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**The North Fork Breast Health Coalition**

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**Pink Pearl Raffle Raises More Than $22K For New Stage IV Breast Cancer Fund**

*Riverhead* – On several days and evenings during March 19-28, the North Fork Breast Health Coalition held a socially distanced Pink Pearl Raffle at their freshly sanitized office on Old Country Road in Riverhead. Through this first-time fundraiser, more than $22,000 (more than double the goal) will go to the organization’s newly created Stage IV Research and Grant Fund.

About 200 visitors dropped by the office where they were greeted by enthusiastic NFBHC volunteers who sold raffle tickets at the door. A few supporters at a time enjoyed perusing more than 100 valuable gift baskets and prizes on display. Tickets and a list of prizes were also available online. In these cases, friends or board members would place tickets in the buyer’s choices. Winners were notified and posted on Facebook.

“We were really pleased and grateful to the community for coming out to support us. Since our annual gala was rescheduled to next spring, the Pink Pearl Raffle was an important fundraiser. The Pink Pearl Gala, and now the raffle, was named for the late Pearl Philindas, past president of the coalition,” says Melanie McEvoy, vice president of the North Fork Breast Health Coalition.

“Now we can expand our mission. The Stage IV Fund will not only provide financial support to oncologists who are actively doing cutting edge research on extending and saving lives of Stage IV breast cancer patients, but also to Stage IV thrivers with unexpected costs and expenses associated with their treatment,” says Susan Ruffini, president.

The North Fork Breast Health Coalition is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization that supports local breast-cancer patients with programs such as Helping Hand grants. The group also provides free services such as gentle yoga, reflexology, meditation class and massage therapy to breast-cancer patients and survivors. However, during the health crisis, only gentle yoga is available via Zoom.

Ann Cotten-DeGrasse and her late husband, Antonio, founded NFBHC in 1998 because they saw a great need for such an organization on the North Fork, where there is an especially high rate of diagnosis of the disease. For further information, call 631-208-8889, e-mail [nfbreasthealth@gmail.com](mailto:nfbreasthealth@gmail.com) or visit [www.northforkbreasthealth.org](http://www.northforkbreasthealth.org).

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