

Avenidas Village

Complementing Existing Programs Filling a Niche in the Community

Lisa Hendrickson, President & CEO, Avenidas
November 2009

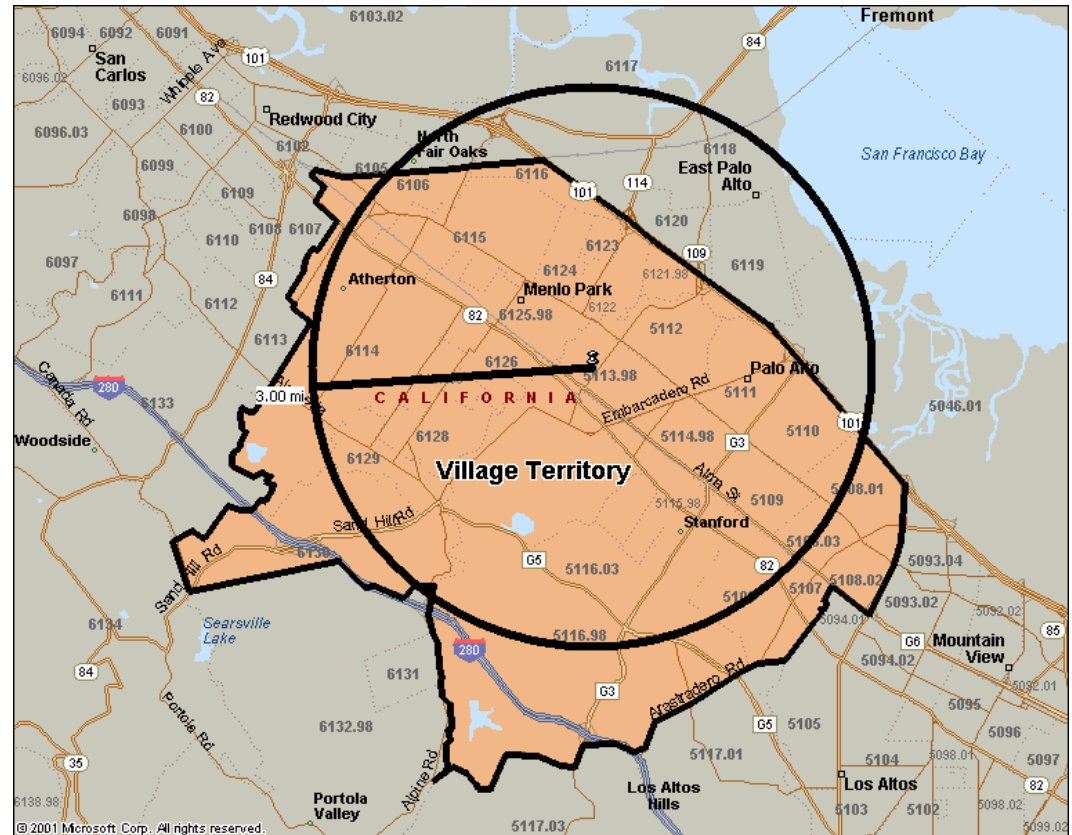


Avenidas

- Providing a continuum of services for older adults and their caregivers for 40 years
- Nine major program areas
 - Adult Day Health Care
 - Social Work Services
 - Transportation
 - Lifelong Learning
 - Health and Wellness
 - Handyman Services
 - Volunteer Services
 - Participant Services



Serving 6,500
people each year
from Palo Alto,
the nine
communities
adjacent to it,
and beyond





James Estrin/The New York Times

Residents of Beacon Hill in Boston, 52 to 98, grow old at home with support from a community group. Above, a personal trainer, Jan Burgess, coaches David B. Arnold Jr., 83.

Aging at Home: For a Lucky Few, a Wish Come True

By JANE GROSS

BOSTON



James Estrin/The New York Times

John Sears, a Beacon Hill Village member and volunteer

ALONE in his row house on Beacon Hill, with four precipitous flights of stairs and icy cobblestones outside the front door, John Sears, 75, still managed to look after himself after he was hit by a taxicab and left with a broken knee.

That is because Mr. Sears was one phone call away from everything he needed to remain in his home, the goal of more than 80 percent of the nation's elderly as they confront advancing age, according to consistent polls.

Mr. Sears required both practical assistance and peace of mind: Transportation to and from the hospital. An advocate with him at medical appointments. Home-delivered meals from favorite restaurants. Someone at his side as he hobbled to the bank and the barber. Someone else to install grab bars in his bathroom. A way to summon help in an emergency. People to look in on him.

