Grocers adjust to growing stress as sales boom

SCIENTISTS DEPLOY TESTS, EXPERIMENTAL DRUGS IN HOPES OF DEFEATING CORONAVIRUS

Read up-to-the-minute news on PaloAltoOnline.com

- **Upfront**  Stray pets find shelter at homes  Page 9
- **Pulse**  A look at this week’s crimes  Page 24
- **Spectrum**  Thoughts and fears about COVID-19  Page 26
At Stanford Medicine our number one priority is the safety of our employees and our patients. We have obtained personal protective equipment (PPE) for the projected needs of our organization for the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. However, as a cautionary measure, Stanford Medicine is now accepting donations of unopened supplies in their original packaging. We are unable to accept homemade supplies.

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- Masks (N95, surgical, and procedure)
- Disinfecting wipes such as Clorox or Sani-cloth wipes
- Hand sanitizer
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- Goggles and eye shields
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- Flocked swabs

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Scientists wage war against the virus

Researchers race to boost testing, vet drugs for COVID-19 as shutdown drags on

by Gennady Sheyner and Sue Dremann

Three weeks into a virus-induced shutdown, as downtown streets remain silent and the economy finds itself teetering on the brink of a steep and sudden recession, a research boom is sweeping through local universities, hospitals and commercial labs. For scientists working nonstop behind the scenes, the race is on to defeat a deadly virus that has brought the whole world to its knees.

Their war has many fronts, but chief among them are testing and treatment, which are seeing a flurry of activity. Stanford University and University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) have ramped up their testing capacity and launched clinical trials at a furious pace. Since the coronavirus pandemic took off, Stanford’s epidemiologists have been working with Santa Clara County health officials to model the pandemic’s trajectory; its virologists have proved effective for fighting Ebola, the flu and Hepatitis D. Researchers also are collaborating with counterparts in other universities as well as public agencies and private labs to share — and scale — their breakthroughs.

Private companies also have stepped up, with commercial labs developing tests and distributing drugs that they believe may become critical weapons in the race.

(continued on page 14)

PUBLIC HEALTH

Here’s the latest on the coronavirus

County sees slowed growth in COVID-19 cases

by Palo Alto Weekly staff

In the latest sign that the Bay Area shutdown is effectively containing the spread of the coronavirus, Santa Clara County is seeing the rate of new cases gradually stabilize.

Dr. Sara Cody, the county’s health officer, said Tuesday that COVID-19 cases in the county are doubling every two weeks, according to the latest counts. In early March, before the county began adopting increasingly stringent measures to mandate social distancing, cases doubled roughly every three days, Cody said. “And this we’ve been able to do because our community has come together and is reducing their contacts and interactions with each other to the greatest extent possible.”

Cody noted that the models that the county has been using to predict the pandemic’s spread suggest that the county’s case count will range between 2,500 and 12,000 on May 1. Without the social-distancing measures, the case count would be about 50,000, she said.

“These models show us that we want to see: that we’re lengthening the doubling time, we’re slowing things down,” Cody said. “And this we’ve been able to do because our community has come together and is reducing their contacts and interactions with each other to the greatest extent possible.”

Cody said the county is seeing the rate of new cases gradually stabilize.

(continued on page 20)

Eggs are sold out. Hand sanitizer is on back order. Strained staff are working overtime.

Here’s how Midpeninsula grocery stores are responding to the coronavirus

by Elena Kadvany

Running a local grocery store under the shadow of the coronavirus means ordering wearable face shields for employees alongside eggs and milk. It means pivoting to home delivery on a dime without the technological infrastructure or resources that major delivery apps have.

It means asking employees at the start of every shift, before they can begin work, if they or anyone they live with has a fever, cough or any symptoms of COVID-19 and documenting their responses.

It means booming sales, but at the expense of overworked staff who are now considered essential workers.

The coronavirus “turned everything on its head,” said Emel Mutlu, who runs The Market at Edgewood in Palo Alto with her father and husband. “There’s a lot of emotional labor — that’s what I’ve been calling it — involved in keeping the place going.”

Locally operated grocery stores and their employees are on their own front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic. Their owners, many with families themselves, have worked quickly to transform their stores and operations to comply with fast-moving public health guidelines, including last week’s more stringent measures for essential workers.

(continued on page 18)

(continued on page 20)
POWER OF THE PRINT …

MakePaloAlto, a group of Gunn and Palo Alto high school students, is doing its part in the effort to increase the supply of personal protective equipment by producing one critical item: face shields. The group prints the parts and sends them to MakerNexus. The Sunnyvale nonprofit then assembles the shields and delivers them to the Valley Medical Center Foundation, which distributes the items to health care workers. Since late March, the group has 3-D printed parts for about 160 shields at Cubberley Community Center. “This highlights the importance of project-based education because in this environment … we’re still seeing things like makerspaces and student journalism programs and broadcast networks operating and doing really meaningful work,” said Gunn High senior Yonatan Maor, a member of the group. Working with the community and other makerspaces, the group’s goal is to produce 20,000 face masks. The group has recruited about a dozen Palo Altans to join the effort and is looking to build its numbers. “Hospitals won’t operate if they don’t have this.” … The fact that we have the capacity to do this, and we have the skills to make this (and it’s being used by people to actually save lives) is pretty mind-blowing,” Maor said. Learn more at makeexpaloalto.org/covid-19.

AIRBNB ANGEL …

Even though Airbnb hosts have taken a hit since the shelter-at-home order went into effect, it doesn’t mean people don’t need the extra living space. Since the shelter-at-home order went into effect, it doesn’t mean people don’t need the extra living spaces. Airbnb hosts have stepped up to offer their own spaces to essential workers. O’Connor has connected four people to other Airbnb hosts. An electrician by trade, he also offers free services through his business, O’Connor & Son’s Electric.

LET’S GET LOUD …

A new tradition has emerged in the Midtown neighborhood: a nightly applause for essential workers. Inspired by similar actions in Italy, Vancouver and other parts of the globe, Palo Altoan Sayona Freeman launched the tradition at 7 p.m., Wednesday. “The world is uniting and showing its gratitude in the best way we know how,” she said. “We just want to thank those who are in the hospitals risking it all for humanity’s well-being.” The idea initially revolved around acknowledging workers at Stanford Health Care and the Palo Alto Medical Foundation. Since then, it has expanded to as many as 4,000 to the East Palo Alto-based social services organization.
This year, the faithful go online to celebrate Passover, Easter week

Spiritual communities press on with traditions during the pandemic

by Lloyd Lee

T he rituals of Passover aren’t traditionally performed through video chat, and the Christian Holy Week services aren’t usually streamed live. But synagogues and churches throughout the Peninsula are devising creative ways to virtually connect for the upcoming holidays of their respective faiths while following social-distancing orders.

Perhaps for the first time in Congregation Kol Emeth’s 63-year history, the familiar melody of Lion King’s “Circle of Life” marked the beginning of Passover. Rather than the sweeping refrain of the chorus, “It’s the circle of life,” the lyrics were altered and an all-male Jewish cappella group sang “At the Seder tonight” — online, that is.

Rabbi David Booth, who hosted the Zoom-based Seder — a ritual feast prepared on the first day of Passover — used YouTube and its trove of parody songs and traditional Jewish music to maintain some semblance of normalcy while adding new notes of hope and laughter.

“Passover is very much a home-based holiday,” said Booth, a rabbi for Kol Emeth of 17 years. “But now I can start to draw anything from the internet. This is a great time to use YouTube to find these resources.”

As someone who’s accustomed to hosting more than 30 people at his family’s home on the first day of Passover, Booth was disheartened to find out he won’t be able to share the biblical story of Exodus in-person. One of the things that has been retold during Seder and is symbolically represented through the foods on the Passover Seder plate.

So to take full advantage of the new virtual medium, Booth used the screen-sharing features of Zoom to retell the several-thousand-years-old tales in a way that’s fit for the 21st century — using videos on the internet.

“People are doing all kinds of things to really make the story come alive,” he said.

The traditions of Holy Week and Easter Sunday on April 12 have also been upended due to the COVID-19 pandemic, from anthers sung by a choir to baptisms conducted during Easter services.

Paul Taylor, a teaching pastor for Peninsula Bible Church of Palo Alto, said that the electricity inside a side room packed for an Easter Sunday service that’s filled with upbeat music could be lost under the social-distancing orders.

But his church and several other congregations are using the unprecedented situation to do something new during the Christian Holy Week: collaborate.

Working with up to 30 different congregations, Peninsula Bible Church has organized collaborative online prayer events and day-long Bible readings this week. The church is also joining with Central Peninsula Church of Foster City, Peninsula Covenant Church of Redwood City and New North Church of San Bruno to pre-record music for the livestreamed Easter Sunday services.

“One of the most things that has happened because of the shelter-in-place order is that a lot of churches are collaborating more than they used to,” Taylor said. “There’s fewer physical barriers. We could never gather our churches in the same building, but you can easily do the same online event.”

At First Presbyterian Church in Mountain View, Lead Pastor Tim Boyer said, the church will be doing an online Holy Communion Thursday morning, a rite in the Maundy Thursday service that commemorates Jesus’ last supper.

For Easter, the church will have a pre-recorded worship service published on their website and YouTube channel.

It doesn’t replace the intimacy of gathering in-person. But Boyer does acknowledge that solely focusing on the church’s online presence these days has helped attract a consistent number of online visitors, averaging around two times more than the 100 people that might come in-person to an Easter Sunday service each year.

“There’s definitely a place for virtual worship that I think we’ll continue on after we do get back to some type of normal way,” Boyer said. “I think our whole culture is going to change a little bit through this experience — I’ll take the good and carry it on.”

Even for Menlo Church, a congregation with six locations up and down the Bay Area, including the original Menlo Park site, suspending on-campus services has pushed the church to think about new online strategies for outreach that may carry over after the COVID-19 crisis.

