

An afternoon of music and elegance

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There are day trips and then there are days that linger in the memory long after the bus has pulled away. For the members of the QC Plus 60 Club who made the journey to Cedar Rapids on Friday, May 8, the latter rings beautifully true. What unfolded that spring afternoon was nothing short of magical – a private Mother's Day concert in the gracious home of internationally recognized Steinway Artist Jim McDonough.

From the moment guests arrived, the red carpet rolled out made it clear that this was no ordinary outing. McDonough's home, as beautiful as it is welcoming, set an immediate tone of warmth and refinement. Sunlight played through tasteful interiors as members were greeted and settled in, the quiet anticipation in the room giving way to something far more personal than a traditional concert hall experience could offer.

As a Steinway Artist – a distinction bestowed upon only a select group of the world's most accomplished pianists – Jim McDonough brought to the keyboard a combination of technical mastery and heartfelt

expressiveness that held the room spellbound. His program, thoughtfully curated for the occasion, wove together beloved melodies and lyrical pieces that felt perfectly suited to the spirit of Mother's Day. Each piece seemed to speak directly to the audience, drawing laughter, sighs, and more than a few tearful smiles from the gathered guests.

But the afternoon offered more than extraordinary music. During intermission, Jim and his attentive, gracious staff served a champagne and dessert buffet that would have done any fine restaurant proud. Sparkling glasses were raised, sweet confectios were savored, including Jim's favorite cookie, and the conversation flowed as freely as the champagne itself. The hospitality extended by McDonough and his team perfectly complimented the music – personal, generous and genuinely warm.

For many in attendance, the experience offered a rare and precious combination: world class artistry in an intimate setting, surrounded by friends old and new, with every detail tended to by a gracious host. Members lingered long after the final notes had faded,

reluctant to let the afternoon end. "This is one for the scrapbook," remarked more than one member as they made their way back home – and they were not wrong.

The QC Plus 60 Club extends its deepest thanks to Jim McDonough for opening his beautiful home and sharing his remarkable giftedness with our members. The afternoon was a testament to what our club does best – bringing people together for experiences that enrich, inspire and delight.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

The good news is that this was not a once-in-a-lifetime treat. The QC Plus 60 Club will be returning to Jim McDonough's home for a Christmas Concert on Monday, November 30. As the holiday season casts its glow, there is little doubt that an afternoon of festive music in that splendid setting will be every bit as enchanting as our Mother's Day visit – perhaps even more so.

Watch our website for details and keep November 30 open on your calendar. If the May concert was any indication, this is one event you will not want to miss!