

Senior spot just what doctor ordered

Physician donates vacant office space

WARREN

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When Dr. Richard Klein couldn't rent out a 2,500-square-foot medical office he owns in Warren, he figured he'd just give away the space by offering it to seniors in the city who were looking for a place to gather.

The Stefani Senior Solitude Center is to open today at 3665 Eleven Mile Road, next door to where Klein runs his private practice, the Michigan Head and Neck Institute. Klein said he couldn't be happier that his vacant property will be put to use.

"It's just sitting there!" he said. "It might be years before anybody rents it. I'm going to donate it to the seniors and let

If you want to go

Lt. Gov. John Cherry and several Warren elected officials will be on hand today for the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Stefani Senior Solitude Center. Dr. Richard Klein donated the 2,500-square-foot space next to his practice, the Michigan Head and Neck Institute.

Where: 3665 Eleven Mile Road, Warren

When: 11:30 a.m. Future office hours will be 9 a.m.-5 p.m. weekdays.

Cost: Free

Details: Call Klein's office at 586-573-0438.

them use it."

The seniors will be welcome to use the building as long as it remains for rent. Seniors commonly congregate at two city-operated facilities — the Warren Community Center and the Owen Jax Recreation Center.

Still, Marilyn Donlin said she was thrilled when she heard about Klein's plan for the vacant space. She said seniors in that part of the city have been looking for a place to gather since the Fitzgerald Recreation Center was shuttered in 2004 because of bud-

get cuts.

"I think seniors are always looking for some place to go and be together and chat," said Donlin, who declined to give her age. "We're a funny breed. We like to be together."

Klein, who bought the building 10 years ago, donated more than 1,000 books, CDs and movies from his personal collection of American classics. The space has one large room with furniture and plenty of space for card games or just relaxation.

So far, five senior groups have expressed interest in

holding meetings at the new venue. Klein will allow them to do so for free.

Klein also plans to meet with seniors once a month and offer his time to answer medical questions they might have.

"A lot of seniors are my patients," said Klein, 67. "This is the least I could do."

Fred Stefani, who is the namesake for the center because of his work as president of Warren Senior Connection, which helps connect seniors with one another and city services, said plans for the new center have been in the works for the past two months.

The center will be open during Klein's business hours of 9-5 Monday-Friday.

"It could go on for a couple of years, or longer," Stefani said. "When he rents that building out, then we have to get out."

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