

INSIGHT: Chefs come out to raise funds to support March of Dimes

By Marge Kullerstrand
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Photo courtesy of Geoffrey Hudson Colin and Shannon Peterson share their family story and the complications they faced due to the premature births of their triplets. The couple spoke at the 2010 March of Dimes Signature Chefs Auction.

Methodist Hospitals CEO Ian McFadden, 2010 honoree for the March of Dimes Signature Auction, was feted with a round of "Happy Birthday to You" led by Jodi Juhl of Lakeshore News after he addressed the crowd at Avalon Manor, where more than 400 guests had come to support the cause of preventing premature births.

Guests were also there to savor signature dishes from Northwest Indiana's top chefs and bid on live and silent auctions in one of the premier chefs events of the region.

"Methodist Hospitals is proud to partner with the March of Dimes," McFadden said. "This has been a memorable birthday."

Guests were moved by a first-hand account of the impact the March of Dimes has had on the lives of the Peterson family of Munster, whose triplets were born 17 weeks early.

"Listening to the Petersons' story really brought it home and reminded me why it's so important to be involved in this event," said Chef Scott Farrell of Briar Ridge Country Club.

Premature birth is the most serious infant health problem in the U.S. today, affecting more than half a million babies each year. Babies born too soon are more likely to die or have lifelong disabilities.

The March of Dimes is committed to reversing this trend by funding research to find the causes of premature birth and providing comfort and information to families.

March of Dimes Board member and Honorary Lead Chef Jim Galligan, of Valparaiso University, praised the businesses and the volunteers who made the event a great success.

The evening featured live music from the Kyle Hurd Band of Lafayette and was emceed by Juhl.

Kudos to the chefs: Ashley Archer - Ameristar Casino, Hipolito Sanchez - Avalon Manor, Ruben Calvo and Frank Kwieicen - Banquets at St. George, Matthew Southard - Barrington Hills Country Club, Scott Farrell - Briar Ridge Country Club, Michial Foy - Dragon Inn, Tim Merkel - Giovanni's, Elida Abeyta and Beverly Seleb - Ivy Tech East Chicago, Justin Evans - Long Beach Country Club, David Hemdal - Strongbow Inn, John Erb and Fermin Monreal - the Radisson Hotel at Star Plaza, and Jack Lencioni - Villa Cesare, for volunteering their services.

Mark your 2011 calendars for the March for Babies on April 30 at old Fairgrounds Park in Valparaiso and May 1 at Highland High School. For the latest resources and information, visit marchofdimes.com or nacersano.org.

Be A Kid Again Gala

Chicago Children's Museum celebrated its annual Be A Kid Again Gala last month. The event drew nearly 700 guests to Navy Pier's Grand Ballroom and raised more than \$970,000.

The evening's theme, "Celebrate Community," highlighted the museum's commitment to providing an inclusive, responsive and diverse environment for all of Chicago's children and families. CCM is committed to building community both inside and outside the walls of the museum, and has an active base of more than 400 community partners throughout Chicago.

During cocktails, guests perused the silent auction which featured a range of fabulous prizes, including trips to Aspen, Colo. and Nantucket, Mass., a suite at the United Center for Lady Gaga's Monster Ball Tour and dinner for four at L2O and Alinea.

At dinner, guests sipped on wine donated by Canvas Wines and enjoyed braised short ribs with a lobster demiglaze and a crab cake with Creole mustard aioli. Dessert featured blackberry creme fraiche cheesecake donated by Eli's Cheesecake.

The live auction facilitated by David Goodman of Auction Results included a trip to Paris during Haute Couture fashion week next July, a luxurious "wine and dine" trip to Napa Valley and San Francisco, and many more wonderful items.

Co-chairs of this year's gala were Robb Webb of Hyatt Hotels Corporations and Camille Rudge of The Private Bank. The lead sponsors of the event were Abbott, Allstate and The Pritzker Pucker Family Foundation. Next year's event is set for Nov. 5.

Find more photos and information at <http://www.my.nwi.com/insight>.

The opinions expressed are solely those of the writer. She can be reached at margaret.kullerstrand@nwi.com or (219) 933-3244.