

'Hope and Remembrance' Banner for Those Killed by Substance Abuse

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Now hanging at the Depot Youth Center, a "Hope and Remembrance" banner with pictures of those who passed away due to drug overdoses.

Next to it is a display pledge cards signed by people committed to reaching out to others "who might be struggling" with substance abuse or addiction.

The banner includes names and pictures of people from both Darien and New Canaan, the town where it originated. The Depot is encouraging people to come see the banner and add their pledges.

Here's an announcement from the Depot about the banner and how you can add your pledge, along with a look at the banner with some (fuzzy) pictures showing closer looks at it:

On the evening of Aug. 31, an Overdose Awareness Vigil was held in the middle of downtown New Canaan.

It was hosted by two local organizations, the New Canaan Parent Support Group and the New Canaan Community Foundation. Over 400 people attended the event, which was tag lined “Helping Each Other to Heal” and included three segments.

During the Engage segment, many people wrote tributes to those in our community who died too soon, or to others who have struggled.

Many photos and heart-shaped stickers were posted on the Hope & Remembrance Wall, which provided a backdrop for the following Listen Segment of the evening.

In the Listen Segment, two parents and two young people in recovery gave testimonials to huge struggles that occurred in their lives.

The two parents, Paul Reinhardt and Stephanie Marquesano talked about their experience with addiction in their family, and how they channeled the grief from losing their sons to overdoses, into important community efforts to help others.

The young people, Kera and PJ, discussed how they had “self-medicated” with alcohol and other drugs in trying to find relief from anxiety and depression. They are now both in recovery and have found ways to cope and find significant happiness in their lives.

During the concluding candlelight Vigil segment of the evening, 14 members of the clergy spoke of their church’s or temple’s commitment of unconditional love for those suffering or at risk from substance use disorder.

In addition, Martha Larsen from St. Mark’s Episcopal Church in New Canaan led the community in reciting a pledge of intention to reach out to others in the community who might be struggling.

Adjacent to the wall — now hanging at the Depot — are the pledge cards that were distributed that evening.

Feel free to take your time read the comments, photos and tributes on the Wall. Feel free to add a message of your own, by writing on the heart-shaped stickers. If you have any questions about the Wall or the Vigil event, contact Paul Reinhardt (Founder of the New Canaan Parent Support Group) at preinhar99@gmail.com or 203-564-6374.