



Avenidas
Village

VOICE

AVENIDAS VILLAGE

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www.avenidasvillage.org

May-June 2020

Avenidas Village Tests “Positive:” New programs meet current challenges



Six weeks ago, “Shelter In Place” brought a sudden new lifestyle and many unexpected changes. Within days of the shelter order, Avenidas Village implemented new features to bring reassurance and practical help to our members.

Grocery shopping & delivery: We repurposed the role of our Social Events coordinator to help members obtain groceries while sheltering in place. To avoid duplicating other resources, we focus on stores that members couldn’t access in other ways. We offer shopping help or grocery pickup from Trader Joe’s, Cook’s Seafood, Piazza’s and Sigona’s Farmer’s Market. If you need this assistance, email shuang@avenidas.org.

Communication & education about resources on the Village Google Group: Concurrently with the shopping help we offer, we’ve worked hard to educate members on other available options such as Instacart or local stores offering online ordering or delivery. The Village Google Group has been a key resource for us to share the latest information on these types of services with you.

Member website – new features: In addition to the Village Google Group for email updates, we have added new features to the members’ only website (accessible by login) to make it a better communication tool. Please see Chuck Sieloff’s article on p.3 for details. Questions about the website? Email dgreenblat@avenidas.org.

Tech and social support - getting on Zoom! Through email, our website, and now through Zoom teleconferencing, we can stay connected! It’s amazing how quickly many members have taken to using Zoom to connect with the Village, friends and family. Many Village meetings including cluster meetings and conversation groups have already been held successfully with Zoom. The Village has offered several “get to know Zoom” instruction sessions, provided by our Chair, Chuck Sieloff, to help members learn the technology. We will continue developing Zoom activities as long as we are required to maintain our social distance. Our May events listing includes some new or adapted programs and there will be more to come!

Village wide check-in with the help of the Clusters: Starting with a Google Group email asking members to confirm that you’re receiving our emails, we proceeded to identify members who were unresponsive and who we had not heard from in other ways. This list was divided by cluster and each cluster’s leaders shared responsibility for calling these members. The purpose of the check-in was twofold: to make sure everyone is well and has what he/she needs, and to ensure members are up to date on ways the Village may be able to offer extra help if needed. We want all members to know the Village is here for their support.

The Village has been compared to an insurance policy, there to help when needed. Our current situation has resulted in new needs, and the Village has been put to the test in how we might address those needs for our members. So far, the results have been positive!

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Call for Nominations for Avenidas Village Advisory Council

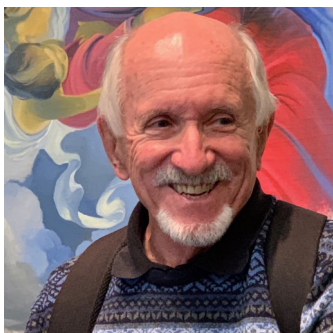
by Chuck Sieloff, AVAC Chair

Have you ever wondered how Avenidas Village programs and activities are determined? You can become a part of that process by serving on the Village Advisory Council! Annually, we call for nominations for new Council members who can help to provide direction and support to the Village program. This year, nominations for membership in the Advisory Council are due on May 15 for a two-year term beginning July 1. Nomination forms have been mailed to all members, but if you have not received one and would like to apply, please contact the Village office as soon as possible. Please consider volunteering (nominating yourself) or nominating another member to serve.

The Advisory Council provides leadership and guidance to the Village. All of our initiatives, including programs and activities, originate with the Council. It is a working body whose members chair or serve on the various Village committees and task forces. Belonging to the Council provides members with a broad overview of the full range of Village activities and with a significant opportunity to impact the program.

We invite each of you to step forward and join us in charting and creating our future development. Take the opportunity to share your ideas for the Village and help bring them to life!

“The IdeaList”: Thoughts on the Village by Dick Smallwood



Dick Smallwood

It seems to me that the coronavirus crisis has actually had a positive effect on the Village mood. Everywhere I see people going out of their way to help others. Villagers are using the email list to share hints on how to make masks, find good takeout places, or just share something cheerful. As a simple example an email that I sent showing a Songbird Opera, elicited upwards of 30 emails thanking me. Not a single complaint that I was clogging up anyone's email!

And look at how our staff has pitched in to set up a very efficient system for helping us acquire food from different markets. We are lucky to have such a dedicated staff. Many villages have reduced

or curtailed member services because of the social distancing requirement's effect on their volunteers. Avenidas Village, in contrast, has expanded our set of services.

