

University Commons, an active senior community

Music is in the Air



Elizabeth Dexter and the restored Steinway.

As spring flowers blossom, so do programs at University Commons. The month of April was filled with a wide range of performances, from student music and dance recitals to professional programs. April's highlight was a Gala that celebrated the restoration of the **Dexter-Brinkman Steinway Grand Piano** donated by University Commons resident Elizabeth Dexter. The piano's extensive restoration was lead by **Robert Grijalva** an associate professor and director of piano technology with the University of Michigan School of Music.

The evening commenced with **Elizabeth Dexter** discussing the piano's historic path to University Commons. Elizabeth and her late husband **Benning Dexter**, a professor with the School of Music, were both involved with the conceptual planning of University Commons. Benning's desire was to have the piano located in the **University**

Commons Recital Hall for the entire community to enjoy. Elizabeth fulfilled her husband's wish by donating the piano to the University of Michigan School of Music with the understanding that it would permanently reside at University Commons.

Dean Karen Wolff also spoke at the Gala and reflected upon the wonderful partnership that has developed between the School of Music and University Commons. The Recital Hall has been an invaluable opportunity for students to develop their musical skills. University Commons greatly appreciates this relationship and is fortunate to enjoy the many wonderful recitals performed by the students.

Piano performances by **Joel Hastings, Katherine Collier** accompanied by **Yizhak Schotten** on the viola, **Louis Nagel, Robert Grijalva** and **James Dapogny** were the highlight of the evening. With the Dexter-Brinkman Steinway Grand Piano restoration complete, the stage is set for many wonderful performances in the University Commons Recital Hall.



Robert Grijalva & Louis Nagel performing four-handed *Marche Militaire*.

UC Prescribed Ecological Burn

University Commons includes 9 acres of woodlands, which completely surrounds the community and offer spectacular views. In order to protect and enhance this natural feature a **Woodlands, Wetlands, and Storm Water Management Plan** was developed for University Commons by Tilton & Associates, Inc. in conjunction with the Natural Area Preservation Division of the Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation Department. This was the first **Natural Features Plan** adopted by a private development in the City of Ann Arbor. The plan provides specific measures to assure that the forest ecological health and biological diversity is sustained.

The plan's first phase was to eliminate **Invasive Species** from the woodlands. Last year a group of University Commons residents, under the leadership of **Bill Kinley**, removed the buckthorn and honeysuckle, which has dramatically opened the woodlands and enhanced views. The plan's second phase was a **Prescribed Ecological Burn** within the woodlands. Ann Arbor based **PlantWise**, a professional, well-equipped group implemented the controlled burn at University Commons on April 26th.



Fires were historically common in mid-western prairies, wetlands and woodlands. The native Ann Arbor plant community is part of this **Fire Dependent Landscape**.

As Ann Arbor developed, fires were suppressed, which resulted in a disruption to the ecosystem. The elimination of fire allowed many fire-intolerant, non-native plant species to out-compete the native, fire-adaptive plants. Prescribed burns reinstate an essential ecosystem process. Fire clears the way for native plants by helping to remove the invasive species and enriching the soil. Fire-blackened soil also absorbs more solar radiation causing an increase in ground temperature and a lengthening of the growing season for native plants.

The preservation and enhancement of the University Commons woodlands will be an ongoing effort. We will continue to be a **Model Community** in the preservation of our natural features.

Meet UC Resident Leonore Gerstein

Leonore Gerstein is in full pursuit of her love of education, artistic performances, recreation, dining and living. She will receive a **Master of Arts in English Language and Literature** from **Eastern Michigan University** in June. At age 62, this will be her second Master's Degree! In 2002, Leonore was presented with the EMU English Department's Excellence in Writing and Research Award, 2002, for *T.S. Eliot in Israel*.

Leonore's path to Ann Arbor was a long and exciting journey that began when her family immigrated to the U.S.A. after World War I. Her mother, from Lithuania, and her father, from Belarus, settled in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, where Leonore was born. In 1950, her family moved to Israel to live in a kibbutz. It was there that Leonore received a **Bachelor of Arts in English Literature and European Philosophy** from **Hebrew University**. She later returned to the U.S.A. where she lived in New York and Minnesota prior to her arrival in Kalamazoo, Michigan, in 1969. She received a **Master of Arts in Speech-Language Pathology**, (the 1st Master Degree), from **Western Michigan University**. Leonore's love of classical music led to her discovery of Ann Arbor and ultimately University Commons. While living in Kalamazoo, she would frequently drive to Ann Arbor to attend the premiere performances that The University of Michigan and the City of Ann Arbor attracted. After her daughter Daniella graduated from High School, she moved to Ann Arbor to be closer to the arts that she so cherishes.

