

“Cook the Book” a thank-you from Lindey McIntyre, *Executive Director*

On Saturday May 1st, we were delighted to welcome over 470 guests to the Hilton-London for “Cook the Book” - a taste of PEI.

We were also thrilled to welcome back our host for the evening, PEI's official food ambassador and Food Network's very own, Chef Michael Smith. For three years now Chef Michael has been gracious enough to join us, for our spring fundraising event. We are humbled by his commitment, compassion and dedication to making a difference and are privileged to call him a friend.

The concept for “Cook the Book” began with lunch with Chef Michael in the Fall, when we were lucky enough to steal him away for few hours. We talked about hosting an East Coast Evening and Chef Michael who had just wrapped up the Fall Flavor's festival in PEI including the launch of his latest cookbook “*The best of Chef at Home*” said hey why not cook the book! We could feature recipes from the cookbook and show case the down home flavors of Prince Edward Island. So Chef Michael, along with Executive Chef Todd Pylypiw from the Hilton-London, Executive Chef Scott Baechler from the Culinary Program at Fanshawe College along with his Team of culinary students literally cooked the book.

Lucky for us Chef Michael has a network of talented friends that were willing to join him, so in keeping with our theme for the evening, we could not have been more pleased to welcome our distinguished guests from PEI. We are grateful they took time out of their busy schedules to come to London to help us make this event the best it could be. From the Prince Edward Distillery we welcomed Arla Johnson and Julie Shore. Their award winning Potato Vodka was used in our signature drink “*The Eddy*” and at the oyster bar. Our next guest John Bil, is the Canadian Champion Oyster Shucker and Genius World record champion. Guests enjoyed not only watching this champion, but enjoyed over a 1,000 oysters John brought along from fresh from P.E.I..

We did leave some folks on the Island, but we had to have our next guest, Mark Haines. Not only is he half of Haines and Leighton our fabulous band who entertained us for the evening, but with a little arm twisting had graciously agreed to be our Master of Ceremonies for the evening. We found out very quickly Mark is one of a kind and why Chef Michael said, he's your guy! Mark received help in the live auction from our good friends Rick DeJager and Brian Mortimer.

We sincerely appreciate the overwhelming support of our corporate sponsors and local businesses.

Thank you to everyone who has generously donated items for our silent and live auction, we know only too well the tremendous demands on our business community for contributions and realize that this year more than ever it was tough. Most of the research funds raised rely heavily on the success of these auctions so we encourage you to consider our sponsors and donors in your everyday business decisions.

This evening would not have been possible without many hearts and hands, thank you to everyone, for their time and talent. A special thank you to Russell Rossini of Rossini Floral and Event Planners and Scott Wenman from Straight Street Event Services for their assistance in transforming the Hilton London to a Hilton-PEI beach resort!

“Cook the Book”a taste of PEI hosted by Chef Michael Smith was by far the most successful fundraising event like this by far. From the words of one of our long time supporters, this event exceeded anything he had ever attended on all levels..... from the talent, the food, the entertainment, the presentations and the auctions. We know only too well we would not have reached those goals without the commitment and compassion of Chef Michael Smith, along with the wonderful support we received from Mr. Joe Drummond and his wonderful Team at the Hilton-London. Once again thank to all our generous donors and the guests for the evening, we could not have exceeded our expectations without you.

Together we continue to offer hope to the children and their families who suffer with the devastation of Leukodystrophy.