Another big change caused by the crisis is the use of Zoom to replace in-person meetings and special interest group activities. We have now converted to Zoom for Advisory Council meetings, Executive Committee meetings, and the Current Events and Video Discussion Groups. The next step in this direction will be to convert all Cluster meetings to Zoom. Villagers have shown extreme patience with this conversion process. It will be interesting to see how much of the Zoom Effect will survive the easing of the shutdown.

I think that the Village should be a dynamic organization always seeking new ways to enhance the lives of its members. This means that we need to constantly try new ideas. Some recent new ideas that have worked out very well are the transportation initiative and the video recording of Village events such as the Vistas talks. We are now working now on finding ways

to expand home maintenance assistance for members. My favorite new activity in the planning stage, is a series of short workshops that will focus on the special interests of our members.

Another recent innovation by our staff is the addition of the “Village Talk” feature to our member website. It is a great place to share information about outside services that are particularly appealing – or not. For example, there are several recent posts on which food delivery services are working well, or not so well. We hope that this will become a well-used service for obtaining up-to-date information about a wide range of issues. When you go to the website to check out this new feature, you can also add your bio and photo to your personal profile so that your fellow Villagers will know something about you.

And finally, we are coming up to the time when we have a minor “changing of the guard” with openings on the Village Advisory Council. If you are interested in helping this raucous group govern the Village, just follow the application process described above.

Make the Most of Your Membership: use the Village Website to find and share the resources we need *by Chuck Sieloff*

A great strength of the Village model is that we have the opportunity to share resources. This often happens through casual conversations where information is shared between a few people that might be useful to many more members. **Did you know that we can easily increase the accessibility and impact of such sharing through our Avenidas Village Members' website?**

Many of you already access our online **Vendor Directory** which includes member reviews and ratings. You may not be aware of two relatively new features of the website which also increase our capacity to connect with one another. One is the ability to add personal information and a photo to your profile which can be viewed by other members through the **Member Directory**.

Another new feature, "**Village Talk**," provides a mechanism for **Resource Sharing for Sheltering in Place**. We have created three conversation groups: "Grocery Delivery Services," "Meal Delivery Services" and "Take-Out Restaurants." The Village Talk tab opens up all three conversation groups, where any member can add their comments or read information shared by others. Members receive email notifications when someone has posted a comment in one of these conversations, and you can click the link in the email to go directly to the latest posts.

You will notice that all three of these capabilities share one very important characteristic: their usefulness depends upon members taking the time to learn how to use these tools to share their knowledge with the rest of the community. If we only use them when we need the information provided by others, eventually a potentially valuable resource dries up because there are too many consumers and not enough contributors. So, if we really want to make the most of our membership, we all need to become contributors as well as consumers of information. That is, after all, what true communities are about. **Let's take advantage of our involuntary isolation to make a personal contribution to the collective knowledge and experiences of the Village.**

Update Your Online Member Profile – *Tutorial by Dawn Greenblat*

Let's get to know each other better! Upload your biography and photo to the Avenidas Village members' website. It is easy to do and fun to learn more about your fellow Villagers.

1. Visit www.avendiasvillage.org and click on **Member Login** at the top right of the screen. Enter your email address and your password and click log in. Forgot your password? Just click on **Forgot Your Password** and follow the directions on the screen.
2. Once you are logged in, you will see a small silhouette of a person and a "down" arrow in the upper right hand corner of the screen. Click on the arrow and then select **My Profile** from the dropdown menu.
3. You will be brought to a screen that contains your contact info, emergency contacts and cluster lead information. At the bottom of the screen is an **edit** button – click on it.
4. To add your photo to your profile, click on the **Choose File** button under the silhouette. Select the photo file from your computer and click Open. The file name will now be listed next to the Choose File button.
5. Under the Choose File button is a box to enter your personal information. It could be your career, hobbies, interests or whatever you'd like to share. Just type in as little or as much information as you want. Once you are done click **Save**. Your picture will now appear in place of the silhouette and a message stating that your profile has been successfully updated will appear.

That is all it takes! A few steps, and a little bit of thought, is all you need to help your fellow villagers get to know you better.

Before & After: Village Activities in March & April



Remember taking this for granted?

The last Village Lunch Bunch before Shelter In Place—The Fish Market, March 10th, 2020. Just a few days later, life changed completely!

Attended by Diana Collins, Chuck Sieloff, Richard Johnsson, Tom Reese, Bruce & Ellie Heister, Christine Holt, Dick & Jerry Smallwood.