Eugene Lee, executive pastor of Menlo Church, said that his team is exploring how to increase online interaction among viewers. On Easter, for example, there will be eight services, from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., and people will be able to chat with other viewers as they watch the service. The service will also include invitations for people to delve deeper into faith, with follow-up resources offered to continue the process.

“The pandemic has definitely accelerated the move to a digital strategy to be connected, to create a community and to disciple members of the church,” Lee said. “We’ve always offered our content online, but this has been an opportunity for us to take that to another level.”

Synagogues are no exception. Along with a virtual Seder dinner, Booth said that his Palo Alto congregation hosted a virtual family scavenger hunt last night for the search of chametz — food with leavening such as bread that issymbolically represented through the foods on the Passover Seder plate.

The Palo Alto Weekly’s staff was recognized with 16 awards for coverage of breaking news, local government, education and land use, as well as for its investigative reporting, enterprise stories, photojournalism, editorial comment and design, in this year’s California Journalism Awards.

The annual competition is organized by the California News Publishers Association and covered work produced in 2019. This year, 168 print, digital and campus publications submitted 2,969 entries. Out-of-state journalists critiqued the work and ranked the top picks.

The results of a school-related awards were announced in Long Beach, which has been canceled due to the coronavirus crisis.

Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner’s first-place land-use story on Stanford University’s withdrawal of its general-use-permit application was described by judges as “a deeply reported, fairly written look on how Stanford’s plans for a major campus expansion fell apart.”

Staff Writer Sue Dremann’s second-place investigative report on John Arthur Getreu, who is facing charges for two cold-case murders near Stanford University in the 1970s, was described by judges as “utterly chilling and wonderfully put together.”

The Weekly employs a newsroom staff of 11 journalists under Editor-in-Chief Jocelyn Dong. The community media outlet’s work competed against other weekly publications across the state with circulations of more than 25,000.

— Palo Alto Weekly Staff

Ravenswood names permanent leader

After serving just over a year as the Ravenswood City School District’s interim superintendent, Gina Sudaria has been selected as the K-8 district’s permanent superintendent.

The school board announced its selection in a press release on Monday afternoon. Board President Ana Maria Pulido said the trustees chose Sudaria during an all-day closed session special meeting on March 28 and will formally vote on her new contract at their next regular meeting on April 16.

Sudaria, who has worked in various roles in Ravenswood for over two decades, has largely been praised for restoring morale and trust at the East Palo Alto district after taking over as interim superintendent last spring. The board appointed her interim superintendent after putting former superintendent Gloria Hernandez-Goff on paid leave. Hernandez-Goff, whose tenure was marred by budget woes and community protests, was soon forced to resign.

Despite pleas from the community that the board conduct an internal search for the district’s next superintendent, which would have likely resulted in Sudaria’s permanent appointment, the trustees voted to take the executive route.

In Monday’s announcement, Sudaria thanked the board for “trusting me to implement their vision.”

Sudaria started her career as a teacher at Belle Haven Elementary School in 1998. After six years of teaching, she became vice principal of Santa Clara Elementary and then principal of Costaño Elementary School and 49ers Academy. She was principal for nearly eight years before moving to the district office, first as director of human resources and then director of student services.

— Elena Kadvany

Facebook gives $15M to local businesses

Weeks after Facebook announced it would put $100 million into a program to offer grants to small businesses around the world, the Menlo Park-based company announced Tuesday that $15 million of that fund will be set aside for Bay Area small businesses.

Facebook’s $100 million investment is intended to support 30,000 small businesses in 30 countries, which could mean splitting a large amount of money into many small pieces. It’s still not clear how the funds will be divided; if split equally, it would provide about $3,300 to each small business recipient.

Facebook intends to prioritize small business grants for eligible minority, women and veteran-owned businesses across the U.S. “due to the disproportionate negative impact that COVID-19 will have on these businesses, their employees, and the communities that they serve,” said Facebook’s Global Chief Diversity Officer Maximilian Heiser.

Eligible businesses need to have between two and 50 employees, have been in business for over a year, have experienced challenges from COVID-19 and be in or near a location where Facebook operates.

— Kate Bradshaw

www.PaloAltoOnline.com • Palo Alto Weekly • April 10, 2020 • Page 7
Palo Alto throws city employees a lifeline as economy crumbles

Council agrees to pay employees who cannot work because of shutdown

by Gennady Sheyner

After seeing the local economy collapse seemingly overnight, Palo Alto’s elected leaders began to plan Monday for a grim “new normal” with fewer services, a leaner workforce and a retail sector decimated by the coronavirus shutdown.

The pandemic, which last month brought the local economy to a near halt, is expected to cost the city between $15 million and $20 million in lost revenues in the current fiscal year, which ends June 30, Chief Financial Officer Kiely Nose said Monday night. At the same time, it is forcing the City Council to confront myriad complex and expensive issues, including a weakened safety net for vulnerable residents, uncertainty for city workers and a retail sector that has been brought to its knees.

Nose told the council that the impacts on the economy have been “very stark and very immediate.” The city’s normally vibrant downtown, she said, is “basically empty.” And the city’s daytime population has dropped significantly as everyone is sheltering in place or working from home, she said.

During an expansive discussion Monday night, conducted virtually as the seven council members gathered at home, the council took several steps to ease some near-term impacts of the sudden recession. It unanimously agreed to pay city employees, even those currently unable to work, until the end of June. It also directed staff to explore a program that would provide “life support” in the form of grants and utility relief to small businesses. And it decided to explore another rent-relief program for residents who are currently protected from evictions by both local and county ordinances but who would be required to pay all the back rent once the public health emergency is over.

“The shutdown has already ripped through City Hall, which has a staff of about 1,100 employees. Roughly 600 “essential” employees, including police officers, firefighters, rangers and workers from the Utilities and Public Works departments, continue to report to work. Another 400 shifted to telecommuting from home. The remaining 100 have seen their hours reduced, in some cases down to zero, as the city shut down its recreational programs and closed all community centers and libraries.

Chief People Officer and Human Resources Director Rumi Portillo told the council that the past few weeks have been “a period of great anxiety for our workforce.” The current pay period at City Hall is winding down on April 10. Without the council’s policy guidance, the city was preparing to reduce employees’ hours or change their employment statuses in the following period, she said.

“When each day, their anxiety increases. … The idea of entering into a time of potentially not having health coverage and pay is something of increasing concern to the workforce,” Portillo said, noting that some employees are also dealing with the fact that schools have closed and they don’t have good child care.

For the council, the toughest decisions will be made in May, when the city refines and adopts its budget for fiscal year 2021, which begins on July 1. The Monday vote did not address the long-term impacts of the recession, though it did throw a lifeline to employees.

The council’s action, which was championed by Councilwoman Liz Kniss, gives employees who are facing administrative leave a reprieve of sorts for at least the next two-and-a-half months. Kniss stressed the importance of taking care of city workers, telling her colleagues that “kindness starts at home.” Others agreed.

“I think given how quickly this crisis has come upon us and that we are approaching the end of fiscal year, and we don’t know all the needs we have for our nonessential workers in the coming months, this is the prudent action,” Mayor Adrian Pine said.

Councilman Greg Tanaka spoke at length about the need to help local businesses. Many, he said, have already shut down and will not reopen after the emergency. Other business owners are reaching deep into their own pockets to pay workers and keep their operations alive.

Tanaka urged his colleagues to follow the example of Mountain View, which has a program in place that allows private companies to contribute to a fund that provides grants to small businesses. The council requested that the city convene a roundtable of business owners to help put such a program together.

The council also agreed to abandon the city’s traditional budget-setting process, which entails a review by the Finance Committee before the budget goes to the full council for adoption. Instead, given the magnitude of the changes that have to be made, it will be the full council that will make all the refinements and decisions on what to cut.

“We can’t yet guess or put forward what those changes are going to be, but they’re going to be significant changes in terms of service delivery in the city, for residents, for businesses and for city staff members,” Pine said.

Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner can be emailed at gsheyner@pawekly.com.
During new statewide order, pets find shelter at homes

Hundreds of local volunteers open their doors to foster animals as rescue facilities clear out their kennels

by Linda Taaffe

When Pets In Need decided to streamline most of its operations last month because of the statewide stay-at-home order, the nonprofit animal rescue group moved quickly to empty out its kennels, sending roughly 160 animals to bunk down with foster families throughout the Peninsula.

Within a matter of days, it also assembled a pipeline of volunteer families ready and waiting to take in any stray that animal control officers might bring to Palo Alto’s municipal no-kill shelter along East Bayshore Road. The group also operates a rescue site in Redwood City but has essentially ceased all operations there.

“The idea is to keep the shelters—basically without animals, and then that way, it’s easier for us to maintain (those sites) on a real small scale,” Executive Director Al Mollica said. “If we had to figure out how to socialize, feed and care for all these animals in shelters, that would be a nightmare. Thankfully we have these foster families.”

The Palo Alto shelter is operating with an on-call medical staff, one employee responsible for maintaining the kennels and another person who coordinates with volunteers. All non-emergency services, such as educational and volunteer programs and on-site adoptions, are temporarily on hold, but all staff members, including hourly workers, are continuing to be paid and receive their current benefits, Mollica said.

Pets In Need isn’t the only organization to clear out its kennels. Humane Society Silicon Valley, which places approximately 6,100 stray animals in homes throughout the region each year, also has worked at a record pace to house as many of its animals in foster homes as possible to make room for rescued animals from other shelters in the state that might otherwise be euthanized.

At the beginning of April, the nonprofit organization had placed 230, or about two-thirds, of its animals with foster families throughout the region and had hundreds more people waiting to take in animals, said Kurt Krukenberg, president of the nonprofit. Most operations have been suspended at the shelter.

“As you can imagine, it’s been a roller coaster for us just like everyone else in the community over the past few weeks,” said Krukenberg.

“We’re all really trying to find a way to operate in this new normal,” Krukenberg added. “We’re all banding together to do what we can — and are figuring out how to do creative new things like virtual or drive-thru adoptions.”

Another strategy that Pets In Need is trying during the shutdown, when pet owners may suddenly find themselves out of work, is to help keep pets in the homes where they belong.

