

# Colors of Compassion

*Fashion show raises funds for St. Jude's*

by MARK GIFFORD

**WILLOUGHBY** - Community support was the key element for the success of the first Francesco's St. Jude's Hospital fund raiser held Aug. 9. Co-owners of Francesco's Salon and Spa, Anthony Fini and his sister Domenica Fini, along with show coordinator Micheline Thompson, beauty consultant from Beauty System Group, reiterated throughout the afternoon that if it wasn't for all the support of the community the event would not have been the success it was.

"One hundred percent of the funds raised will be given to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital. Everything was donated," Thompson said.

Thompson came up with the idea just seven weeks before the date of the event.

"St. Jude's was behind it from the beginning 100 percent. Beauty System Group was one of many sponsors that stepped forward for the cause," she said.

More than \$10,000 was raised at the event held at the Willoughby Brewing Company.

"At first I was apprehensive, but Micheline convinced me it would work," Anthony Fini said. "When the community support started pouring in from every direc-



Francesco's Salon and Spa owner Anthony Fini and Beauty District Consultant from Beauty System Group and show coordinator, Micheline Thompson collaborated to raise funds for St. Jude's Hospital.

tion it was inevitable that it would become a big success. We can't thank the community enough for their enormous support, because the event would not have been possible."

"It was a total team effort, from the area businesses that donated prizes and food, Dillard's donating the fashions, Francesco's staff for their time and dedication, and, of course, the fabulous people of the Willoughby Brewing Company for donating their time and restaurant," Micheline Fini said.

Thirty six models, including children, teenagers and men and women donated their time and dressed in the latest fashions coordinated by Dillard's at Great Lakes Mall. Styles ranged from casual to high fashion. Most of the models were Francesco clients and some were professional models who traveled from as far as Columbus for the show.

Keri Berardinelli from Spa Beaute, Inc., who helped obtain a donation and always tries to attend Francesco's event's said that, "... Francesco's has a great sup-



Lisa Lampert, hostess for the Willoughby Brewing Company, enters her Chinese raffle tickets for her chance to win one of the donated items at the St. Jude's Hospital fashion show fund raiser.



Dawn Burdecki from Francesco's sells Chinese auction tickets to Dawn Aponte, Caryn Lasko and Bob Aponte during the "Colors of Compassion," Francesco's Salon fashion show for St. Jude's.

port team and talented group of individuals that work together just like a family and I'm very proud to feel a part of the Francesco family."

After the hair and fashion show portion of the event, Beat's Workin entertained with music as the crowd of about 400 stayed and danced the afternoon away.

Group Leaders for the event included Vanessa DeMila, Danielle Papa, and Lana Cummings, make up artists Andrew Lundberg and Jill Grande.

Community involvement and local charity fund raising isn't new to Francesco's. For

the past three years in the fall Francesco's has sold Chinese raffle tickets for New Directions for Living, a women's shelter. Food and drink are donated by Longo's Pizza during the event.

Francesco's Salon and Spa is located at 7337 Mentor Ave. in the Points East Shopping Center.

**The grand finale of the fashion show included everyone involved or responsible for the event up on stage as the crowd applauds to show their appreciation.** (right)



Madalyn Elayan and Lola Vitalone receive oohs and aahs from the crowd while modeling some of the fashions during Francesco's St. Jude fund raiser.



Twins Leo and Rocky Mongelluzzi model some of the fashions from Dillard's during the St. Jude's Hospital fund raiser at Willoughby Brewing Company.



Show coordinators Micheline Thompson, Jill Grande, Venessa DeMila and Andrew Lundberg acknowledge the Francesco staff and the crowd for all their hard work, dedication and support for the St. Jude fund raiser.

