. Doug disagreed.

"Doug vetoed my sunset design wanting something floral with rainbow colors and lots of dimension," said Sandy. "I thought his idea was too busy, but I came up with a design he liked. Since the project was in his honor, I thought he should have something that he feels represents him."

Sandy spent six hours every Saturday morning from mid-September until the end of October working on the piece, often starting at 5:00am.

"I think the final product is a bit busy, but Doug was pleased with results," he said.

Doug also loves that his high school friends had cared enough to raise the money to commission the painting.

"We had a dedication service to reveal the finished piece in early November and many of his classmates attended the dedication," explained Sandy. "We didn't know at the time that he had less than two months to live. I was working full-time and taking care of Doug, so Doug felt bad that I had

the extra burden of painting such a large painting. I brought him with me on the last day I painted and gave him a paint brush and paint, so he could add the finishing touches.”

Doug died on Thursday, December 29, 2016, after fighting a long and courageous battle with cancer.

Sandy says that while actually completing the painting was therapy, but he had mixed feelings during the project.

“I felt good about doing something to honor Doug, but I have to admit I would rather have been spending time with him rather than taking time away from him to paint,” he said. “Now that he’s gone, I look at the painting and think of him.”



Sandy Ceppos’ original artwork, created to honor his husband, Doug Jones, hangs in the sanctuary of the Umstead Park United Church of Christ in Raleigh.



Many others think of Doug when seeing the painting; the piece is very symbolic of the popular, loving man.

“Our church building is used by non-profits during the week and I’ve had several nice notes and letters about the painting,” said Sandy. “I’m glad that it brings some color to a very dull space, just like Doug brought a lot color to my life and the lives of others. Doug had the ability to see beauty in everything and everyone. He studied for the ministry, paying for college and seminary working for a florist in his church eventually buying the business. Through is florist business he was there for the important moments in people’s lives, marriages, births and deaths. He used his business to minister to people and formed many lifelong friendships.”

