



Neeje Association for Women and Family

Newsletter
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*Thank you
for your
support!*

*Wishing all a
happy summer!*

Another Year Gone by at Valrideau

Valrideau University Residence, Neeje's main project, has just completed its 18th year as a university residence for female students. By now, over a hundred residents have come and gone. Without Neeje, Valrideau would simply not exist. We are proud to support an endeavour that is effectively contributing to social change by giving young women a chance to make the best of their university years and a difference in the lives of all those they will touch as wives, mothers, professionals and neighbours.

2006-2007 has brought another full house of youth and life to Valrideau. Students and volunteer staff have shared just about everything



throughout the year, from tears and laughter to the stress of exams and treasured times of family fun and recreation.

There were also many learning opportunities, with speakers from around the globe telling us about their home countries – Irak, Korea, Romania, Hungary, Poland, Russia, China – or about their respective fields of expertise such as world trade negotiations, or sharing tips for balancing family life and a career, a concern that is on the minds of many women working towards a university degree. Residents and their friends were also given opportunities for spiritual growth at Valrideau's Saturday afternoon recollections and meditations.



Resident Jenny Yoon brought Korea, her home country, to our minds, hearts and taste buds during a fantastic cultural evening in September 2006 (a special tribute goes to her aunts, who took care of all the cooking)

Management, administrative and catering staff are key to making a year at Valrideau a positive experience. They ensure everyone gets to eat healthy meals three times a day, live and study in clean and well-kept facilities and enjoy the motherly touch of perfectly laundered and pressed clothing and linen. Neeje would like to extend a special thanks to all the people behind the scenes that are truly making Valrideau a home away from home through their careful work and their dedication.

In two years, we will be celebrating the 20th anniversary of our residence, something to look forward to. In the meantime, through our partnership with Opus Dei and with the help of so many women of all ages and backgrounds, we continue our endeavour to make young women agents of change by striving to do and to be their very best. We are excited about the coming school year; Valrideau is already full for September 2007!

Good Families Don't Just Happen

The Neeje Association for Women & Family welcomed Dr. Joseph Garcia-Prats and Catherine Musco Garcia-Prats, authors of *Good Families Don't Just Happen*, as the guest speakers at the Association's third annual parenting conference on April 21. Joe, a neonatologist, and Cathy, a former teacher, are parents to 10 sons, ages 13 to 31. For two hours, Cathy and Joe regaled a near-capacity crowd with their experiences raising so many



boys that people often mistook them for a school group, especially dressed in blazers for Sunday Mass. Interwoven with the stories were nuggets about the importance of prayer—which provides the opportunity not only for discernment but also for rare quiet times—respect for self and others, love, and commitment. They stressed that parents need to make choices and then do what it takes to support them. Their own decision to raise loving, caring, compassionate, faith-filled individuals meant they sent their sons to Catholic



Our guest speakers, right, with Louise Aubrey, of the organizing committee

schools and had high but realistic expectations. Discipline was both loving and firm. Their sons quickly learned that a ride home from school was a privilege, not a right!

Following a short break for refreshments and a draw for door prizes, all supplied by sponsors, the Garcia-Prats answered audience questions. Copies of their books were also available. A family album is posted on their website at www.garcia-prats.com. This conference was a tremendous success, partly thanks to all our sponsors, to whom we are truly grateful: Thomas C. Assaly Charitable Foundation; Sentry Select; TD Waterhouse Private Investment Advice; Paul Hewitt; Hewitt, Hewitt, Nesbitt, Reid LLP; le Groupe financier Beaudry-Deschatelets; and Heenan Blaikie LLP. We are already planning and looking forward to the next conference.

Another successful fundraiser!



Western, Hawaiian and German dinners over the last six years. Over 100 people annually attend. From cooking, to serving, dishwashing and cleaning up, all aspects are carried out by friends of Neeje volunteering their time and talent. This year, Rideau Acres provided the setting for a fun Mardi Gras evening, complete with festive masks, bright helium balloons and lots of beads. No one will forget the chicken and shrimp jambalaya served with a tantalizing hot sauce, or the delicious pecan pie that topped it all off.



A brief talk about Neeje was given by Irene Freundorfer. Everyone was delighted with the great dancing music provided by Mr. Hugh Johnson and the Jazz Ensemble of Regiopolis Notre Dame Highschool. A silent auction and 50/50 draw were also held. There was an opportunity to watch two computer presentations on fashion designed by Hilda Jerina and Claire Bouvier and friends. It was a night of fun, friendship and festivity for a worthwhile cause. Way to go Kingston!