

Living Well

A monthly special section of news & information for seniors



Courtesy Avenidas

Workers from PAMF/Sutter Health deliver a shipment of donated personal protective equipment to Avenidas in Palo Alto, which is partnering with a coalition of local doctors to distribute emergency supplies to area senior care facilities through Operation PPE/Operation S.O.S. On the far right are Jyllian Halliburton, director of volunteers at Avenidas, and Dr. Albert Lam, co-founder of Operation PPE, who have been spearheading the effort.

Getting supplies to where they're needed most

Local doctors launch Operation PPE to aid senior care facilities before second coronavirus wave comes

by Linda Taaffe

As new coronavirus cases continue to be reported, senior care facilities have emerged as hot spots for the disease, according to data that the California Department of Public Health has been collecting since mid-April.

Skilled nursing facilities account for 1,835 of the state's 4,286 recorded COVID-19 deaths. In Santa Clara County, long-term care facilities — including assisted and independent living centers and board-and-care homes — account for approximately 44% of

its 142 recorded COVID-related deaths, according to state and county data released on June 1. Vi at Palo Alto, Palo Alto Subacute and Rehabilitation Center, Lytton Gardens and Palo Alto Commons are among the 39 facilities in Santa Clara County that have reported at least one case since the outbreak, according to the county's public health department, which does not include deaths at individual facilities in its data. Webster House and Channing House also reported cases, according to the state health department.

Patient advocates say testing and personal protection equipment are key to curbing the spread of the virus at both skilled nursing centers and non-medical senior care facilities. While the county's new COVID-19 testing task force rolled out recommendations on May 14, followed by an updated order from the state health department on May 22, to establish baseline testing for skilled nursing centers and congregate living facilities, there is no plan in place for how facilities will comply.

There also is no coordinated system in place to provide senior care centers with personal protective equipment, such as masks, which are included as part of the mandates outlined in the state's new order.

"The COVID-19 pandemic shows the deficiencies that we've been talking about for many years in the area of senior care," said Dr. Mehrdad Ayati, adjunct professor of medicine at Stanford University, who has been advocating for more state leadership in the purchase and distribution of

protective gear for long-term care communities.

"Traditionally, a skilled nursing home was not supposed to be like a hospital, taking care of very sick people, but this has happened because of the complexities of the aging population these days," he said.

Skilled nursing homes, which are regulated by the state, as well as unlicensed facilities that aren't set up to provide medical care, such as assisted living centers,

(continued on page 34)

Supplies

(continued from page 33)

were unprepared for a pandemic, Ayati said.

“They didn’t have masks; they didn’t have gloves. They didn’t have the very basic material that is necessary for a medical center,” he said.

Dr. Albert Lam, chairman of the Depart-

‘We have to give people the supplies they need to be safe.’

—Dr. Albert Lam, chairman of the Department of Geriatric Medicine, Palo Alto Medical Foundation

ment of Geriatric Medicine at Palo Alto Medical Foundation, said these facilities have been forgotten about as most attention has been focused on getting personal protective equipment to hospitals.

“It just doesn’t make sense for 1,200 nursing facilities and 7,000 assisted living centers in California to each be fending for themselves,” Lam said. “None of these very important providers have been allocated (personal protective equipment) in any sort of organized way. It’s not the fault of any one community. This is really a national issue.”

Lam explained that hospitals have existing supply chains and larger budgets than most senior care facilities, which don’t typically require these items. This has made it difficult for them to secure protective equipment during the pandemic.

Rather than wait around for the government to figure out a way to get supplies to these facilities, Lam, Ayati and a coalition of local doctors from PAMF/Sutter Health and Stanford University have launched a program to fill the void.

Through Operation PPE, the group has gathered face shields, N95 masks, gowns, gloves, shoe covers and other protective equipment donated by friends, neighbors, overseas family members, medical providers and just about anywhere else they could find needed items to distribute to local senior care facilities.