Design and Launch of Avenidas Village

- Design Group guided the process (beginning winter, 2006)
 - With oversight of the Avenidas Board of Directors
- Goals
 - replicate Beacon Hill Village-style delivery of supportive services to local seniors
 - reach a segment of the local older adult population that was not using Avenidas services
 - Increase awareness of Avenidas
- Business Plan
 - Size the market
 - Determine program staffing and roles and responsibilities
 - Test financial assumptions

- **Focus Groups were critical** (fall, 2006)
 - 14 groups involving 220 people
 - Tested the concept
 - Prioritized interest in services
 - No services tested Essential (70% deemed the service desirable)
 - 7 tested Important (50%-70% said they were desirable)
 - Transportation and drivers
 - In-home caregivers
 - Help securing skilled care
 - Delivered meals
 - Care Management
 - Home Repair
 - House Cleaning
 - Tested fee sensitivity and interest in signing up now
 - Advanced the grassroots marketing effort

- Board of Directors committed start-up funding for pre-launch expenses of \$40,000 (focus group contractor, marketing materials, website, advertising, launch event). Later, required Year 1 capital of \$66,000 approved
- Director hired June 2007
- Member Services Coordinator hired Sept. 2007
- Vendors selected
- Strategic Alliance with Stanford Hospital and Palo Alto Medical Foundation (later, El Camino Hospital, Kaiser)

What is Avenidas Village?

- A membership program providing supportive services to members aging-in-community
- Concierge-style service; one-stop shopping
- Qualified vendors; discounts; directory
- Social events



- One phone number to call for assistance or for help in coordinating services
- Prompt, friendly and professional customer service from dedicated Avenidas Village staff
- Access to pre-screened vendors
- Discounts on services
- Transportation to and from medical appointments when your doctor advises you not to drive
- Free emergency preparedness review
- Free daily personal telephone check-in service (if desired)
- Members-only social and cultural activities
- Members-only website
- Members-only directory of fellow members
- Benefits of Avenidas Village partnerships with healthcare providers
- Medical advocacy program (MedPals)
- Volunteer opportunities
- Legal assistance service (Legal 411)
- Social connections
- Safety net
- Peace of mind

Avenidas Village

Your Life, Your Way

“Designed to provide many of the benefits of living in a retirement community without leaving the comfort of your own home.”

Two Years Later.....

- 270 members (down from a high of 347)
- Annual dues \$825/individual, \$1050/dual
- 2 FTE
- Annual program budget of \$260,297 (including indirect expenses of \$51,757)
- Projected deficit of \$22,000 (ongoing *in-kind* support from Avenidas needed)
- Advisory Council of 19 elected members
- 140 vendors
- 10-12 social events per quarter
- 12 daily check-in calls
- 60-70 service calls per week

Were Our Goals Met?

- replicate Beacon Hill Village-style delivery of supportive services to local seniors
- reach a segment of the local older adult population that was not using Avenidas services
- Increase awareness of Avenidas

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Cooperatives that help people stay in their homes come to the West Coast



Joan Gascayne (left) is greeted by the Rev. Mary Moore Gaines at St. James Episcopal Church in San Francisco. Gascayne's health problems prompted Moore Gaines to organize a "senior village."

Inside

- Resources for designing a senior-friendly home. **63**
- Profiles of senior villages in Palo Alto and San Francisco. **63**

By Robin Evans
SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The first "senior village" is open in the Bay Area, bringing to the West Coast a popular new model of care for the elderly. This village is not a place but a membership program that helps people stay in their own homes by providing support — everything from the medical to the mundane.

The concept was developed by a group of elderly neighbors in Boston trying to line up in-home services their insurance didn't cover.

"People end up moving because they can't change the lightbulbs or (they) get isolated when they get home from the hospital and can't coordinate everything," said Judy Willett, director of Beacon Hill Village in Boston, which opened five years ago. "The reason it's so popular is it's what everyone wants to stay in their own homes. . . . It's unbelievable the impact of such a brilliant and simple idea."

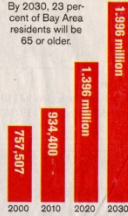
That simple idea is being developed in San Francisco by the Rev. Mary Moore Gaines, and is a reality at Avenidas Village in Palo Alto, which opened in October.

Mary Minkus, 74, a retired family law attorney in Palo Alto, was the force behind the village after she hurt her elbow five years ago and discovered what many seniors do: Her health insurance covered a nursing-home stay, but she didn't have coverage for the

► **VILLAGE:** Page C2

AGING POPULATION

By 2030, 23 percent of Bay Area residents will be 65 or older.



QUALITY OF LIFE

50%

People age 85 and older who still live in their homes.

60%

Reduction in chance of going to a nursing home for those older than 70 with disabilities who receive personal care from a grown child.

80%

Seniors who have at least one chronic health condition. Fifty percent have at least two.

