

An Olympian for Life

by Edith Baguinho

Toronto PEV and *Olympian Claire Carver-Dais* added to the buzz synonymous with Toronto in September. The elegant setting of the Intercontinental Hotel's Bloor Street West location provided the backdrop for Ms. Carver Dias, a member of the 2000 bronze medal winning Canadian Olympic synchronized swimming team, to share the secret of becoming an Olympian in everyday life.

Ms Carver Dias was the featured speaker at PEV's annual seminar for professional women, an event organized to provide women with an opportunity to relax and network while benefitting from the experience and insight of the speaker.

As usual, the evening was nothing short of stellar. Ms. Carver-Dias' subject was "***The Power of Effective Goal Setting***". Her words and insights motivated the audience to set goals and stay on a course that will enable them to achieve final victory no matter what the objective.

Ms Carver-Dais' approach was inspired by the drive, discipline and determination needed to compete as an Olympic athlete. The experience she gained through the successes and, more importantly, the frustrations and failures on her journey through international competitions to the Olympics has provided Ms Carver-Dais with a template for success and a keen understanding that the ability to rise above set backs makes the struggle and ultimate success all the more meaningful, rewarding and fruitful.

Truly inspiring Ms Carver Dais, after a 15 year career in sports, obtained a Masters degree in English which she then parlayed into a successful career as a communications consultant, forming her own company Clearday Communications.

In addition to emphasizing discipline and hard work, she provided us with tips to help us

focus on our individual goals. These included keeping a journal as a living reminder of what we set out to do and enlisting family, friends, teammates, coaches and mentors to encourage us especially when we feel overwhelmed and discouraged to the point of wanting to quit.

Ms Carver-Dais vividly illustrated the value and power of having both a clear goal and encouragement by recalling a 5 A.M. mid-February workout running through knee-deep snow and, not surprisingly, simply wanting to quit. It was the rally cry of a teammate, "Remember our goal!" that kept her going. Ms Carver-Dais credits others with helping her achieve her numerous successes. Now married and a young mother of two, Ms. Carver is currently working on a Ph.D. and has most recently begun volunteering at her local church.

What Ms Carver-Dais made abundantly clear is that it is never too soon or too late for each of us to set goals for ourselves and persevere. Not only will this lead to great personal success, it will accomplish much for society and will encourage other women to discover *their unique influence in shaping society*.