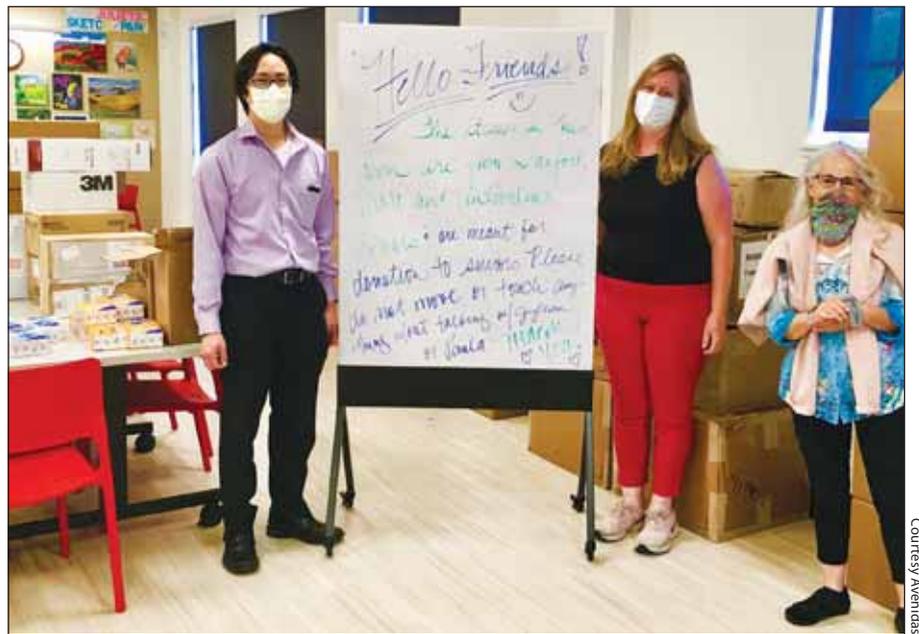
Ayati said prior to the stay-at-home order, he took his personal — and limited — supply of gloves and masks, put them in the back of his car and started delivering them to various nursing centers.

“Operation PPE is really our response to a dire lack of personal protective equipment for providers of elder patients and elderly patients that are not in the hospitals,” Lam said. “We have to give people the supplies they need to be safe.”

Just wearing a mask can dramatically reduce the disease’s transmission, Lam emphasized.

At the end of May, the group teamed up with Avenidas senior center in Palo Alto to help with its distribution efforts. The nonprofit distributed supplies to 30 facilities up and down the Peninsula this week.

Lam said before teaming up with Avenidas, Operation PPE initially was able to distribute a handful of supplies that the coalition was storing at Palo Alto’s Webster House to about 17 facilities. Retired registered nurse Pat Robinson surveyed local facilities and created a spreadsheet detailing what each needed. People were driving from as far away as Santa Cruz to pick up a



Courtesy Avenidas

Dr. Albert Lam, left, and Jyllian Halliburton, volunteer director at Avenidas, and Paula Wolfson, manager of Avenidas Care Partners, inventory personal protective equipment that has been donated to Operation PPE.

box of supplies, he said.

As more supplies started coming in, however, the group realized it needed outside help and reached out to Avenidas, which has many connections in the community through its various programs that provide assistance to seniors.

“They told me, ‘We are very busy physicians and we need support,’” said Paula Wolfson, manager of Avenidas Care Partners program. “You know, what better way to spend our time right now than in this process? And so everybody said ‘yes,’ and then it quickly came into play.”

A room at the Avenidas building at 450 Bryant St. in downtown Palo Alto now is being used as a warehouse where about a half dozen Avenidas volunteers sort and track inventory brought to the center.

Jyllian Halliburton, Avenidas volunteer director who is working as the operational and logistics coordinator for the joint effort, which has been dubbed Operation PPE/Operation S.O.S (Save Our Seniors), said they have inventoried donations large and small from all over the world: 4,236 face shields, 14,000 pairs of gloves, 2,056 gowns, 4,142 N95 masks, and 500 surgical masks.

“There are all of these huge boxes of gowns and gloves and face shields, so we feel now we’re kind of helping to save lives,” said Wolfson, who is among those helping to sort items.

Halliburton said the idea is to take the donated supplies and divide them evenly among facilities so that everyone gets an equal amount.

“This is a heart-warming story because we’re all coming together, but it’s also a story that we don’t know when it ends,” Lam said. “There’s an ongoing need, and we need to get the word out. We think that people have pockets of (supplies) that they don’t know where to send. Maybe if we can get those supplies out there ... maybe we can reduce transmission in the community.”

Ayati said the group is already preparing for a second wave of the virus.

