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The Dancer's Sole begins to clean up after Webster tornado

Mike Roberts
THE LAKE 940

On Saturday, August 4, the morning of her annual open house registration, Kristen Lynn St. Laurent's business was ripped apart by the Webster tornado. The Dancer's Sole has been located at 6 Main Street in Webster since 2013, but has now found a temporary home in Oxford while she cleans up and gets ready to rebuild.

Luckily, no children or families were in the building when the twister hit just before 10 a.m. Kristen told her story of the events that took place once the wind and rain started to swirl that morning on a recent episode of Get Your Local On Radio on The Lake 940 AM. "The storm came in very quickly," she remembered. "We could actually feel the air pressure change. We lost power, heard a large crash and immediately went down to the basement."

A short while later after the dust and debris settled, it was time to assess the damage to the building. Many plate glass windows in the front had been blown out, and "a part of the roof kicked back and flopped over itself. About half of our studio was completely open. It looked like a waterfall."

Like many businesses on Main Street that were damaged, Kristen rents the space used for her dance studio. She and her crew have been hard at work trying to clean up and salvage anything that wasn't damaged, but she is also waiting on the landlord and for insurance to find out what's next.

The landlord is mainly responsible for taking care of repairs to the building itself, but Kristen is going to have to pay for everything inside that was ruined, like her



Kristen Lynn St. Laurent and Tamara Beland.

expensive stereo system and dance props.

That is where some help from the community came in to help offset some of the things that insurance won't pay for. "I feel so blessed, but at the same time I want people to know how thankful I am. I can't say thank you enough for all of the donations."

The studio has become a second home for Kristen and many of her students. "Some of my greatest friends in life I've met in dance," referring to another teacher at the studio, Miss Greta, who Kristen met as a child in dance class. They have been dubbed 'The Twister Sisters'.

If a parent is thinking about placing their child into a dance class, what is the first step? "I always tell people to do your research. All of my staff are college educated. Two of my staff members are teachers." It is important for parents to know the backgrounds of the people who are spending time with them. The Dancer's Sole instructs students from walking age through high school. If there are enough adults interested in joining a class they are also offered on occasion.

After the radio show, Tamara Beland presented Kristen with a check made up of funds she collected with a campaign that begun hours after the tornado swept through.

The 'Get Your Local On Supports Main Street Webster Fundraiser' for area businesses damaged by the tornado raised over \$8,500 in just the first week. Funds were quickly presented to Downtown Tattoo, Hot Costumes, The Dancer's Sole, The Blessed Backpack Brigade and others who suffered damage. Thank you to all who donated money to local businesses affected by the storm.

Kristen is hoping the Dancer's Sole can get back into their Webster location by mid-fall.

Listen to the full interview with Kristen Lynn St. Laurent on the Get Your Local On page of Lake940.com and catch a new episode every Sunday morning at 7:30 a.m. on The Lake 940 AM Radio, or online at Lake940.com.

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