The nonprofit recently launched a temporary financial assistance program to help owners pay for everything from pet food and medications to cat litter and emergency medical care. Pet owners can call the nonprofit and explain their situation, Mollica said. The shelter will grant individuals up to $1,000 from its $25,000 emergency fund.

Again, this is an attempt for us to make sure we care for animals in homes and help people that are in a financial bind right now,” Mollica said. “We thought that shelters will grant individuals up to $1,000 from its $25,000 emergency fund.

Again, this is an attempt for us to make sure we care for animals in homes and help people that are in a financial bind right now,” Mollica said. “We thought that shelters might have to close if they were not deemed ‘essential services.’ We made the call, and we hope many people across the state and nation answered by clearing out shelters.”

Mollica said taking in an animal is a great source of support and companionship, especially while many people are working remotely from home and are feeling scared and socially isolated.

Krukenberg said the Humane Society is experiencing the same phenomenon. The shelter has re-opened virtual adoptions online and is looking to launch drive-thru adoptions at its Milpitas site to help move along adoption requests. On Wednesday, the shelter had already completed 20 adoptions and had received more than 200 adoption requests.

Sabrina Ashjian, state director of the Humane Society of the United States, said the number of adoptions and fosters gone up nationwide over the past two weeks after many shelters made a public plea for help placing animals in homes during the crisis.

“We are so thrilled by the number of adoptions and fosters we’ve seen,” she said. “We were worried that shelters might have to close if they were not deemed ‘essential services.’ We made the call, and so many people across the state and nation answered by clearing out shelters.”

Ashjian said taking in an animal is a great source of support and companionship, especially while many people are working remotely from home and are feeling scared and socially isolated.

There is a need for more foster homes as well, according to the nonprofit.

The nonprofit has launched a virtual foster application and held a virtual foster orientation, which places approximately 6,100 stray animals in homes throughout the region each year, also has worked at a record pace to house as many of its animals in foster homes as possible to make room for rescued animals from other shelters in the state that might otherwise be euthanized.

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Mollica said taking in an animal is a great source of support and companionship, especially while many people are working remotely from home and are feeling scared and socially isolated.

Ashjian said shelters are becoming very creative with virtual adoptions, curbside pickup and social-distancing guidelines.

Mollica said he believes that foster families could provide another vital link in the new virtual adoption process.

Those interested in adopting a particular animal, he explained, will be able to Skype or FaceTime with the foster family to talk about the animal’s personality, likes, dislikes and other details that might not otherwise be evident if the animals were living at the shelter.

While each nonprofit has been able to adjust operations while under the shutdown, both are bracing for financial hardship that is likely to come.

The Humane Society’s annual Fur Ball fundraiser at Levi’s Stadium, which typically brings in about $1 million, or about 10% of the nonprofit’s annual budget, had to be canceled. Krukenberg
Neera Ahuja is a doctor and researcher at Stanford Hospital working on the frontline with patients battling the coronavirus. Read more about her research in the story “Scientists wage war” on page 5.
An open letter from public health leaders around the nation:

Dear Fellow Residents,

As public health leaders of the largest cities and counties in this country, it is our mission and duty to assure transparency during this time of great uncertainty.

Our country has not faced a public health threat like COVID-19 in over 100 years. With worldwide daily increases in both confirmed cases and deaths, it is clear to us as public health experts that this pandemic is gaining momentum and not soon subsiding. If we do not act quickly and collaboratively, many more lives will be lost across our country.

It does no one any good to soften the reality of what we are confronting. We must all prepare ourselves for loss—of normal routines and services, of economic security, and, tragically, of many, many lives. The only question now is how great the losses will be—an outcome that depends on our shared commitment to take individual responsibility and civic accountability for adhering to preventative measures, and, above all else, to stay home.

To save lives, we urgently need to slow the spread of the virus now. Many of our cities have put measures in place to sharply limit the spread of COVID-19. But no matter the extent of these measures, and even if you feel fine, we again implore you: Just Stay Home!

We know there are certain people, essential workers, who must work, and we thank them for their dedication. Your staying home helps keep them as safe as possible.

Staying home will protect both you and everyone you would otherwise come in contact with. If everyone stays home as much as possible, we will limit the spread of the virus, we will greatly reduce the number of people getting sick, and we will save many lives.

It is also critical to follow other recommended and mandatory measures to ease the burden on our health care system. If too many people rush to our emergency rooms for non-emergency care, our system will buckle under the weight of the demand.


We understand that what we are asking of you is not easy. We know that for many of you, sounding this alarm may cause fear and anxiety. But, we must.

While we ask you to stay apart physically, we implore you to come together emotionally and spiritually. Together we are the best defense against this pandemic.

In gratitude,

Oxiris Barbot, MD
New York City

Tomas Aragon, MD, DrPH
City and County of San Francisco

Rex Archer, MD, MPH
Kansas City

Allison Arwady, MD, MPH
Chicago

Rachael Banks, MPH
Multnomah County

Virginia Caine, MD
Marion County

Kelly Colopy, MPP
Long Beach

Letitia Dzirasa, MD
Baltimore City

Dawn Emerick EdD, MPA
San Antonio Metro Health District

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Denver

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LaQuandra Nesbitt, MD, MPH
Washington, D.C.

Mysheika Roberts, MD, MPH
Columbus

Rita Nieves, RN, MPH, LICSW
Boston

Vinny Taneja, MBBS, MPH
Tarrant County

Stephen Williams, MEd, MPA
Houston

Kimi Watkins-Tartt
Alameda County
Accustomed to danger, emergency responders face new threat — a virus

Firefighters, paramedics and police officers have quickly acquired and repurposed personal gear to keep themselves safe

by Gennady Sheyner and Angela Swartz

R esponding to a reported increase in violence and harassment aimed at Asian American residents during the coronavirus pandemic, Santa Clara County on Tuesday passed a resolution denouncing xenophobia and pledging to work with police agencies to curb hate crimes. The unanimous vote came as the urgent calls from Asian American residents have reached a critical and concerning point.

In one week targeting Asian Americans in late March, organizations have logged more than 650 incidents of verbal harassment aimed at Asian Americans. The volume of incoming hate reports is only expected to rise as the coronavirus pandemic continues to spread and more people are forced to stay indoors.

In response to the reported increase in violence and harassment aimed at Asian American residents during the coronavirus pandemic, Santa Clara County on Tuesday passed a resolution denouncing xenophobia and pledging to work with police agencies to curb hate crimes. The unanimous vote came as the urgent calls from Asian American residents have reached a critical and concerning point.

In one week targeting Asian Americans in late March, organizations have logged more than 650 incidents of verbal harassment aimed at Asian Americans. The volume of incoming hate reports is only expected to rise as the coronavirus pandemic continues to spread and more people are forced to stay indoors.

Chavez noted that in the first week after the reporting center was launched, there were more than 650 incidents of verbal harassment, shaming, and physical assault against Asian American residents. She called the trend “disheartening.”

“The behavior reported and the volume of incoming hate reports is really unacceptable,” Chavez said at Tuesday’s meeting.

Supervisor Joe Simitian said the conversation about xenophobia is particularly discouraging because “millions of people around the Bay Area, around the state and around the country have stepped up in such extraordinary ways during a very difficult time and have really let their best selves step forward.”

“The contrast between that kind of behavior and the behavior that we are calling out here is

(continued on page 20)
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Only toilet paper and human waste should be flushed down the toilet.
the war against COVID-19 and with manufacturers joining the effort to create personal protective equipment, such as masks and face shields, for health care workers.

Thus far in the battle, public health strategies have led the charge, deploying the tactic of social distancing. On Tuesday, Santa Clara County residents received a glimmer of hope: Staying home to help “flatten the curve” appears to be working, even though the number of COVID-19 cases is still expected to climb between now and May 1, Dr. Sara Cody, the county’s health official, told the county Board of Supervisors during her April 7 update.

Yet the hopeful news came with another message: Numerous conditions have to be met before officials can relax their social-distancing orders.

The county will need to get to a point where widespread testing for COVID-19 is available and hospitals can safely and effectively treat everyone living in the county.

“We have to at least be able to test everyone who has symptoms,” Cody said. “And we also have to have enough testing capacity so that we can test where we think there is some risk of accelerated transmission or there is risk in a particular community. So we’ve got to have testing capacity.”

**Testing as defense**

While Cody said she is optimistic about the latest data on COVID-19 cases, county, state and federal officials have consistently pointed to testing as a glaring weakness in the collective response to coronavirus. As of Thursday morning, only 13,360 people in Santa Clara County have been tested for COVID-19, county data show, with 1,442 testing positive — a rate of 10.79%. It takes an average of 2.27 days to get a test result, a problem that Dr. Karen Smith of Santa Clara Public Health Department attributed Tuesday to delays at just about every step of the testing process.

Testing, she said, is limited by a shortage of swabs that are used to take samples and by the worldwide shortage of reagent, a key chemical for sample analysis.

That said, where the government has lagged, Stanford has been able to rev up its testing capacity. One of the nation’s first coronavirus tests came from Benjamin Pinsky, associate professor of pathology and of infectious diseases at Stanford School of Medicine who has been developing a COVID-19 test since late January and whose team was validating and confirming results throughout February, according to Stanford.

In early March, Stanford’s Clinical Virology Laboratory, of which Pinsky is medical director, was capable of conducting 1,000 daily tests, with a turnaround time for results between 36 and 48 hours, according to the university. Now, the lab can now perform 2,000 tests daily, Pinsky told this news organization in an email, and the turnaround time has been cut down to 24 hours.

Pinsky said the team has been able to optimize its workflow and boost production over the past month by validating multiple additional extraction instruments and thermal cyclers — machines that amplify DNA segments using a copying process called polymerase chain reaction.

UCSF also has boosted its testing capacity by opening a new lab that can process more than 2,000 samples per day and return results in 24 hours. In early March, when UCSF began testing for COVID-19, it had a capacity to test only 60 to 100 tests daily, according to the university.

