

# The Sag Harbor Express.

## A CONVERSATION WITH

# Duncan Darrow

*The founder and chairman of Fighting Chance talks about its upcoming benefit, honorees Rodney Yee and Colleen Saidman Yee and the future of the nonprofit, which offers counseling and other resources for those facing cancer on the East End.*

BY MARGARET OSBORNE

**Fighting Chance will hold its annual summer benefit on June 22 and is honoring Rodney Yee and Colleen Saidman Yee. What have been their contributions to the work of Fighting Chance?**

About 10 years ago, we got into a discussion with them — they had their studio in Sag Harbor — about the benefit of yoga for cancer patients and that they had a theory that it would be good. Around that same time, there was a little movement within the yoga instructor community to create something called yoga for cancer patients. We continued it and over time, we expanded it and now, yoga for cancer patients is held twice a week, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons at Yoga Shanti. And if you can imagine, over 10 years, the number of people who have benefited from that program is hundreds. I don't want to say thousands, but a lot of people and Rodney has never charged us a penny.

**Are there other local businesses that are supporting the mission of Fighting Chance?**

Of course. So, you can take the Hampton Jitney. They were looking for a philanthropic focus. And they said, 'What do your patients need?' and I said 'Well one thing they need is transportation' because a lot of our patients were being treated — still are being treated — at hospitals in New York City. I just said, 'These tickets are expensive.' You know, you go in with your husband or your wife and back and before you know it, you spend \$150. So Geoff Lynch, who was, and remains, the chairman of the Hampton Jitney, we entered into an agreement where we would purchase tickets from him during December. We would purchase them for \$14 and he would subsidize the other \$14. And we give them away. Everything we do is free.



*Duncan Darrow  
Founder & Chairman  
Fighting Chance*

**In April, a retrospective of Ken Robbins' work was held at art galleries throughout Sag Harbor as a benefit for Fighting Chance. How did the benefit go?**

It went pretty well. It was just a Saturday and Sunday, a weekend. It was a walking tour of all the galleries in Sag Harbor plus the library. You could purchase them [artwork], and we received the proceeds. And a significant number were sold. What I found with the Ken Robbins walking tour, if you will, is you may not raise a lot of money. You do raise awareness.

**Phillips Family Cancer Center opened in late April on County Road 39 and Fighting Chance has a satellite office in the center. Can you tell us how that's going?**

Very well. We're on the first floor; we've got some prime space. Actually, Stony Brook Southampton Hospital gave us the space for free. There's radiation oncology at the center, there's chemotherapy and other medical oncology, and we offer psycho-oncology. We hired a full-time oncology social worker, who had previously worked for seven years at the Stony Brook cancer center. She is extremely well-versed in the field.

**What are your future goals for the organization?**

I think the challenge for us within the next couple of years is we're now a two office charity...one in Sag Harbor and one in Southampton, within a cancer center. The office is exceptionally more accessible. We're working cheek-by-jowl where patients are working. Our Southampton office will see a lot of requests for patient counselling. We have set up that office so that it can export counseling requests to Sag Harbor. That's being done through a fairly elaborate kiosk, very much like an ATM machine. Patients select whether they want to receive counselling in Southampton or Sag Harbor. We expect we will have a significant increase in patient requests for support.

*The Fighting Chance 18th annual Summer Gala will be held at the Wesnofske family barn on Scuttlehole Road in Bridgehampton. For more information or for tickets, visit [fightingchance.org](http://fightingchance.org).*

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