Source: ABAC projections, U.S. Health and Retirement Study

THE VILLAGE CONCEPT

Idea is to bring together agencies that can address seniors' health, social needs

By Robin Evans
SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

A Palo Alto man stopped going to Stanford games when his wife died. That bothered Lisa Hendrickson, the CEO of Avenidas Senior Center.

"The Stanford games were the backbone of his social life, but he had no one to go with," she said. "So I called him. I happen to know a widower who loves going to the games."

Hendrickson says she sees that kind of matchmaking happening frequently in the newly launched Avenidas Village in Palo Alto. "We've heard a lot of people say, 'This village sounds like a good idea, but I still want to be able to help myself as much as possible, and I'd like to meet other members to be of assistance where I can be,'" Hendrickson said. "We're going to facilitate both of those instincts."

The village concept is to bring together service agencies, volunteers, businesses and civic groups to create a network that addresses seniors' health and social needs and to counter the isolation that can exacerbate the problems of aging.

About 80 percent of seniors have at least one chronic health condition — from arthritis and diabetes to respiratory disorders — that limits their physical activities; 50 percent have at least two, according to a U.S. Department of Commerce report, "65+ in the United States 2005."

Physical limitations — the inability to climb stairs or lift a 10-pound object, for example — increase the odds of developing a new disease within two years by nearly 50 percent, says the 2006 U.S. Health and Retirement Study. Those with at least some symptoms of depression were one-third

"The home becomes the gateway for doing other things in the community and trying to address the isolation."

SUSAN POOL, Richmond Village planning committee

in the community and trying to address the isolation that comes up."

The Richmond Village program, which has been in development for more than a year, coincides with St. James' \$4.5 million capital campaign. A four-story building is planned that will house a new community center, church offices, a preschool and rooms on the fourth floor for lease by the village program, which will be its own nonprofit.

With Social Security the main source of income for most people 65 and older, funds for the kind of care that might keep them out of a nursing home can be in short supply outside of long-term care insurance. And few people purchase that.

"A lot of people are scared to use their limited resources," said Anne Hinton, director of San Francisco's Department of Aging and Human Services.

Medicare doesn't cover long-term needs. Only the very poor have hope of some federal assistance. "Unless it's for very low-income, nearly destitute seniors, those who make a little bit of money find it very hard to manage on a fixed income," Hendrickson said. "When they encounter the need, they have a very difficult time paying for it."

Lucky Willett, director of Bos-

Bay Area villages

AVENIDAS VILLAGE, PALO ALTO

Membership: Open to adults 50 and older who live in Palo Alto, Mountain View, Stanford, Woodside, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Menlo Park, Atherton, East Palo Alto and Portola Valley. Membership costs are \$750 single; \$900 couple.

Program offers:

- A network of providers — from errand-runners to plumbers to a range of in-home helpers — who have been screened and offer their services at a discount.
- The option of having the village schedule appointments and services.
- Social and cultural activities.
- Volunteer opportunities — to help others or to receive help.
- Daily check-in service by telephone (if desired).
- Members-only Web site and forum.

► Transportation to and from medical appointments when the doctor advises against driving.

► Access to an alliance created by the village with medical providers at Kaiser, Stanford University Hospital and Palo Alto Medical Foundation.

► Access to Avenidas Senior Center services, including day care for healthy and frail adults.

Contact: Vickie Epstein at (650) 289-5404, vepstein@avenidas.org, or Elyse Garson at (650) 289-5405, egerson@avenidas.org. Or visit www.avenidasvillage.org. Avenidas Senior Center is at 450 Bryant St., Palo Alto.

RICHMOND VILLAGE, SAN FRANCISCO

Membership: Details to be determined.

The program is expected to be up and running by mid-2008.

In the plans are:

- Services of a network of screened providers. Professional and volunteer in-home help, sometimes at a discount, for everything from bill paying to pet care to housecleaning.
- Caregiver support and shared caregiving.
- Health and wellness services, including exercise classes and activities.
- Health-care assessment and management.
- Educational and social activities, including Senior Center Without Walls, an Oakland organization that offers a range of activities — from bingo to brain aerobics to a writing workshop — on the telephone.
- Volunteer opportunities.

For information: For Richmond Village, call (415) 252-0139. For San Francisco's Community Living Fund, call (415) 355-3555 or (800) 510-2020.



Mary Minkus, at Avenidas Village, which offers transportation, errand-runners, and educational and social activities.

ERIC LINTZ / THE CHRONICLE

Challenges and Surprises

- Communicating the benefits of membership an ongoing struggle

Sustainability Issues

- Growing membership in a down economy
- Maintaining a favorable mix of users and non-users
- Delivering a village experience in a sprawling suburb

Common Elements of All Villages

- Membership organizations with grassroots origins
- Self-Supporting
- Consolidators of Services
- Strategic Partnerships
- A Village cares for the whole person