On Tuesday, UCSF Health President and CEO Mark R. Laret and UCSF Chancellor Sam Hawgood co-wrote in a letter that it will allow public health officials from the nine Bay Area counties, UCSD and county health officials to order tests and results, for people in the county.

Alyssa Weaver, a second year physician assistant student at Stanford School of Medicine, draws blood from a participant at a COVID-19 antibody testing site in Mountain View on April 4.
including San Mateo and Santa Clara, to submit their samples to UCSF for free analysis.

While virology labs at Stanford and UCSF are using the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) technique to zoom in on the virus DNA segments, a research team headed by Eran Bendavid, associate professor of medicine at Stanford, is looking at blood samples for evidence. On April 3 and 4, the team took 2,500 blood samples from volunteers at drive-thru sites in Mountain View, Los Gatos and San Jose. The team used targeted Facebook surveys in an attempt to get a population-representative sample of the county for its experiment.

The goal of the study is to examine the antibodies in the blood sample, a technique known as serology, to gauge the percentage of county residents who are — or have been — infected with COVID-19. Stanford Health spokesperson Lisa Maldonado said.

Two of Stanford's trials involve remdesivir, a drug produced by the Foster City–based company Gilead Sciences, Inc. Scientists from various institutions across the globe, including a team at Stanford Hospital, are examining whether remdesivir can prevent the coronavirus from replicating.

"The RNA virus gets into the cells and uses them as little hotels (to replicate)," said Kari Nadeau, co-investigator and professor of pediatric food allergy, immunology and asthma at the School of Medicine.

With the virus proliferating, some COVID-19 patients' immune systems overreact, causing severe symptoms that lead to death. Researchers hope that limiting the virus' replication will prevent the immune system from becoming overly active.

Gilead announced on April 4 that it has produced 1.5 million doses of remdesivir, enough to treat 140,000 patients. It plans to supply the drug at no charge.

Nadeau's trial began enrolling patients on March 30. Stanford is collaborating with 65 other sites worldwide; the aim is to study the drug's effects on 600 patients.

"The test will enable us to determine which health care workers might be at low risk for working with COVID-19 patients, as well as understanding disease prevalence in our communities," Kim said.

Going on the offensive

Just as testing has accelerated, so have medical trials of potentially life-saving drugs. At an April 2 virtual town hall put on by medical leaders at Stanford, Dr. Yvonne Maldonado and Dean of Stanford Medicine Dr. Lloyd Minor, both said that the university’s early development of the PCR test has increased the university's capacity to stage trials.

"Because we are one of the first to launch our own PCR test — and we hope we’ll have serologic testing available in the near future as well — it gives us the capacity to monitor patients for not only immediate medical care but clinical trials," Maldonado said.

Pass federal scrutiny, the FDA approval could come within a month.

"That’s unheard of in the non-pandemic world," she said.

Stanford is one of many institutions now looking at remdesivir. Among the National Institutes of Health (NIH) trials of the drug is one involving patients who are on ventilators; another is studying patients with moderate COVID-19 symptoms. A third will compare the results for moderately ill patients who will be given the drug and for people who only receive standard care.

The studies involve dozens of hospitals throughout California, including the VA Palo Alto Health Care System, Stanford Health Care, Kaiser Permanente and the Regional Medical Center in San Jose. Gilead also is involved in studies using remdesivir in China and France.

Stanford is also looking at other drugs, including those that have in the past proved effective in treating other infections. Maldonado said at the April 2 town hall that in addition to its work on remdesivir, Stanford is preparing to move ahead with trials for Lambda, an immunomodulator, and the viral inhibitors Camostat and favipiravir.

"They have been studied in other infections, so we think we can obtain rapid FDA INDs so that we can start doing primarily outpatient trials for these drugs," Maldonado said, referring to "investigational new drug" authorization.

"So if they work in reducing symptoms and perhaps prevent spread by reducing viral shedding from an infected person, then these could be scaled up in the not too distant future," Nadeau said.
given to critically ill COVID-19 patients through a transfusion, the center stated.

The blood center is working with Stanford Medicine in hopes that the antibodies, which are immune proteins that attack pathogens such as viruses, might help lessen the severity of the COVID-19.

Though the use of antibodies to treat COVID-19 patients is in the investigational phase, the technique, also known as passive antibody therapy, dates back as far as the 1890s. And prior outbreaks with other coronaviruses, including the one that caused SARS, showed that neutralizing antibodies were helpful in reducing the effects of the disease.

Likewise the technique was used in the 2009 – 2010 H1N1 influenza pandemic to reduce patients’ respiratory viral load, inflammatory reactions and death, researchers Arturo Casadevall and Liise-anne Pirofski wrote in an article published in The Journal of Clinical Investigation on March 13. It also was used in the 2013 West African Ebola epidemic.

Stanford Blood Center will begin collecting the plasma this week and plans to increase collections in the following weeks as it identifies more donors. The donors must be fully recovered and symptom-free for at least 14 days. If they are only symptom-free for 14 to 28 days, they will be asked to retake a COVID-19 test at no cost. The repeat test must be negative to be eligible to donate.

The process takes about one to two hours using standard blood and plasma-removal methods. The collections take place at the center’s Palo Alto headquarters at 3373 Hillview Ave. in Palo Alto, where special care will be taken by a small team in a dedicated room, according to Dr. Suchi Pandey, the blood center’s chief medical officer. (Interested donors can visit stanfordbloodcenter.org/covid19plasma and fill out an intake form.)

Getting enough of the antibodies to treat many patients could take time. Pandey said in an email that there’s also no known way to cultivate or increase the amount of plasma in a laboratory, so blood centers and hospitals rely on donors.

“The volume of plasma collected from a donor is based on specific donor parameters such as weight. Depending on the volume of plasma collected, the unit may be divided into separate plasma components, which can be used to treat up to three patients,” she said.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently approved use of the antibody treatment by hospitals, initially only for critically ill patients. It will later be used in clinical trials on patients in different stages of the disease, according to the blood center.

Staff Writers Gennady Sheyner and Sue Dremann can be emailed at gsheyner@pawEEKLY.com and sdremann@pawEEKLY.com.

Stanford Hospital is conducting two trials involving remdesivir, a drug produced by the Foster City-based company Gilead Sciences Inc., to determine whether the drug can prevent the coronavirus from replicating.

Scientists (continued from page 15)

Scientists (continued from page 15)

RECOGNIZING LOCAL HEROES

LOCAL HERO

Bruce Gee

Bruce cannot say no. He is very involved in the Palo Alto community. He is on the board of the Palo Alto Community Fund and the Palo Alto Rotary Club. When asked he always says yes — “I CAN DO IT.” He gets it done in record time always with a big smile.

Submitted by: Roger Smith

LOCAL HERO

Blas Lozano

Blas, our wonderful mailman, has been delivering our mail since the ’80s. He calls us by name, sometimes sings to us, and always has a cheerful hello. He watches out for us, making sure we are safe. And, he plays the sax with his band at our summer block parties (Blas is shown above on the right).

Submitted by: Kipling 3300 ESVs and Cool Block Team

About the cover: Remdesivir, a drug produced by the Foster City-based company Gilead Sciences, Inc., in being studied to determine whether the drug can prevent the coronavirus from replicating. Background photo courtesy of Gilead Sciences, Inc. Beaker/glove photos by Getty Images. Illustration by Douglas Young.

Have a local hero you want to recognize? Spread the joy and support our journalism efforts by giving him/her a shout-out in the Palo Alto Weekly. Submit entries at PaloAltoOnline.com/local_hero/
PVI Meals on Wheels

COVID-19 CRITICAL SENIOR CARE FUND

HELP PENINSULA VOLUNTEERS, INC RAISE $500,000!

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"The brave staff and volunteers at PVI’s Meals on Wheels are our heroes. We’re afraid to leave the house and don’t know what we would do without them.”
-Kay, Redwood City

While we are six feet apart, we’re shoulder to shoulder in caring for at risk seniors in our community!

We are living through extraordinary and uncertain times. Please know that all of us at Peninsula Volunteers, Inc., hope you and your loved ones are and will remain safe and healthy during this COVID-19 health emergency.

Daily life for an aging senior in your community now feels much more insecure and fragile than just a few short weeks ago. Someone near you is waking up alone fearful of having no means of getting food for the day. Peninsula Volunteers, Inc.’s Meals on Wheels program is up and running with staff and volunteers providing daily hot, nutritious meals to local homebound seniors unable to shop or cook for themselves. We are preparing and delivering over 12,000 meals each month, to our most vulnerable, at-risk seniors throughout all of San Mateo County, except coast-side. We’ve enhanced our protocols and protective equipment. Considered an essential service, we have become more critical now than ever and are heartened by the remarkable outpouring from volunteers in our local communities, assisting us with meal packing and delivery.

Our most urgent ask now is for your help through donations to continue this vital lifeline for our at risk seniors. Needs are skyrocketing. Our major public fundraising events have been cancelled due to COVID-19; yet the need is greater now than ever. We cannot do it without you! You can have an immediate impact. At uncertain times like these, you are the proof that the community will weather this crisis together. Thank you for helping us keep local seniors fed and safe. A donation of $500 covers meals for two seniors for a month. Donations of all sizes make a huge impact now and in the weeks ahead to help feed our homebound seniors and assist us to ramp up and further expand our programming once our doors re-open to the public. We all look forward to that day.

We are grateful beyond words.

WAYS TO DONATE

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businesses. Bay Area counties are now requiring that grocery stores limit the number of people allowed at one time and have staff assign an employee to regularly disinfect carts and baskets and conduct the daily symptom checks with staff, among other precautions.

On the Midpeninsula, grocery stores’ responses to COVID-19 have intensified over the last few weeks as the number of local cases spiked and public health officials doubled down on urging social distancing. The Market at Edgewood, for example, initially encouraged people to continue bringing their own reusable shopping bags due to a shortage in paper goods; now, under the new Bay Area restrictions, people are not allowed in with outside bags.