“If there’s going to be a second wave that operates, it will happen exactly in the same places,” Ayati said. “(Senior) facilities always will be a place because they are the best incubators for viruses.”

“The COVID-19 had a very painful lesson for us, but I believe it was not only painful but was very valuable for us,” he added. “We cannot go back to the same operation that we were doing in the past. We need to change it.” ■

For information on how to donate personal protective equipment for senior facilities, or items like soap and hand sanitizer for local seniors, contact Avenidas at 650-289-5400.

Associate Editor Linda Taaffe can be emailed at ltaaffe@pawebly.com.

Private Duty Nursing In Palo Alto



NurseRegistry remains open and is committed to matching each client with a skilled nurse for care that fits his or her specific needs—whether it’s a short visit or 24 hour support.

Services include:

- Post-Hospital Care
- Wound Care
- IV Therapies
- Palliative Care
- Hospice Care

- Wellness Checks
- Medication Management
- Airway/Ventilator Care
- Patient Education
- Respite Care

Call (650) 462-1001 for private duty nursing.

(650) 462-1001 | NurseRegistry.com
125 University Avenue, Palo Alto, CA



Senior Focus

DISCUSS THE CLASSICS ... Registration is open at Avenidas for “A Class on the Classics,” which will be held from 10:30 a.m. to noon, Thursdays, July 9 to Sept. 10 via Zoom. Each week, the instructor will provide an overview of some of the best-known plays, poems and novels ever written and look at what makes the classics a classic and why they have importance centuries after being written. Cost is \$30 for members and \$40 for nonmembers. To register, go to apm.activecommunities.com.

TAKE A VIRTUAL FIELD TRIP ... Avenidas is offering weekly online field trips that take participants to international concerts, museums, zoos and other destinations via Zoom. The 40-minute field trips start at 1 p.m. on Thursdays, July 9 to Sept. 17. Each trip will be presented in English and Chinese. Cost is free for members and \$35 for nonmembers.

To register for “Let’s Go on a Field Trip Together,” email Rosie Chow at rchow@avenidas.org or Pinki Fung at pfung@avenidas.org. Space is limited.

‘ASSEMBLY REQUIRED’ ... Neil Shubin, the best-selling author of “Your Inner Fish” and the master of writing about science in a way that both educates and entertains, will talk about his new book online at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 18, as part of the Kepler’s Literary Foundation series. In his new book, “Some Assembly Required,” Shubin examines the evolution of human and animal life on earth. In today’s scientific moment, archaic fossils coupled with new DNA technology have given us the tools to answer basic questions about our existence. Shubin takes us through all of the twists and turns that originated life’s immense diversity. Cost is \$35. Registration is open until one hour prior to the event. To register, go to keplers.org. ■

Celebrate Pride with Avenidas!

LGBTQ Empowerment and Connections Group

Social Clubs

Lesbian Social Group

Friendly Men Social Walking Group

Virtual Town Hall Presentations

Friendly Visitor/ Pen Pal Program

PRIDE 2020 Celebration



For dates and details, please call (650) 289-5417 or visit www.avenidas.org

450 Bryant Street, Palo Alto



With support from the County of Santa Clara, Office of LGBTQ Affairs.

For complete schedule or info about Avenidas events, call 650-289-5400

Living Well

June 1
LGBTQ Senior Empowerment & Connections Group via Zoom

2:30 to 4pm, every Monday. Email tkingery@avenidas.org with subject "Connections" for log on info. Free.

LGBTQ+ Town Hall on COVID-19 via Zoom
3:30-5pm. Register at: www.surveymonkey.com/r/lgbtqtownhall. Free.

June 2
Internet of Things
10-11am, Senior Planet @Avenidas. RSVP to rsvp@seniorplanetavenidas.org for log on information.

June 3
Short Story Reading Club via Zoom
10:30am-12pm, every Wednesday. Email register@avenidas.org for log on information. Free.

June 4
Ukulele Jam Session via Zoom
Every Thursday, 2-4pm. For more info email register@avenidas.org. Free.
Lesbian Social Group via Zoom
3-4pm. Email jenn@seniorshowerproject.com for info and to register. Free.

June 5
National Doughnut Day
Yep. Who's in?

June 8
How to Host a Zoom Meeting
10-11am, every Monday. Senior Planet @Avenidas. RSVP to rsvp@seniorplanetavenidas.org for log on information.

