

Our mountain is a little darker, because one of our brightest stars has gone out. She shone so brightly for much too short a time, but the brightness she shared with all of us will light our lives and hearts Theatre in the Mountains was honored to have had Tessa always. as part of our family since she was a baby. Her brother Evan, and sister Kelly, are both veteran TIM performers. Her mother Letitia produced close to ten plays for TIM. This gave Tessa a front row seat from the very start. It was evident she was meant for more than watching from the audience. It wasn't long before she was on stage as a Loma first grader in "The Wizard of Oz". She was a gifted actor and comedienne. She epitomized the traits of her characters: the radiant, terrific, and, humble presence of Wilbur, the sassiness of The Queen, and the gentle, curious, loyal nature of Horton. No matter what her role, you couldn't take your eyes off Tessa. However, she never 'stole' the spotlight. That just was not in her nature. Instead, she shared it and made everyone else shine with her. One of her unique and incredible gualities was that she lived her life the same way. The sheer joy and delight with which she approached each day, was infectious. Effortlessly, she made everyone who knew her, a better, happier person. This was her gift to us.

Tessa, we will miss you deeply. No presence will ever be able to fill the empty stage that you left behind. You were destined for great things. Perhaps, one of those great things is the profound impact you left on all of those who were privileged to know you. We can, in no way, replicate your joyous spirit, but we can face each day as you did, a joyous adventure with endless possibilities. You have forever, changed our lives. To quote a line from the song *For Good*, from the musical "Wicked": "You'll be with us, like a handprint on our hearts." Tessa, you have truly, rewritten our stories.

With Love, Pennie Dembry Chair, TIM Steering Committee