

Home-Grown Poetry

FLY FATE

Caught between two windows, a common fly
In January seemed to be alive on a warm day.
As days lengthened, cold strengthened,
It seemed he could hardly survive.



A February sun appeared. Suddenly from
Critical, he picked up enough to
Encourage any who might be interested
In his fate. Only two – he and I.

After all don't most of us wish to tell
Him off in warmer days with murder in mind.
Except for me, he's in solitary confinement
Between two windows. He has to stay.

He can see in. He can see out.
I don't feel like a kill.
Not I to end his strife or life.
Spring's soon enough to decide.

Phyllis Letts

Editor's note: I am very thankful to Phyllis for coming to me on her own initiative and offering her poetry to The Common Times. May her example encourage others to submit their work to the Home-Grown Poetry column.

Naming Contest

Our Grounds and Gardens Committee has just come up with a pair of good ideas:

1. Name the three ponds that dot the terrain behind Houghton and southward;
2. Have a contest to select names for the three ponds.

Indeed, down with ambiguity! When someone in the community mentions one or more of

these three bodies of water, as happens from time to time when we discuss the property, it would be so nice to know to which of the ponds he/she is referring. Names would help.

The prize for the best trio of names will be a bottle of Michigan wine. The committee would like to have your suggestions in by the end of June. Please submit your names to any member of the grounds and gardens committee.

Fauna and Flora

Big Bird News

Our hawks have on sabbatical leave! After three years of raising young here, they are gone! But we have the turkey vultures (buzzards), cruising aloft, and they are wonderful to watch in the air.



Burn News

The "burn" has left us with a parched earth look. But time will heal and the grounds will be the better for it

Betty Graham

Mini-Profile of UC Resident

Vijaya Nagesh

A recent newcomer to our complex with her husband Nidamaluri (who calls himself Nagesh for short), Vijaya has taught me much about Indian culture. It began when she came to my apartment for the interview, delicately removing her shoes (an age-old custom), wearing a diaphanous shades-of-blue garment composed of three layers: the pants part called slawar; the shirt part called kameez, and the scarf part called chunni. She charmingly insists that she wears these clothes not necessarily

because of tradition, but because she can hide behind them if she gains weight.

Vijaya, born in India, met and married her husband in the usual arranged marriage. They have a 22-year-old son, Vikram. She received her undergraduate and master's degree (with honors) in Bombay, then came to the states, where her PH. D. was obtained at the University of Missouri in Columbia. Awards include the Greppi and International Awards for the study of headaches.

Her position at the University of Michigan Medical School is as Research Investigator in the department of Radiation Oncology. But she makes time for hobbies, which include reading, cooking, painting, gardening and traveling.

Her warm, open manner invites good talk. Do look for her at Common Time.

Frieda H. Morgenstern

**Vijaya
Nagesh**



An Art Adventure

A good while ago, Sally Fleming, of blessed memory, herself a dedicated amateur watercolorist, suggested that the Art Committee organize a painting class just for us. After all, we have the wonderful crafts room; why not use it to make it easy for residents to take part in such an activity? Finally, we made it happen. For the past five weeks, six University Commons residents and two non-resident participants have been meeting once a week to practice basic watercolor skills. Along with the other students, I am learning about the science and art of color and taking first steps in watercolor painting. How stimulating it has been! With each lesson I feel my brain stretch and say, "I dig this new stuff; bring it on!" With only one more class to go, now I wonder whether there would be interest in running a new series again later this summer or in the fall. Interested? *Tell Leonore.*

Editor's Note

Two years have passed since I began my stint as chief reporter and editor of The Common Times, and I have enjoyed the task immensely. But with the Art Committee on the upswing and other interests beckoning, I lay down the quill with this issue. My thanks to Frieda Morgenstern, who recruited our new editor, Karen Stutz. Karen is a seasoned writer and editor, as well as a warm and sensitive neighbor. I look forward to watching her place her own personal stamp on our evolving newsletter. Please welcome her tenure with topic suggestions, news items, and your own writing efforts.

Leonore Gerstein

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