June 9
Webinar: Moving Towards a Plant-Based Diet
With Karen Ross, RD, 1-2pm. Pre-registration required. Email register@avenidas.org. Free

June 10
Mindfulness Meditation via Zoom
Every Wednesday, 2-3pm. Visit www.Avenidas.org for log on information. Free.

JUNE 2020

Calendar of Events

June 11
Short Story Podcast Discussion Group
11am-12pm, every Tuesday and Thursday, Senior Planet @Avenidas. RSVP to rsvp@seniorplanetavenidas.org for log on information.

Gay Men's Walking Group
3-4pm. Email tkingery@avenidas.org for more info. Free.

June 12
How to Spot Fake News
11am-12pm, Senior Planet @Avenidas. RSVP to rsvp@seniorplanetavenidas.org for log on information.

June 15
World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
Check out HelpGuide.com, search Elder Abuse and Neglect for more info on signs, prevention and reporting.

June 16
What's App
10-11am, Senior Planet @Avenidas. RSVP to rsvp@seniorplanetavenidas.org for log on information.

June 17
How to Host Zoom Meetings 2.0 (advanced features)
10-11am, every Wednesday, Senior Planet @Avenidas. RSVP to rsvp@seniorplanetavenidas.org for log on information.

June 18
Video Chat
10-11am, Senior Planet @Avenidas. RSVP to rsvp@seniorplanetavenidas.org for log on information.

Lesbian Social Group via Zoom
3-4pm. Email jenn@seniorshowerproject.com for info and to register. Free.

June 19
Google Maps
11am-12pm, Senior Planet @Avenidas. RSVP to rsvp@seniorplanetavenidas.org for log on information.

June 20
Pride 2020 Celebration! via Zoom
2-4pm. Games, prizes and more! Email tkingery@avenidas.org for info and to register. Free.

June 22
National Onion Rings Day
Soak sliced onions in buttermilk, coat in a bread crumb mix, place on a cookie sheet, lightly coat with cooking spray and bake at 450 for 12 minutes for a healthier alternative.

June 23
Facebook
10-11am, Senior Planet @Avenidas. RSVP to rsvp@seniorplanetavenidas.org for log on information.

June 24
Webinar: What You Need to Know about California's Coordinated Care Initiative
11am-12pm. Email info@avenidas.org for more information. Free.

June 25
Dragon Boat Cultural Learning Festival via Zoom
10-11am. To RSVP email pinkipfung@avenidas.org and/or rosierchow@avenidas.org. Free
Gay Men's Walking Group
3-4pm. Email tkingery@avenidas.org for more info. Free.

June 26
Online Health Resources
11am-12pm, Senior Planet @Avenidas. RSVP to rsvp@seniorplanetavenidas.org for log on information.

June 29
National Camera Day
How did we ever live without cameras in our phones?

June 30
Webinar: So You Have Pre-Diabetes - Now What?
By Donna Louie, RD, 1-2pm. Pre-registration required. Email register@avenidas.org. Free

*You're there
for him.*

*We're here
for YOU.*



The San Mateo County Caregivers Collaborative www.SMCCaregiversCollaborative.org

Alzheimer's Association
Resources for people living with dementia, care partners, and the community
(800) 272-3900

Catholic Charities Adult Day Services
Services for adults with dementia or other impairments, and their caregivers
(650) 592-9325

Coastside Adult Day Health Center
Structured day health care and support
(650) 726-5067

Edgewood Kinship Support Services
Support services for caregivers and families caring for relatives
(650) 832-6711

Family Caregiver Alliance
Support for families and friends caring for adults
(800) 445-8106

Kimochi
Japanese language-based caregiver support services
(650) 388-7130

Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County
Assistance for low-income clients with civil legal issues
(650) 558-0915

Mills-Peninsula Senior Focus
Programs and services for older adults and their caregivers
(650) 696-3660

Mission Hospice & Home Care
Compassionate care and comfort at end of life
(650) 554-1000

Rosener House Adult Day Services
Services for older adults with challenges and their family caregivers
(650) 326-0126

Seniors at Home
Home care and care management for seniors
(844) 222-3212

South San Francisco Adult Day Care Center
Social and supportive services for frail or disabled older adults
(650) 829-3824