After the shelter-in-place orders, public health leaders started asking residents to cover their faces with a cloth when going out for essential activities, the stores made face shields for employees to wear face masks and encouraging customers to do so.

This week, Bianchini’s Market in Portola Valley asked staff to wear masks, either ones supplied by the market or their own. Every cashier at Mountain View’s Draeger’s, an Asian supermarket chain, working this week behind plexiglass at the registers, also wore plastic face shields made of plexiglass and nitrile gloves. (In Los Angeles, a new order is mandating both employees and customers at essential businesses wear face coverings.)

Many local markets installed plexiglass dividers at check stands as a barrier between staff and customers, including at Piazza’s Fine Foods in Palo Alto and San Mateo, Sigona’s Farmers Market in Palo Alto and Redwood City, and Draeger’s. (In San Francisco, a Draeger’s in mission was closed.)

The asiles at Draeger’s and The Market at Edgewood are now one-way only, with arrows in blue tape on the floors, like makeshift traffic signals, directing customers. Small, independent markets are presenting themselves as a calmer option to the national chain stores, which have become synonymous with long lines outside and picked-over shelves. At Sigona’s, the volume of customers is down by about 20 to 30%, but the average sale has more than doubled, Sigona’s owner Carmelo Sigona said.

Grocery stores across the Bay Area are now required to limit the number of people inside at one time to 100, while national stores are encouraged to count customers as they come in. The Market at Edgewood’s cap is currently 30, for example, while the Menlo Park-based shopping center, a small store with narrow aisles, is limited to 20. Both stores are now asking customers to shop alone, rather than with another person from their household, though The Market at Edgewood is enforcing it while Sigona’s is only encouraging it, following pushback from some customers. Stores are discouraging cash payments, though Sigona’s has come up with its own system to accommodate it, using a basket that’s wiped down after every exchange of money.

Local markets also have shortened their hours of operations. Piazza’s now closes an hour earlier than usual, time the staff spends sanitizing the entire store, from PDV pads and cash registers to door handles and bathroom faucets. Piazza’s now has a person in each store whose sole responsibility is cleaning throughout the day.

Country Sun Natural Foods on Palo Alto’s California Avenue is temporarily closed on Saturdays “to give our staff a break.” (The small market is also hiring. “During this extraordinary time, we’re especially in need of employees,” Country Sun posted to Twitter recently.)

Mary Carusi shops at Bianchini’s Market in Portola Valley. The market asked staff to start wearing masks at work this week as part of its new regulations put in place while the market stays open to the public during the coronavirus crisis.

Early morning shopping hours for seniors have been adopted at Draeger’s, Country Sun and Robert’s in Redwood City, and Sigona’s. The Market at Edgewood, meanwhile, is closed from 5 a.m. to 2 p.m. but didn’t leave until 5 p.m.

Dina Abcaran, who manages the deli at Bianchini’s, said she sees customers coming into the store several times throughout the week, and some even more than once in a single day.

“People really love the products,” Abcaran said. “They love coming into the store, and we’re happy to do it. We just don’t want to make it too stressful for our employees.”

The coronavirus has forced independent grocery stores to abruptly adapt their business models, including by offering curbside pickup and home delivery — both labor-intensive changes for small, local businesses. But demand for delivery is high right now as more people can’t or choose not to leave their homes.

“Right now we’re doing more sales than we did before, but if we could go back to where it was before, not putting my employees in harm’s way, I would go back,” owner Rick Piazza said. “It’s been tough on them.”

The coronavirus has forced independent grocery stores to abruptly adapt their business models, including by offering curbside pickup and home delivery — both labor-intensive changes for small, local businesses. But demand for delivery is high right now as more people can’t or choose not to leave their homes. Orders placed through grocery delivery app Instacart usually hover at around 3% of overall sales for Sigona’s in Redwood Park, Los Altos and San Mateo. Fine Foods in Palo Alto and San Mateo, and Draeger’s in Menlo Park also started offering delivery, pickup

“A few weeks ago, we had to choose whether to do delivery or pickup, and we decided delivery, because of the uncertainty of securing unemployment in a timely fashion, she said.

As Arwater has watched sales at Draeger’s shoot up by as much as 50% and the store raise its prices, she said she hopes to see that “trickle down to those of us who are here doing the work.”

On a recent afternoon at Ava’s Downtown Market, Jonathan Angeles, a 19-year-old cashier, wore one of the masks that were donated to the Castro Street store by a San Jose State University professor. Angeles said Ava’s is giving employees a hazard bonus but he didn’t know the amount. At Piazza’s, before the stores were capping the number of customers who could come inside, one employee likened the noise levels to having a fan constantly whirring in their ears.

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Now offering delivery, pickup

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“A few weeks ago, we had to choose whether to do delivery or pickup, and we decided delivery, because of the uncertainty of securing unemployment in a timely fashion, she said. She’s been working overtime since the first stay-at-home order took effect, some days as long as 14 hours. She worries about getting sick herself but more so for her coworkers who have children or elderly parents or are at-risk themselves. National and local reports of grocery store workers who have died from COVID-19 underscore their concerns.

Draeger’s has provided some masks but not enough for all staff members, Atwater said.

Churcher, who is older than 65 years old and has health issues, was initially told not to come in, but he has continued to work because of the uncertainty of securing unemployment in a timely fashion, she said.

As Arwater has watched sales at Draeger’s shoot up by as much as 50% and the store raise its prices, she said she hopes to see that “trickle down to those of us who are here doing the work.”

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Mary Carusi shops at Bianchini’s Market in Portola Valley. The market asked staff to start wearing masks at work this week as part of its new regulations put in place while the market stays open to the public during the coronavirus crisis.
City. Now, they’re accounting for more than 20%. Instacart said in late March that it planned to hire 300,000 additional shoppers over the next three months to meet increased demand and wait times due to the coronavirus.

It was a “controversial” move within the Mutlu family to start offering delivery from The Market at Edgewood two weeks ago. Some members felt like it would only add to their list of mounting responsibilities during the pandemic, Mutlu said, but they ultimately decided to do it, both to respond to customer requests and as a means to minimize the number of people coming to the store. (The store has a $50 minimum for orders, a 15% personal shopping fee and a flat $15 fee for deliveries within a 5-mile radius. Orders can be placed at marketatedgewood.com/delivery.)

Sigon’s also recently started delivering fruit and produce boxes to customers in San Mateo, Foster City, Belmont, San Carlos, Redwood City, Palo Alto, Los Altos, and Mountain View. (People can place orders at sigonashome.com.)

The company had for a decade delivered fresh fruit and snacks to local offices, such as tech companies and law firms, which normally accounts for about half of Sigona’s overall business and employs 65 people, including about 20 drivers.

Orders for office deliveries have evaporated during the shutdown, Sigona said. But shifting to home delivery is allowing the company to keep most, though not all, of the distribution staff employed. Some of them also have been moved to provide support at the busy Palo Alto and Redwood City markets.

Sigona’s is also piloting a curb-side pickup program, which the owner was reluctant to implement at first. It means setting aside staff time to take orders via email or phone, answer any questions that come up, shop and bring the goods out to customers.

“We don’t have software set up like Instacart would,” Sigona said. Both owners and workers said the silver lining of the coronavirus is an increased appreciation for the essential service that grocery stores provide. Customers are largely respectful and thankful, they said. One Bianchini’s regular recently gave $5 gift cards to the nearby Konditorei coffee shop to every employee.

“I’m proud of the work we’re doing,” Abarca said. “The general public is taking consideration of the hard work that grocery workers do. Sometimes it’s not seen or taken for granted.”

“Eighty-five percent of our money comes from fundraising and programs and adoptions,” he said. “Our expenses have continued, but we have no program revenue and we haven’t been able to do any serious fundraising.”

The nonprofit receives the remaining 15% of its $4.3 million operating budget from the city of Palo Alto, which provides the organization $650,000 to manage its municipal shelter.

“This is a tough situation, but it’s been good that we are staying active in serving the community and that so many foster families went above and beyond to help,” Mollica said. More information about adoptions or how to help is posted at PetsInNeed.org or hssv.org.

“Al Mollica, executive director of Pets In Need, said the nonprofit is trying to keep animals out of its shelters and place them in foster homes, where they can be properly socialized. “If we had to figure out how to socialize, feed and care for all of these animals in shelters, I mean, that would be a nightmare,” he said.

Pets (continued from page 9)

Avenidas Still Supporting Seniors

Although Avenidas has temporarily closed its three facilities to help contain and mitigate the COVID-19 virus, seniors and their families can still turn to Avenidas for information, resources, support, or just a friendly voice!

• Call the Avenidas ...

Friendship Line: (650) 289-5400

• Email us at ...

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Food reporting you won’t find anywhere else.

Xenophobia (continued from page 12)

particularly stark and striking,” Simitian said. “You’d like to think that we wouldn’t even need to say this, but the reports indicate pretty clearly that we do.”

Eddie Chan, president and CEO of North East Medical Services, a nonprofit that operates 12 health clinics throughout the Bay Area, reported to the board that the use of the terms “Chinese virus” or “Wuhan virus” “caused some patients and staff to feel attacked or disempowered, and many patients have shared experiences with staff where they feel targeted, disenfranchised, and anxious.

“For instance, one patient experienced a man yelling at him to ‘Go back to China and take the virus back with you’, and ‘It’s all your fault.’ We have seen firsthand how elderly, immigrant community members are targeted for this type of violence,” Chan wrote.

Numerous civic organizations, including Asian Americans for Community Involvement (AACI) and the San Jose chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, applauded the resolution. Marsha Fong, board chairwoman of AACI, wrote in a letter that her organization is “appalled by the anti-Asian rhetoric and scapegoating of immigrant groups as a result of this crisis.

“Hate crimes and attacks against the very communities AAPI fights to serve and protect are attacks against us all and must be publicly denounced,” Fong wrote.

Dolores Alvarado, CEO of Community Health Partnership, also submitted a letter endorsing the county’s resolution.