In December 2002, after 10 years, Leonore retired as a **Clinical Speech-Language Pathologist** from **The University of Michigan Health System**. At that time, Leonore joined the active adult community of University Commons to continue her passion of music and art. As an active supporter and former board member of **Chamber Music Ann**

Arbor, she was introduced to the University Commons Recital Hall where many performances are held, including regular performances by Chamber Music Ann Arbor.

In addition to Leonore's participation in Chamber Music Ann Arbor, she enjoys reading poetry (William Butler Yeats is a favorite), collecting modern art and volunteering in many Ann Arbor community organizations. She also maintains her membership and involvement in several professional affiliations. Leonore is Co-Chairing the **University Commons Art Committee** and will be involved with the University Commons Community Director, Alisande Cutler, to publish a **UC Newsletter**. Her many talents are an invaluable asset to the enrichment of University Commons.

Leonore is the mother of Dylan (age 35) who resides in Israel and Daniella (age 34) who resides in New Jersey. In August, Leonore will be even busier when she becomes a first time grandmother when her daughter Daniella gives birth.

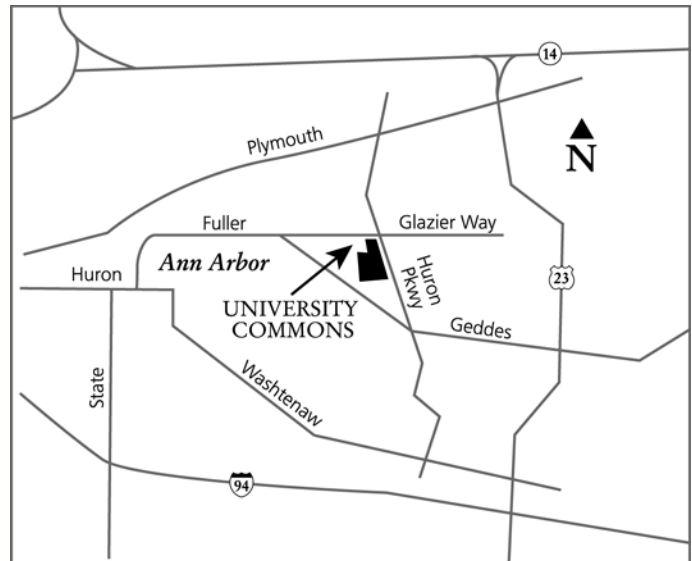
With the exciting life that Leonore Gerstein leads, University Commons provides an elegant, maintenance-free place to live, learn, and enjoy.



In Brief

- ◆ Please join us on May 29th at 5:00 p.m. for a **University of Michigan Student String Quartet Recital** in the University Commons Recital Hall. For a complete monthly calendar of events please visit us online at www.BlueHillDevelopment.com or call us at **734.663.2500**.
- ◆ Join us on Fridays from 4:30-6:30 p.m. for **Common Time** in the University Commons Café. Common Time is an informal wine & appetizer gathering and is a great way to learn more about the community from our residents.
- ◆ Opening May 1st is the recently designed **Woodbridge C Model** which includes a sunroom overlooking our beautiful woodlands. We have also designed a spacious single-level 2,805 sq. ft. **Woodbridge M Plan** with two master suites, generously proportioned dining room, living room, study and sunroom.

Charles Reinhart Company Realtors is co-marketing our final phase of new homes at University Commons. Susan Gartin of Reinhart is our UC Sales Manager - she is a **Seniors Real Estate Specialist** designated by the National Association of Realtors. Susan is a caring and reliable source of real estate expertise for seniors considering buying or selling a home. Please call **Susan Gartin** at **734-663-2500** for more details!



Sales Office is Open Daily from Noon to 5:00

Blue Hill Development
817 Asa Gray Drive
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
734.663.2500
www.BlueHillDevelopment.com



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