The New Normal—Distant Socializing on Zoom

In just a few short weeks, Villagers—even those who never expected to try it—have become adept at teleconferencing! It's proven to be fun, useful and effective for formal meetings or just getting together with friends. Avenidas Village held some learning sessions for members to practice and get to know the features, and AVAC Chair Chuck Sieloff generously provided lots of individual tutoring. It's been amazing to see how quickly our members have become confident users. Several neighborhood clusters have started meeting on Zoom, and on April 24th the Village held its first ever Zoom Friday Happy Hour Social with close to 30 participants. *(Photos courtesy of Ralph Cahn)*



Cheers! - Villagers gather for a Friday happy hour to enjoy each others' company and share some of their unexpected positive experiences.



Great turnout for Neighborhood Cluster 2S with 15 attendees at their meeting on Sunday, April 26th.

Keeping Healthy & Happy at Home

Members share ways they stay positive while staying safe



Molly Agras models her personally designed and created necklace and Chris Constantinou drills the thread holes. Molly's philanthropic mission is to sell her jewelry to support the Ecumenical Hunger Program in East Palo Alto. (shared by Janet Constantinou)



Whether in trouble, or happy I always turn to my garden. For the last 4 months Wisteria was my project: During winter I pruned and disciplined its shape. Since early March, while working on my computer I admired its progressive beauty. Last week the time came to cut the spent flowers. I climbed the ladder and Harley pruned the lower area. —Sophie Stallman



A bouquet to share with a friend (Jeannie Siegman)



Bird of Paradise (Katie Dunlap)



Stanford Cactus Garden (Ralph Cahn)

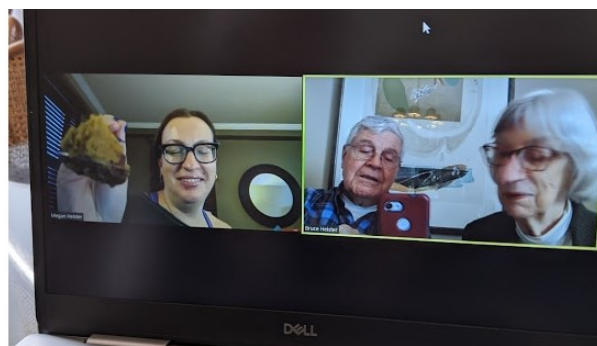


We had a neighborhood BYOB check-in one evening, just for the homes right around us at Stanford. We stood 6-7 feet apart, locations marked on the lawn with yellow irrigation flags, and had a chat. Wanted to hear perspectives, from their various disciplines and personally, on what is happening and make sure everyone has what they need and is doing well. We limited it to 12 people so we could be sure the distancing would hold, and it did. We invited C-Man, in the photo with Chuck and me, who is perched on our bench wearing mask and gloves and a sign "Please keep your distance!" He is patriotic, following the guidelines and protecting his bottle of wine! - Christy Holloway

Family Time:
Members keep
up with their
Grandchildren



Happy Birthday!
Ellie and Bruce
Heister celebrate
Ellie's birthday
on Zoom with
their daughter

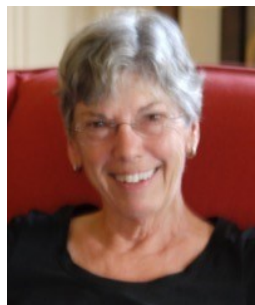


Welcome New Members: Milo & Carla Gwosden, Barbara Carlitz



Carlota Costa and Milo Gwosden married in 1963 in San Francisco, where they lived and attended San Francisco State College. They moved to Palo Alto in 1972 and have lived here happily since then. They have two daughters. Laura and her son, Zachary, live in Los Altos, and Helen Snyder and her husband live in Campbell. Both graduated from Palo Alto High School and work in Silicon Valley.

Milo retired from Aragon High School in San Mateo in 2003 after more than three decades of teaching secondary social studies, and Carla retired from DeVivo Asset Management as an office manager the same year. Milo and Carla are in Cluster 2N.



Barbara Carlitz: Avenidas is familiar territory for me – I've served on the boards of both Day Health Center and of Avenidas. As current liaison to the Village from the Avenidas board, I've discovered how the Village has grown both larger and more diverse in its services during the past few years...I'm happy to be back.

Palo Alto has been my home since 1971. During most of those years, I worked as an architectural designer (as a number of Village members can attest). Since retiring three years ago, I've rediscovered the joys of reading and hands-on gardening, and I continue sharing my love of cooking with friends. When I'm not at home on Ramona Street, I'm probably at a borrowed cabin on the Pt. Reyes peninsula which has been my home away from home for twenty-five years.

