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Extraordinary millionaire

BY MADHU KRISHNAMURTHY

Daily Herald Staff Writer

Posted Thursday, April 20, 2006

Carolyn Gable's idea of a millionaire lifestyle is sipping champagne on a yacht while getting her toenails painted and being fed grapes by a gorgeous hunk.

But that is so not her style.

Mornings for the millionaire businesswoman and philanthropist from Barrington start with getting three of her seven children out of bed, making breakfast and taking them to school like many other single, divorced parents do.

Gable, owner of New Age Transportation in Lake Zurich, went from waiting tables for 15 years to founding a \$23 million-a-year freight shipping and warehousing company. Her clientele includes Time Warner and Cox Communications.

She was recently interviewed by a news crew from ABC News' "20/20" show for a proposed episode titled "The Millionaire Mind," tentatively airing May 19.

This is not Gable's first exposure to limelight. Last year, she was featured on the cover of Business Week's Small Biz edition and in the Ladies' Home Journal.

The "20/20" show explores the theory that a certain part of a millionaire's brain lights up, allowing them to take risks. Gable agrees with that notion.

"I know other people - friends, business associates - no one really thinks the way I do, so

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Philanthropist and millionaire Carolyn Gable, owner of New Age Transportation in Lake Zurich, says everything she knows about being the CEO of a multi-million dollar business she learned as a waitress. (Gilbert R. Boucher II/Daily Herald)

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there's always a certain element," she said. "There's got to be something in me."

She believes that something is faith in God and her abilities.

"If you have the faith, you know that it's going to be OK, even if you fail," she said. "As many times as I have been successful, I have failed, too. More so. The roster of failures would be pages and pages."

At the time Gable graduated from Conant High School in Hoffman Estates in 1969, there were few women in business.

"You were either a secretary, a nurse, a teacher or a beautician," she said.

Gable chose beauty school but quit after working a year. She started waiting tables instead. She said it was not her ideal job, but she lacked the college education that would have given her a better start.

She said everything she knows about being the CEO of a multimillion-dollar business she learned as a waitress, which is also the title of her forthcoming first book that she plans to publish herself this fall.

"My idea of writing this book is more to offer hope to anybody who is a waitress or in a job where they feel that they are trapped," Gable said of the book, "Everything I Know as a CEO I Learned as a Waitress."

It was while waiting tables that Gable came across a new breed of woman - the saleswoman.

"I would wait on them and I would think, 'I could do that,' " she said.

Gable took a leap of faith and applied many places only to be rejected for being unqualified and inexperienced.

"But I never gave up. I always had that fight," she said.

Her persistence landed her a \$12-an-hour job as a customer service representative for an Elk Grove Village trucking company. From then on, she never looked back. After working for several freight companies, she decided to start her own business from the basement of her then-Rolling Meadows townhouse.

Today, Gable oversees more than 50 employees and reports that her transportation company is growing by 25 percent yearly.

Her good fortune in the business world prompted Gable to give back to her community. She established the "Expect a Miracle Foundation," a nonprofit organization that grants wishes to the children of single parents.

Gable's latest venture is starting a salon and spa in Barrington and building her dream home in Kildeer.

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