“Verbal and physical violence against Asians has created an environment of danger and fear among a community that represents nearly 38% of this county’s population,” Alvarado wrote to the board. “Additionally, a large percentage of our county’s health care providers and frontline responders to the COVID pandemic are Asian, and creating an unsafe atmosphere among our health care workers of all ethnicities, is simply dangerous and unacceptable.”

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Coronavirus (continued from page 5)

The county’s hospitals also are well below capacity, with 276 coronavirus patients, including 165 in acute care beds and 91 in intensive care beds, according to county data. About 46% of the acute care beds and 30% of ICU beds remain available.

Even with the slowdown, there’s been no indication that the stay-at-home measures will be lifted on May 3, when the current order is set to expire. Before the county relaxes the social distancing rules, it would need to make sure that its hospitals are able to “safely treat everyone living in the county with the care that they need, when they need it,” Cody said.

The county also would need to have widespread testing available so that anyone who shows symptoms can be tested and, if necessary, isolated.

Cody said that before the county transitions to the next phase, it needs to see a “sustained reduction of cases” over 14 days, the incubation period of COVID-19.

Gov. Gavin Newsom on Tuesday also reported a slowdown in cases at the state level, where the number of hospitalizations and patients in the intensive care unit diagnosed with COVID-19 increased by only a single-digit percentage for the first time since the crisis began.

The public health report was but one development in the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Here are more updates from the past week.

NEW COVID-19 CASES, DEATHS: Santa Clara County has reported 1,442 confirmed cases of coronavirus as of Thursday, with a death toll of 47. There were 57 cases in Palo Alto and 30 in Mountain View, according to the county. San Mateo County has confirmed 633 cases as of Wednesday, of which 21 have been fatal.

MORE TESTING NEEDED: Santa Clara County public health officials on Sunday said that there has been little progress rolling out large-scale testing for COVID-19 to see just how far the virus has spread. The hope was that, by working with the commercial sector, there would be widespread testing available at this point, Santa Clara County Public Health Officer Sara Cody said.

“To be perfectly blunt, that is not the case,” she said. “To date, less than 10,000 patients in our county have been tested.”

Santa Clara County’s population exceeds 1.9 million.

Cody said there are reasons limiting the ability of commercial labs from scaling up — some known to her, and some unknown — but the result is that the county must prioritize testing for those who are symptomatic.

“At this point we do not have the testing capacity that we need,” she said. “Unfortunately much of it is not in our control.”

COUNTY WANTS YOUR GEAR: Santa Clara County issued an order on Wednesday requiring all residents, organizations and businesses with a stockpile of personal protective equipment — such as gloves, N95 masks, sanitary wipes, safety goggles, disposable gowns and other critical items to treat COVID-19 patients, like ventilators — to report their inventory to the county via online at scpwhd.org/cv19ppe.

Mike Wasserman, vice president of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, said that the county expects to have a shortage of equipment if no additional supplies are obtained. For those who want to donate protective equipment, visit vmfoundation.org.

TEMP HOSPITAL GETS FIRST PATIENTS: A state Field Respite Center in Santa Clara opened its doors to two people with less-acute cases of the coronavirus, the county announced on Sunday, April 5. Located at the Santa Clara Convention Center, the facility has beds, supplies and medication delivered by the National Guard and can accommodate up to 250 people. It was established with help from the state and federal governments to alleviate the volume of patients at hospitals in the area.

For comprehensive coverage of the Midpeninsula’s response to the new coronavirus, including how the virus is affecting public health, residents, schools, cities, businesses, nonprofits, arts groups, etc., please go to tinyurl.com/MidpenCorona.

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Pastor David Bordele & Leonna Persson

STANFORD BLOOD CENTER
Give blood for life!
bloodcenter.stanford.edu

Upfront

Maria Filsinger Interrante, an MD-PhD student at Stanford School of Medicine, draws blood from Nitzan Drori Revitzer, 12, at a COVID-19 antibody testing site in Mountain View.
had to be pretty strategic in terms of how that equipment is distributed, as well as to seek additional sources for equipment.\[5pt\]

The Palo Alto Fire Department remains well-stocked with most types of the basic protective equipment, including masks and gloves, according to Fire Chief Geoffrey Blackshire.

“As long as we can provide (responders) with appropriate protective gear, which we’re doing now, and funding solutions and contingencies when stock is low, that keeps them confident and keeps them prepared,” Blackshire said, told the council Monday night.

The department has seen a shortage has been in gowns. While the masks weren’t the fire stations and apparatus inside of using medical gloves,” Blackshire said.

The department also has received some help from the community in the form of donations. This includes a donation of 100 masks from Palo Alto’s Chinese American community last month. More recently, the department received 2,000 surgical masks from Palo Alto’s sister city, Yangpu District, China, and 3,000 gloves from the Palo Alto Unified School District. While the masks weren’t N95 masks and the donated gloves that it also received weren’t medical gloves, the department was able to use both and conserve its use of the higher-level protective gear.

“We were able to get creative. We were able to use those masks on patients to protect the responders. And we were able to use those gloves to clean and decontaminate the fire stations and apparatus instead of using medical gloves,” Blackshire said.

(Thedepartmentis now accepting donations of gowns, safety goggles, disposable coveralls, aseptic wipes, heavy-duty paper towels, hand sanitizer and disinfectant spray, according to the city’s donation page.)

### Police switch gears

Police departments also have had to adapt their operations, in many cases by reducing face-to-face interactions and switching to phone and video calls for routine matters. The Menlo Park Police Department has urged residents to only call 9-1-1 for “life-threatening emergencies (life or death) only” and informed them that for non-emergency incidents, callers may be asked to use an online form or file a report over the phone.

Officers in Menlo Park and elsewhere also are using personal protective equipment when responding to calls.

Atherton Police Chief Steven McCulley said that, just like in Menlo Park, if police receive a call about something minor — a stolen bike, for example — they will take the report over the phone or use a video call instead.

McCulley said he has instituted new measures to protect his officers during the outbreak. At the police station, officers and the department’s eight support staff members wear surgical masks as a precaution and officers clean their boots at a washing station so they don’t bring the virus inside. And once the department acquires a forehead thermometer, staff will soon have their temperatures taken when they enter or exit the station, McCulley said.

Before the outbreak, the police department had supplies on hand for officers entering contaminated sites. McCulley and his 20 police officers have access to Tyvek protective suits and a limited supply of N95 masks if they need to enter an area that will potentially expose them to COVID-19. Officers also have chemical-agent masks with special filters and eye protection. The department has enough personal protective equipment for the next month or two and that can easily be resupplied, he said.

Additionally, supplies are coming in from Atherton residents, who have been donating hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, surgical masks and catered meals, he said.

Officers wear a surgical mask anytime they interact with the public. If it’s necessary for police to respond to a call in person, police dispatchers are trained to ask callers about their symptoms, McCulley said. The dispatcher briefs the callers about precautions police will take when they arrive on the scene.

San Mateo County now has two hotels where officers can go to rest and another hotel set up for officers who are showing symptoms of the virus and don’t want to go home to their families, McCulley said. Personally, McCulley leaves his boots at the front door of his home and washes his hands right away to protect his wife from any possible exposure to the virus. Although the outbreak puts an added layer of stress on officers, “This is this is the time we (police officers) all choose to rise to the occasion,” he said.

“Our residents are looking to us for leadership and confidence, and we know now this is the time we have to come to work,” he said. **Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner can be emailed at gsheyner@paweekly.com. Almanac Staff Writer Angela Swartz can be emailed at aswartz@almanacnews.com.**
Whether they’re grocery shopping for a neighbor or volunteering for a nonprofit, you can spread the joy and support our journalism efforts by giving them a shout-out in the Palo Alto Weekly.

For $250, we’ll design a quarter-page announcement featuring your Local Hero. Just visit the Google form at the address below and include a 50-word description and an optional photo.

And a huge "thank you" to all the good neighbors in Palo Alto doing their best to shelter in place.

Submit entries at PaloAltoOnline.com/local_hero/

Blas Lozano

Blas, our wonderful mailman, has been delivering our mail since the ‘80s. He calls us by name, sometimes sings to us, and always has a cheerful hello. He watches out for us, making sure we are safe. And, he plays the sax with his band at our summer block parties (Blas is shown above on the right).

Submitted by: Kipling 3300 ESVs and Cool Block Team
Support local food businesses and stay well-fed

Check out our guide to local takeout and delivery

We’ve compiled this ever-evolving list of restaurants, cafes, breweries, wine shops and bakeries throughout the Bay Area that are providing takeout or delivery service while in-person dining has been suspended due to public health restrictions to stem the spread of the coronavirus.

Find local takeout and delivery options at PaloAltoOnline.com/restaurants

To report changes or additions, email food@paloaltoonline.com
Loretta Miller Emert

April 2, 1925 – March 29, 2020

Loretta Emert passed away unexpectedly on March 29, 2020. Always active and engaging, a loving wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother who will be missed by her surviving sons, Richard, Steven his wife Lupta, her grandchildren Aaron, Colin, Janelle, Mario his wife Shawna, Derrick, Heather her husband Chad, Matthew his wife Lucy, Joshua, Carrie and her great-grandchildren, Lea, Paul, Eric and Olivia. Her husband George, son Barry, great granddaughter Terra and great-grandson Noah predeceased her. Born in Williston, ND to Roy and Ella Miller she was the youngest child with three sisters and three brothers all predeceased her. She moved to San Francisco where she met and married George Emert in 1945. They then moved to Menlo Park where she lived for the next 70 years. After the birth of her youngest son Barry she joined the local workforce. First at Winthrop Laboratories and Raychem Corporation in Menlo Park. Then for the next 20 years she worked at the San Mateo County Sheriff until her retirement. After being predeceased she proudly carried her sheriff’s badge to her last days. In 1980 she became the first female president of the San Mateo County Sheriffs Association. She was an avid water skier and spend many of her summers on the shores of Lake Berryessa with her family and friends. She loved to dance the jitterbug and travel. She would bring many of her family members on her trips and cruises. She was active and very involved in her retirement. First at the Red Morton Senior Center in Redwood City and more recently at Pacifica Senior Assisted living in Union City. She will be interred with her husband and son at the Alta Mesa cemetery in Palo Alto.

