

UK pub seeks cash for homeless regular's funeral

Written by Guardian-series.co.uk

REGULARS at a UK pub are putting their hands in their pockets to pay for the funeral of a homeless man, originally from Zimbabwe, who was “like one of the family.”

Edward Kuwateedza, or ‘Fast Eddy’, as he was known to his friends, was 54 when he died of a stroke sleeping in a car park behind his favourite Leytonstone pub, the Walnut Tree in the London Borough of Waltham Forest.



Kuwateedza would sometimes help out at the pub when it was busy in return for a bit of food and somewhere to leave his belongings overnight.

Now the staff and the regulars are hoping to raise enough money to give their friend a cremation service costing more than £2,000.

Good friend Julie Stephenson says Kuwateedza was called ‘fast Eddy’ because if anyone wanted a job doing, they could ask Eddy and he would get it done quickly.

Stephenson, 56, of Newport Road, Leyton, has known Kuwateedza for 15 years.

She said: “He was a lovely man. He was very proud and a humble man and he was always helping everyone else.”

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Stephenson broke down into tears saying that she had just helped Kuwateedza find some accommodation before he died on September 11.

Kuwateedza, originally from Zimbabwe, came to the UK over 30 years ago to study accountancy.

After losing a job in a factory in 2007, Kuwateedza was made homeless and spent his years since staying with friends and sleeping rough in the Leytonstone area.

Duty manager at the Walnut Tree, Billy Rowlands, 24, said: "Everyone's absolutely devastated. He was really a part of the furniture. He was one of those characters."

The coroner is currently trying to contact Kuwateedza's family members so there is no date for a service yet but Rowlands is looking into the possibility of a cremation at Manor Park cemetery.

The regulars have so far raised about £300 so Rowlands is hoping to put on a charity fundraiser with his band to raise the extra money.

The Crown in High Road, Leytonstone is also helping to raise money for the cause.