

Building renovated to warehouse

Defunct tennis club is sold

By MARY GNIEWEK

South Downs, the indoor tennis court building in Farmington Hills' Industrial Park which has stood vacant for nearly a year, has been sold to a Birmingham partnership which plans to lease it out for industrial warehousing. Anthony Brown, one of three partners in 24110 Industrial Park Associates, purchased the 50,000-square-foot facility on Industrial Park Drive earlier this month.

Brown said about half of the building is already leased out, but declined to name prospective tenants.

Brown, with partners Eric Lutz and Leonard Grossman, bought the building from the South Downs Building Co., a limited partnership owned primarily by Orchard Lake businessman Hans Hafemeister.

Though details of the sale were not disclosed, Brown said the purchase price was between \$300,000 and \$1 million.

"We bought it as an investment," said Brown, whose real estate investment and development firm recently purchased another commercial building in Birmingham.

"The building has high ceilings, which is important to warehousing. We have already leased out half. Renovation work will start immediately. We'll do whatever is necessary to convert."

South Downs closed its doors last August. It was operated solely as a tennis facility with eight indoor courts. Players were charged a membership fee plus court time costs. Tournaments and lessons were held there. The build-

ing had been in operation about five years.

OWNER HAFEMEISTER would not comment on the closing of the tennis courts, but several others said it did not generate enough business to stay solvent.

"They wanted members to buy into ownership, but that didn't work," said Charles Karabell, general manager of the Detroit Tennis and Squash Club in Farmington Hills.

"There are five indoor tennis clubs in the immediate area. There was lots of competition."

Ralph Shoberg, a former president of the Farmington Industrial Park Association (FIPA), said South Downs had not paid FIPA membership dues (\$83 annually) for the past two years.

Shoberg had been a member of the tennis club.

Ed Lane of the Farmington Chamber of Commerce said there was speculation after the building closed that it might be used as an exposition hall, since the industrial park is in close proximity to Holiday Inn and other hotels.

The industrial park currently has two other vacant buildings for lease. One is a 17,000-square-foot building on Industrial Park Drive, the other is a newly constructed structure that is tied up with building inspection problems over floor-to-ceiling height regulations.

Dave Justis, supervisor for the Farmington Hills Recreation Department, said interest in tennis programs sponsored by the city is down over last year.

"It seems that the fad is over with," he said. "This year we offered more tennis than ever and our program has dropped to less than half over last year. "Even the tennis tournament (which begins today and runs through Sunday) is down 25 percent over last year."

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Obituaries

PATRICK JOSPEH SUGRUE

Mr. Sugrue, 81, of Farmington Hills, died on July 16 in New Grace Hospital. He was a bus driver for the city of Detroit.

Survivors include: wife, Marion; sons, Frank M., Thomas J., daughters, Marie, Marie Hughes; Sister Jane, R.S.M.; brothers, Dan, Conn, Edward, Jim; 11 grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Services were conducted on July 19 at Heeny-Sundquist Funeral Home and St. Alexander's Roman Catholic Church. Rev. James Wright conducted the services. Burial was at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Southfield.

BARBARA ANN CHASTON

Mrs. Chaston, 38, of Farmington Hills, died on July 18 in Mt. Carmel Mercy Hospital, Detroit.

Services were conducted on July 21 at Heeny-Sundquist Funeral Home by Rev. William Frayer of Nardin Park Methodist Church, Farmington Hills. Burial was in Glen Eden Memorial Park Cemetery, Livonia.

LILLIAN PARLETT

Mrs. Parlett, 73, died on July 18 in her Tuscon, Ariz., home.

Formerly of Milford, she was a homemaker.

Survivors include: husband, Harvey; daughter, Donna Bishop of Farmington; brothers, Roy and Earl Allen, Harley and Melbourne Allen.

She was a homemaker. Survivors include: husband, Leslie A.; daughters, Mrs. Debra Scott, Mary Ann, Leslie, Katherine Matz, Leanne, Michelle; sons, Patrick, Daniel; mother, Mrs. Leona Lackey; father, James Sabados.

Services were conducted on July 21 at Heeny-Sundquist Funeral Home by Rev. William Frayer of Nardin Park Methodist Church, Farmington Hills. Burial was in Glen Eden Memorial Park Cemetery, Livonia.

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Mrs. John F. Cotant, of Farmington Hills, received a Distinguished Service Award from Our Lady of Providence League, the volunteer organization at Providence Hospital, Southfield.

The award was established to recog-

nize members who have given outstanding service and contributed substantially to the growth and success of the league. Each honoree was given an engraved plaque and will have her name inscribed on a plaque displayed in the hospital.

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