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Farmington City Hall is a short distance. Also, the Farmington Downtown Development Authority subleases office space from the chamber.

As a result, DDA director Judy Downey is also looking for a new location.

"I will be moving. I don't know when," Downey said. "I will be looking for office space in the DD A district."

The Farmington Training Center is off Grand River. Soronen said the chamber will likely look into putting up a sign.

The new office is about one-third the size of the current location. But the places far exceed any minutes, Soronen said.

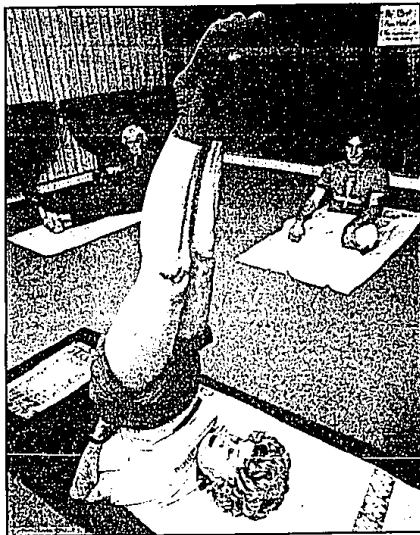
Among the advantages is the \$14,600 savings annually in rent. Soronen said the chamber has had to postpone some projects and publications due to a decline in membership.

"Maybe it will help pay the bills we've kind of dragged along," Soronen said. "As like many chambers, and not unlike many businesses, the last couple of years have been on the tough side. "We've really kind of squeaked through a few months. We never missed a payroll, but there were times I thought that I might."

Superintendent Michael Flanagan, who is on the chamber board, reportedly suggested the idea of moving.

The Training Center, which is under renovation, is intended to train school staff. Under the plan, chamber personnel will be available to provide some training for school employees.

The chamber and schools have put together Partners in Education, a resource guide for educators and the community. O'Malley said the chamber has helped in other areas such as lining up places for students to volunteer as part of a new community service program.



STAFF PHOTOS BY SHILON LEMIEUX

Taking her stand: A yoga shoulder stand is demonstrated by Sandy Darvin as students Elma Ambrose (left) of Redford and Larry Voletti of Westland watch.

has the orange "whole wheat" sticker affixed to it.

Darvin's eligible for the national senior competition in Baton Rouge, La. She can't go, though.

Burglars made off with her tiller, a tool box and assorted garden tools in separate break-ins since May. She's afraid to leave her house unattended.

The B&Es don't inject bitterness into her recipe for happiness.

"I was told if I harbor this hate, it will boomerang back a hundred times more," Darvin said. "So, I bless them (the culprits)."

Such a rosy outlook has carried her in tough times.

She's been a widow for a year and a half; her husband fell outside the hospital after being discharged. The shock caused a heart attack.

Her youngest son, Kurt, died three weeks before his 10th birthday from undetected internal injuries sustained in a barnyard fall.

Sadness gives way to fond reminiscences, recalling how children lined up at her house on Halloween, the night of her late son's birthday or how her boys' Cub Scout troop used to do yoga demonstrations.



Worth her medal: Sandy Darvin shows off some of the gold and silver medals she won in Senior Olympics competition.

"God's been good to me," Darvin said.

While some her age might shuffle slowly, Darvin zips down the hallway at the Farmington Hills

Senior Center. She teaches yoga there, and wonders out loud why more people her age are not at the senior center.

"Probably bad eating habits," she said.

Those who do frequent the senior center usually know her. Every time someone walks by, Darvin looks up and expects to say a hearty hello. She looks disappointed when she doesn't know them.

"I've been calling you," said Loretta Conway, director of the senior program. "I can't get ahold of you."

No surprise there. Darvin's busy in the garden or in the swimming pool at the Y. She's already talking about next year's Senior Olympics, which she's been involved with for 12 years. She hopes to get a sponsor, and ideally make it to the nationals in 1995 in San Antonio, Texas.

She'll be 82 then, but she doesn't see competing at that age as pushing the edge. Instead, Darvin wants to let others in on the secret.

"They can go walking. They could put a ball . . . They have so many things," she said. "You don't have to be an expert."

"Just go out and do it."

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