Member Birthdays—May

Charles Botsford	5/1	Chris Berka	5/15	Bonnie Borton	5/24
Ted Carlstrom	5/1	Helga Reed	5/15	Analee Nunan	5/24
Rick Peterson	5/5	Katie Dunlap	5/16	Phil Smaller	5/24
Roslyn Bienenstock	5/10	William Agras	5/17	Paula Berka	5/25
John Couch	5/10	Margaret Rosenbloom	5/17	Yvonne Lenbergs	5/26
Margaret Kosek	5/13	Naomi Levinson	5/22	Luella Isaacs	5/27
Alex Florence	5/14	Dorothy Lloyd	5/22	Charles Holloway	5/28
		Irene Plattner Cannon	5/23	Walton McMillan	5/28

Member Birthdays—June

Brigid Barton	6/1	Adelle Rosenzweig	6/10	Gail Sredanovic	6/15
Sara Botsford	6/1	Gerry Gilchrist	6/11	Judy Goodnow	6/16
Rob Robinson	6/1	Lynne Toribara	6/11	Dody Lee	6/18
Susan Gould	6/2	Sandra Weiss	6/11	Bruce Ackerman	6/20
Donna Silverberg	6/2	Stanley Finkel	6/12	Gee-Gee Lenhart	6/21
Margaret Weil	6/2	Frances Perry	6/12	Marjorie Rose	6/21
William Gould	6/4	Molly Agras	6/13	Robert Williams	6/21
Mary Schaefer	6/4	Ginny Turner	6/13	Elizabeth Wolf	6/23
Joe Rolfe	6/9	Lorrie Walton	6/14	Elizabeth Lyon	6/24
Bob Herriot	6/10	Milo Gwosden	6/15	Lowell Price	6/25
				Molly Meschke	6/29

In Memoriam:

Clifton Herndon 3/22/20

Harry Sweeney 4/21/20 * Chet Brown 4/21/20

Please Note—Events are listed for May 2020 only

Due to the current circumstances, events and programs are subject to change. We may add activities not listed in the newsletter or make other adjustments based on social distancing requirements.

Please review the events listing at www.avenidasvillage.org for the most current event schedule.

Monday, May 4

Current Events Discussion Group (Special Interest group)

Join in to share your thoughts on the latest happenings! Moderated by Dick Smallwood.

Monday, May 4th at 3:00 PM

Email Dick Smallwood to request the Zoom invitation
rsmallwd@pacbell.net

Friday, May 8 & Friday, May 22

Friday Happy Hour Social hosted by Chuck Sieloff

Pour a glass of wine or a cup of tea and toast your Village friends! Enjoy an hour of relaxed, casual conversation and perhaps a thought-provoking question or two.

Friday, May 8th and Friday, May 22nd at 4:00 PM

Register Online to receive the Zoom invitation or email dgreenblat@avenidas.org

Tuesday, May 12

Guided Meditation: Self-Compassion for Stress during COVID-19 led by Sabrina Huang

Everyone needs to practice a little more kindness, awareness, and compassion toward others and ourselves. We have to be as present as possible to navigate this moment in time. Let's enjoy a Guided Meditation on Self-Compassion for Stress during this special time together with a Singing Bowl. It's like a new world. In a way, we get to be better people.

Tuesday, May 12th at 10:00 AM

Register Online to receive the Zoom invitation or email dgreenblat@avenidas.org

Wednesday, May 13

Zoom Games! Hosted by Dick Smallwood

Join in some friendly competition with an online group game session featuring trivia or brain challenge type games (more details to come)! Fun and Prizes included!

Wednesday, May 13th at 3:00 PM

Register Online to receive the Zoom invitation or email dgreenblat@avenidas.org

Monday, May 18

Lunch With the Bunch—Lunch Bunch at Home! Hosted by Kayleen Miller

Order your favorite takeout or delivery, or fix your own lunch at home. Then sit down and enjoy it while you chat with your Village friends on Zoom.

Monday, May 18th at 12:00 PM

Register Online to receive the Zoom invitation or email dgreenblat@avenidas.org

Tuesday, May 26

Video Discussion Group (Special Interest group)

Watch a short video and join the discussion afterward! Moderated by Dick Smallwood.

Tuesday, May 26th at 3:30 PM

Email Dick Smallwood to request the Zoom invitation
rsmallwd@pacbell.net



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Village Voice May-June 2020

Avenidas
Village
Office
Closed

Monday,
May 25
Memorial
Day

Meet the Avenidas Village home office assistants



We all need a little help working from home! Fortunately, Dawn has Bullet (left) and Erika has Oreo (right)