George Fugazi Brown

July 7, 1926 – March 22, 2020

George Fugazi Brown, a long-time resident of Menlo Park, died on March 22nd at the age of 93 after a short illness. One of his close relatives, on learning the news, responded in shock, “I thought he would live to be 100!” Until early this year, he was still driving and went to Palo Alto every evening for Italian food, followed by chocolate dessert on most occasions at Café Pro Bono, where they maintained a personal table for him marked with his name and photo. Brown’s ancestors first came to California from the Genoa region of Italy to join the Gold Rush. A few generations later, Brown was born on July 7, 1926 in San Francisco and was raised in Menlo Park with his sister Rosemarie by their grandparents during the Great Depression. Brown served briefly in the US Navy during World War II. An accomplished sportsman, Brown was a professional baseball player for the San Francisco Seals in the Pacific Coast League. He held a black belt in judo and was a low-handicap golfer most of his life. Later in his life he organized golf tournaments for retirees around northern California. He is fondly remembered by his nephews, Mark Lintner of Menlo Park, who he affectionately called “Marco Polo” and “Steve-a-Rino.” They will miss having dinner with him, and hearing his stories about family history, enjoying his sense of humor an enormous smile. His wife, Mary E. McDevitt-Brown, predeceased him in 2016. Due to the COVID 19 crisis, there will not be a funeral, but a celebration of his life will be held at a later date.

Martine Garrido

1956 – 2019

Martine Garrido passed away on April 17, 2019. Martine devoted her life to caring for children. She grew up in France and moved to the United States as an au pair, eventually becoming a loving nanny for several families in the Bay-area.

Throughout her life, Martine was a natural mentor, advocate and caring guardian to each child. She found joy in their success and happiness. She was also a dear friend to many, always placing others’ needs above her own.

Martine is fondly remembered and deeply missed by Joe and Grace Molnar, and their daughters Alessandra and Lauren. “Gros bisous Martine.”

Mary “Pat” Rogondino

May 22, 1942 – March 20, 2020

Mary Patricia “Pat” Rogondino, 77, passed peacefully on Friday, March 20, 2020, after 5 years standing up to cancer. Born in Los Angeles, CA, May 22, 1942. She is survived by her husband of 56 yrs, Michael, daughters Michal Anne, Erin, Kate, their families. They lived in Palo Alto from 1947 to 2000. Raising their three daughters and running their own graphic design company, Rogondino & Associates. Together Pat and Michael created the designs for technical and educational books for over 30 years. She was a talented graphic designer, technical illustrator, and artist. Pat was an active member of the Palo Alto community, including participating in many cultural events and playing Adult AYSO soccer. Although Pat and Michael moved to Fallbrook, CA for retirement in 2000, Palo Alto has remained a strong part of the fabric of their lives where they still have many friends. A celebration of Pat’s life to share stories about our dear Mother, Wife, Relative, and Friend will happen when it is safe for people to be together.

George Fugazi Brown – Hais Obituary

Mary Patricia Rogondino – Hais Obituary

Call Alicia Santillan at 650-223-6578 or email asantillan@paweky.com for assistance with your legal advertising needs.

995 Fictitious Name Statement

SUPREME PAINTING AND MORE
File No.: FB00646359
The following person(s) (person is (are) doing business as: Supreme Painting And More, located at 888 McCreery Ave., San Jose, CA 95116, Santa Clara County. This business is owned by:
An Individual:
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) (I/cdz):
HERCULES M. CASTILLO
888 McCreery Ave.
San Jose, CA 95116
Registrar began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 03/10/2020.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Santa Clara County on March 10, 2020.
(Paw Mar 20, Apr 3, 10, 2020)

ROS
ROS CORPORATION
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: FB00644609
The following person(s) (person is (are) doing business as: 1) Rocs, 2) Rocos Corporation, located at 172 University Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94301, Santa Clara County. This business is owned by: A Corporation.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) (I/cdz):
ROBOTIX-VENTURES, INC.
172 University Ave.
Palo Alto, CA 94301
Registrar began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 03/09/2020.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Santa Clara County on March 1, 2020.
(Paw Mar 27, Apr 3, 10, 2020)

Pulse

A weekly compendium of vital statistics

POLICE CALLS
Palo Alto
April 3 - April 8
Violence related
Attempted armed robbery ........................................1
Assaulted/sexual assault ...........................................1
Child abuse ..........................................................1
Elder abuse .........................................................1
Sexual assault ......................................................1
Suicide ..................................................................1
Theft related
Commercial burglary ...............................................2
Fraud ....................................................................1
Identity theft .........................................................2
Pety theft ...............................................................4
Vandalism ..............................................................1

Menlo Park
March 31 - April 8
Violence related
Battery ................................................................1
Burglary ..................................................................1
Firearm ....................................................................
Grand theft ............................................................2
Guilty theft ................................................................
Prowler ..................................................................1
Theft of merchandise ..............................................2
Theft underdefined ...................................................
Vehicle related
Attempted theft from auto .......................................1
Auto recovery .........................................................1
Hit and run .............................................................
Theft from auto .......................................................5
Vehicle accidents ....................................................
Alcohol or drug related
Possession of paraphernalia ......................................1

VIOLENT CRIMES
Palo Alto
Tandale Drive, 4/1, 6:01 p.m.; child abuse
Encina Avenue, 4/3, 9:36 a.m.; elder abuse/physical/$600
El Camino Real, 4/3, 12:27 p.m.; attempted adult suicide.
Unknown, 4/4, 8:40 a.m.; sexual assault.
College Avenue, 4/4, 8:30 p.m.; attempted adult suicide.
El Camino Real, 4/5, 9:14 a.m.; attempted armed robbery.

OBITUARIES

Obituaries: Mary Patricia Rogondino
A list of local residents who died recently.

Mary Patricia “Pat” Rogondino, 77, a Palo Alto resident for more than three decades, died on March 20.

To read her full obituary, leave a remembrance and post photos, go to Lasting Memories at PaloAltoOnline.com/obituaries.

Page 24 • April 10, 2020 • Palo Alto Weekly • www.PaloAltoOnline.com
GUIDE TO 2020 SUMMER CAMPS FOR KIDS • VISIT PALOALTOONLINE.COM/CAMP_CONNECTION

Early Learning Institute Palo Alto Pleasanton
Improve your student’s writing skills this summer at Emerson School of Palo Alto and Hacienda School of Pleasanton. Courses this year are Expository Writing, Creative Writing and Presentation Skills.
headsup.org Emerson: (650) 424-1267
Hacienda: (925) 485-5750

Harker Summer Programs San Jose
The Harker School’s summer programs for children K – grade 12 offer the perfect balance of learning and fun! Programs are led by dedicated faculty and staff who are experts at combining summer fun and learning. Strong academics and inspiring enrichment programs are offered in full day, partial and morning only sessions.
harker.org/summer (408) 553-5737

i2 Camp at Castilleja School Palo Alto
i2 Camp offers week-long immersion programs that engage middle school girls in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). The fun and intimate hands-on activities of the courses strive to excite and inspire participants about STEM, creating enthusiasm that will hopefully spill over to their schoolwork and school choices in future years.
castilleja.org/i2camp (408) 470-7833

STANFORD EXPLORE: A Lecture Series on Biomedical Research Stanford
STANFORD EXPLORE biomedical science at Stanford. EXPLORE offers high school students the unique opportunity to learn from Stanford professors and graduate students about diverse topics in biomedical science, including bioengineering, neurobiology, immunology and many others.
explore.stanford.edu explore-series@stanford.edu

Summer@Stratford Palo Alto/Bay Area
Stratford infuses its STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) curriculum into an innovative and enriching summer camp experience. Younger campers learn, explore, and engage in hands-on learning projects, while Elementary-age students collaborate to tackle real-world problems by utilizing academic principles and concepts in a fun and engaging way. At the Middle School level, individual subject-based enrichment classes are offered and tailored for each grade level.
stratfordschools.com/summer pa@stratfordschools.com (650) 493-1141

DANCE, ARTS, CULTURE, OTHER CAMPS

Art and Soul Camp Palo Alto
Art, cooking, linking, yoga and mindfulness. We celebrate multiple perspectives and recognize the many ways for our children to interpret their world. Summer Unplugged is appropriate for ages 6-11 years. Located at Walter Hays School.
artandsoulca.com (650) 269-0423

Castilleja Summer Camp for Girls Palo Alto
Castilleja Summer Camp for Girls Palo Alto Casti Camp offers girls entering grades 2-6 a range of age-appropriate activities including athletics, art, science, computer, writing, crafts, cooking, drama, and music classes each day along with weekly field trips. Leadership program available for girls entering grades 7-9.
castilleja.org/summercamp (650) 470-7833

Community School of Music Mountain View
Community School of Music and Arts (CSMA) Mountain View 50+ creative camps for grades K-12: Drawing, Painting, Ceramics, Sculpture, Musical Theater, Summer Music Workshops and more. One and two-week sessions; full and half day enrollment. Extended care from 8:30am-5:30pm. Financial aid offered.
arts4all.org (650) 917-6800 ext. 0

Let’s Go Crafting Palo Alto
Let’s Go Crafting’s Studio is where your child will have fun while learning many different fiber related arts. We teach sewing, knitting, crochet, weaving and jewelry making to children ages 8 to 15 years. AM or PM camps 275$/week. Full day camps 550$/week. 5 student minimum for all sessions; 10 student maximum.
lstgoecrafting.org (650) 814-4183

Oshman Family JCC Camps Palo Alto
Camps at the OJCC introduce your child to new experiences while creating friendships in a fun and safe environment. We work to build confidence, stretch imaginations and teach new skills.
pal坍oalotjcc.org/Camps (650) 223-8622

