

Celebrating Ceresville Mansion's 20th Anniversary.

❁ WINNERS OF DREAM WEDDING GIVEAWAY ANNOUNCED! ❁



Sarah Lee + Augustine Park

Ceresville's Events Director Kate Moreland recently announced Sarah Lee and Augustine Park as the winning couple in the venue's "Why Our Love is Meant to Go the Distance" essay contest.

Sarah and Augustine's winning entry will receive a complete wedding and reception package valued at approximately \$30,000. Included in the prize package is a complimentary wedding ceremony and reception, event planning services, photography, videography, ceremony and reception flowers, a wedding cake, hair and make-up services, limousine, invitations, ceremony and reception music, wedding favors and a generous stipend toward a wedding gown and other bridal fashions.

The call for entries went out in mid-November of last year, and within a week, the essays started to arrive. By the deadline of March 31, 2009, eighty-one entries had been received. An early review of the love stories, says Moreland, made her grateful the decision as to the winner would be completely out of her hands.

"The sincerity and the variety of these essays was really heartwarming," she says. "They were all dramatically different from one another, all thoughtfully done—a surprising number written by grooms who hoped to surprise their brides-to-be with the prize if they won."

The difficult task of culling through the entries to find the finalists fell to a panel of three judges, all women who had been married at Ceresville Mansion. An independent third party made the final selection, which was announced at a reception for all the entrants on Sunday, April 26th.

According to Ceresville event planner Jenni Meisner, fifty of the eighty-one couples who entered the contest attended the reception.

"Everyone was clearly having a good time, but the excitement in the room was palpable as we approached the moment for the announcement of the winning couple," she said.

Our love story originates long before the year we were born (1982). It all began in the early 1970s in South Korea, where our mothers attended the same nursing school and church. Our fathers shared the same office in graduate school. Augustine's father talked very openly about his faith and taught my father about the Bible, eventually leading him to church and his own relationship with God. In 1977, both of our parents wed on the same day, thus beginning a very special friendship between our families.

Although I grew up in a small town in Pennsylvania and Augustine lived near Washington DC, our families remained close. Our childhood memories are marked with memories of church conferences, shared family beach trips, endless games of cards and good conversations. Despite their own history, our parents never even hinted at a possible relationship between us.

After college, our lives began to deeply intertwine. Right after Augustine returned from a five-week mission trip to China, I left for a two-year mission trip to the same area. In the meantime, he was hired as a high school biology teacher. When I returned, I was determined to become certified in teaching and moved to Maryland, where there were many teaching positions available.

My first year as an elementary school teacher in a rough area was challenging to say the least. However, I will never forget the way Augustine readily lent an ear to my voiced struggles, and offered words of wisdom and encouragement. Throughout this time, we also worked closely together as youth group leaders for our church. Seeing him teach and love the middle school and high school students of our youth group allowed my respect and admiration for him to grow exponentially.



Augustine would take Sunday evening walks, which often included a stop at my house where we would sit and chat. Our much-anticipated days off from school would usually include a lunch shared together. We began developing little traditions, like purchasing a bag of a dozen mini-cookies from Potbelly's Sandwiches for the other. Even before we began dating, Augustine was always the gentleman—holding open car doors, and offering his jacket when it was chilly. Having always considered Augustine a friend, it was not too difficult to begin imagining him as more than a friend.

When he approached me about beginning a relationship, we took some time to pray about it. He called my parents, my brother and my closest friend to ask for their permission and blessing to date me. Although some may consider this old-fashioned, it was the most romantic thing I could have imagined.

Our relationship is meant to go the distance because of our deep-rooted friendship and history. Our relationship is not only founded on our own love, but the love of our parents, and the love of our God. We plan to honor this very special bond by marrying on their anniversary: July 16th.

With a July 16, 2009 wedding date fast approaching, many couples might be concerned, but with all the elements provided in their prize package, Sarah and Augustine are very relaxed. Instead of worrying about choosing vendors and worrying over innumerable details, the delighted couple are concentrating on preparing for their life together.

"Writing our essay for the contest reminded us of how thankful we are for our childhood memories, and that our families are so intertwined," said Sarah. "Now we're just looking forward to see what's in store for us in this new season of our lives."



The Ceresville Mansion · www.ceresville.com

Ceremony & Reception to include hors d'oeuvres and dinner buffet or plated menu for 125 adults

Abloom Florist, Ltd · www.abloomltd.com

Ceremony flowers, bouquets, boutonnieres, table centerpieces, cake décor & toss bouquet

Creative Force Photography · www.creativeforcephoto.com

Over 500 photographs in choice of traditional, photojournalistic, or combination





Participating vendors in Ceresville Mansion's \$30,000 Dream Wedding Giveaway with the winning couple pictured from L-R: Wayne Grauel, Woods Glen Studio; Peter Lloyd, Entertainment Exchange; Jim Stanton, Soundsations; Lia Seltzer, The Perfect Truffle; Tara Franklin, The Organized Bride; Sarah Lee and Augustine Park, Contest Winners; Kate Moreland, Ceresville Mansion; Terry Warfield, TLC Bridal; Lori Himes, Abloom Florist; Carol and Tim Cahall, The Main Event; Shaun Campbell, Creative Force Photography. (Not pictured: Jennifer Cuzzo, A Touch of Class Limousines; Mary Jane Tabler, Thomas Scott Salon and Spa; Juanita Bowers, Carriage House Candy & Bake Shop)

Woods Glen Studio • www.woodsglen.com
Video coverage of preparation, ceremony & reception

Soundsations DJ Service • www.soundsations.com
DJ/emcee services with sound and lighting systems

TLC Bridal Boutique • www.tlcboutique.com
Wedding gown valued at \$1000 and 25% off bridal fashions

Carriage House Candy & Bake Shop • www.carriagehousebakery.com
One flavor wedding cake



Thomas Scott Salon and Spa · www.thomasscottsalon.com
Complimentary hairstyle, make-up and nail services for bride and her mother

The Organized Bride · www.theorganizedbridestore.com
Invitations and seating cards

The Perfect Truffle · www.theperfecttruffle.com
Assorted chocolate truffles in favor boxes

The Entertainment Exchange · www.entertainmentexchange.com
Classical guitarist for prelude, ceremony & cocktail hour

A Touch of Class Limousines · www.ataouchofclasslimousines.com
Transportation for 8-10 in Lincoln stretch limousine

The Main Event · www.themainevent.com
Two carriage lights for terrace lighting



Bride-to-be Sarah Lee reads her winning entry in Ceresville Mansion's Dream Wedding Giveaway essay contest "Why Our Love is Meant to Go the Distance" while fiancé Augustine Park and Ceresville staff look on.

