

Compassion Story of the Month

When it's a Privilege to Help

Sandy Klein for the New England Youth Theater

The compassion demonstrated by our town for Stanley Lynde and Laura D'Angelo has been extraordinary. If anyone *ever* doubts that Brattleboro is indeed part of the Charter for Compassion and has internalized its spirit, all that person has to do is look at the town's response to Stanley and Laura's terrible accident and Stanley's subsequent death – including the unparalleled financial support covering medical costs: over 900 people contributing over \$90,000.

The New England Youth Theatre mentors felt privileged to be able to join in this support. They are a leadership group within the Youth Theatre comprised of about thirty 13 to 19 year olds who seek to strengthen NEYT's collaborative spirit through leadership, responsibility and exemplary guidance.

Twice a year the mentors put on a cabaret that raises money for a worthy cause: either to people in need or a cause on which the mentors agree. Since Stanley and Laura have been neighbors of NEYT for many years, the mentors quickly decided to donate the recently raised funds to their medical support fund. The mentors also asked the younger kids, then rehearsing for our fall play "Clowntown," to deliver a card and a set of paper flowers as seen in the photo. The flowers were donated by our other neighbors at the Cultural Intrigue.

All of the bikers hanging out that day at Stanley's shop eagerly welcomed the children as they decorated the shop with the flowers and delivered the card. Flat Street, as we know, can be a complicated street. But we have always felt that our youth are looked after by the folks at Stanley's. And when we had to move our big circus tent, the guys came over and helped. It is hard to imagine that shop without the guys there. The love surrounding that place is simply ineffable, and it will forever symbolize this town's feelings for Stanley and Laura.

Let me close with some words from a 17 year old NEYT mentor on the day of Stanley's death:

I first heard about Stanley and Laura's accident through our NEYT Mentor Group page. I had walked past their building on Flat Street almost everyday for years on my way to rehearsals. This summer as my little sister and I walked to the theater, we were always greeted there by kind smiles and cheerful "good mornings." Once the news had been posted on our page, all of us mentors knew immediately we had to help. We agreed to donate to their gofundme. We also decided we wanted to give them some flowers we made to wish them well. The senior company kids in Musical Comedy Murders made paper flowers together before our rehearsal and the junior

company kids in Clowntown used the beginning of their rehearsal time to deliver the flowers, along with a card we all signed.

Now just today we learned that Stanley has died. We are heartbroken. Our neighborhood will never be the same.

With Brattleboro voting overwhelmingly to become part of the international Charter for Compassion, the Reformer and The Commons have agreed to publish a "Compassion Story of the Month." This is the fourth.

Submissions, from Brattleboro area residents, for future publication, not to exceed 650 words, should be emailed to: compassionstory@gmail.com or mailed to: Compassion Story of the Month, c/o Robert Oeser, PO Box 6001, Brattleboro, VT 05302. Please include your name, address, phone number and email address. Earlier submitted stories will automatically be considered in subsequent months.