PALO ALTO EXPLORE: A Lecture Series on Biomedical Research Palo Alto
PALO ALTO EXPLORE biomedical science at Stanford. EXPLORE offers high school students the unique opportunity to learn from Stanford professors and graduate students about diverse topics in biomedical science, including bioengineering, neurobiology, immunology and many others.
explore.stanford.edu explore-series@stanford.edu

PACCC summer camps offer campers, grades 1st to 6th, a wide variety of engaging opportunities. We are excited to announce all of your returning favorites: Leaders in Training (L.I.T.), Camp YOUUnique, F.A.M.E. (Fine Arts, Music and Entertainment), J.V. Sports, Operation: Chef and Chef Jr. Periodic field trips, special visitors and many engaging camp activities, songs and skits round out the variety of offerings at PACCC Summer Camps. Open to campers from all communities. Register online.
pacc.org (650) 493-2361

Stanford Jazz Workshop Stanford
World-renowned jazz camps at Stanford. Week-long jazz immersion programs for middle school musicians (July 6-10), high school (July 12-17 and July 19-24), and adults (July 26-31); all instruments and vocals. No jazz experience necessary
stanfordjazz.org (650) 736-0324

TheatreWorks Palo Alto/Atherton
Camps bring their plays to life, make new friends, and practice collaboration skills at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley’s PlayMakers camp (Grades K-5). TheatreWorks offers four sessions in Palo Alto and Atherton from June 8 – July 31. Campers learn acting, playwriting, movement, and stagecraft from professional teaching artists from the Tony Award-winning local company.
theatreworks.org/education (650) 463-7146

ATHLETICS

Dance Connection Palo Alto
Dance Connection Palo Alto is an extended family and a “home away from home” for our community of children and teens. At Dance Connection, we value the positive energy and atmosphere that we continuously strive to provide. Summer Dance Camps include all styles of dance for ages 4 and up and features our new “This is Me!” Empowerment Camp along with Teen Jazz and Hip Hop Camps. A Summer Session for ages 3 to adults will be offered from June 8 – July 31.
danceconnectionpaloalot.com/dance-connection- event-calendar/summer-dance-camps (650) 852-0418 or (650) 322-7032

Kim Grant Tennis Palo Alto
Kim Grant Tennis Summer Camps Monterey Bay
Fun and specialized Junior Camps for Mini (3-5), Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced, High Performance and Elite tennis levels. Weekly programs designed by Kim Grant to improve player technique, fitness, agility, mental toughness and all around game. Weekly camps in Palo Alto and Sleep-Away Camps in Monterey Bay. SO MUCH FUN!
KimGrantTennis.com
Text: (650) 690-0678
Call: (650) 752-8061

Nike Tennis Camps Stanford University
Junior Overnight and Day Camps for boys & girls, ages 9-18 offered throughout June, July and August. Adult Weekend Clinics (June & Aug). Camps directed by Head Men’s Coach, Paul Goldstein, Head Women’s Coach, Lele Forood, and Associate Men’s and Women’s Assistant Coach, Brian Coupe and Frankie Brennan. Come join the fun and get better this summer!
nikecampstanford.com (800) NIKE-CAMP

Run for Fun Camps Bay Area
Run for Fun’s mission is to provide creative and engaging play for all youth by getting kids active in an inclusive community centered around outdoor fun! We pride ourselves on hiring an enthusiastic, highly trained staff who love what they do. Summer 2020 features four weeks of Adventure Day Camp and two weeks of Overnight Camp High Five. Adventure Day Camp is a new discovery every day filled with sports, crafts and nature, including explorations to Camp Jones Gulch, Capitola Beach, Foothills Park, Shoreline Lake and Great America. Camp High Five is six days and five nights of traditional overnight camp mixed with challenge-by-choice activities, campfires, friendships and lots of laughter.
rufforfun@paloaltoononline.com/summer-camps-and-school-holiday-camps/camp-overview (650) 823-5167

Spartans Sports Camp Mountain View
Spartans Sports Camp offers a wide variety of sports, performing arts, and academic enrichment camps for kids entering grades 1-9. Experienced staff ensures everyone has fun. Daily on-site swimming is offered for all camps. Camps begin June 8th and run weekly through July 31st at Mountain View High School. The camp is run by MVHS coaches and student-athletes and all proceeds benefit the MVHS Athlete’s Endowment. Lunch and extended care are available for your convenience. Flexible cancellation policies.
spartansportscamp.com (650) 479-5906

Stanford Athletics & Youth Stanford
We can’t wait to have you join us this summer at Stanford! We hope you’re ready for engaged and safety-focused staff, phenomenal facilities, and innovative programs. We’ll have camps that challenge your camper’s physical, mental, and social skills in age-appropriate activities. When your camper registers for Camp Cardinal, they are a Cardinal Kid for life. Our main camper program is for grades K-6 and then campers graduate to our Counselor-in-Training Program where they become camp leaders!
campcardinal.org campcardinal@stanford.edu

Stanford Baseball Camps
Stanford At Sunken Diamond on the campus of Stanford University. A variety of camps are offered to benefit a wide range of age groups and skill sets. Campers will gain instruction in several baseball skills, fundamentals, team concepts, and game play.
stanfordbaseballcamp.com (650) 725-2054

Stanford Water Polo Camps
Stanford New to water polo or have experience, we have a camp for you. Half day or full day options for boys and girls ages 7 and up. All camps provide fundamental skills, scrimmages and games.
stanfordwaterpolocamps.com

YMCA of Silicon Valley Summer Camps
Silicon Valley At the Y, children and teens of all abilities acquire new skills, make friends, and feel that they belong. With hundreds of Summer Day Camps plus Overnight Camps, you will find a camp that’s right for your family. Sign up today, camps are filling up! Financial assistance is available.
ymcsav.org/summercamp (408) 351-6473

For more information about these camps visit paloaltoonline.com/camp_connection. To advertise in this weekly directory, call (650) 326-8210.
Coronavirus: My early April thoughts — and fears

by Diana Diamond

I wake up in the morning. Is it Friday? Or maybe it’s Tuesday or Wednesday. What day was yesterday? Is yesterday just going to be like today, and what about tomorrow? Will it all be the same? I get up, grab a cup of coffee, read the paper, get dressed and no longer ask myself what I should wear today. Yesterday I wore my white sweater, but what difference does it make? I used to dress according to what I was doing that day, but now, no one sees me, except on Zoom, from my shoulders up. I am not complaining, just house-bound, bored and trying to have some sort of virtual social life. I am especially appreciative of my TV, my news channels, my newspapers, Zoom, Netflix, Kindle and, of course, my telephone, which is next to my ear a good part of the day.

I am one of those people who need social contact. My husband doesn’t. Opposites attract. The times are a changin’, as Bob Dylan wrote. We are living in a new world. People in hundreds of countries are affected by the coronavirus, and no scientists have yet come up with a way to control it — other than self-isolation and self-quarantine, which Californians and locals are doing a great job of. I went to Safeway yesterday because I was out of fresh produce, which should help us stay healthy. I was halted at the front door by an employee who said we had to wait until enough customers came out before we could go in. Good idea, I stood patiently.

I was told I couldn’t bring my recyclable bags in because they may carry germs, which could affect the baggers. Okay, I was told the county imposed a limit on the number of people in the store to 60, plus staff — but it seems there were a lot more inside.

I wasn’t nervous until checkout time. The new rules are that only one customer can be at the checkout stand at a time, and Safeway said the rest of us should stand in one line until the next checker was available. Okay, except there were 30 people on line, stretching from the checkout stand to the milk and egg shelves in the back. The 6-foot-apart rule was ignored. I asked the person behind me to please stand back, and he declared, “No way. I am keeping my place in line right next to you.” I was uncomfortable about the lack of distance.

I am sure Safeway will try to iron out these distance wrinkles. We are living in dangerous times. This awful virus isn’t going to quell until all of us in the U.S. self-isolate, and governors in the eight remaining states (as of April 7?) finally decree a stay-at-home policy. And then there is the face mask issue. At first, the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) told us face masks are not necessary unless you think you have COVID-19. Last week, the CDC apparently changed its mind, telling us to wear masks when we go out. Were they telling us the truth from the beginning? Or were they trying to prevent people from buying masks that health officials needed more than us? I can accept the latter but would have preferred knowing their rationale from the beginning. Can I really trust the CDC as much as I once did? Being honest brings credibility.

And by the way, where are these masks — four weeks after the outbreak? CVS and Walgreens tell me they still don’t have any (or hand sanitizer). My neighbor is making her own and kindly gave us two masks.

As we all know, this virus knows no boundaries, no state lines. It travels whimsically and frighteningly; it reportedly morphs along the way, so scientists are constantly tackling a new and recreated version of the virus.

I am angry that our government still cannot provide us enough hand wipes in our stores, that decent sanitizer. My neighbor is making face masks (which sounds good on the surface), the debt and the interest on that debt continues to accrue. Many of the lower-income workers may lose their homes, cars and other items through no fault of their own because they are not allowed to work. The present system is just not fair.

What is needed is a full economic freeze retroactive to the start of the stay-at-home order that freezes all debt, interest accrual and evictions until after it is safe for the public to go back to work.

Rich Stiebel
Talisman Drive, Palo Alto

The Palo Alto Weekly encourages comments on our coverage or on issues of local interest.

What’s your opinion on how local government is responding to the coronavirus?

Submit letters to the editor of up to 300 words to letters@paweekly.com. Submit guest opinions of 1,000 words to editor@paweekly.com. Include your name, address and daytime phone number so we can reach you. We reserve the right to edit contributions for length, objectionable content, libel and factual errors known to us. Anonymous letters will generally not be accepted. Submitting a letter to the editor or guest opinion constitutes a granting of permission to the Palo Alto Weekly and Embarcadero Media to also publish it online, including in our online archives and as a post on Town Square. For more information, contact Editorial Assistant Lloyd Lee at lle@paweekly.com or 650-223-6526 or Editor Jocelyn Dong at editor@paweekly.com.
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