A Community of Communities

It is heartening to be part of such a vibrant and innovative movement as our villages, their leaders, members, and volunteers come together to build on the founding principles that guide us all. Here's to all of you in our Community of Communities and the great work you are doing!

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From the Executive Director

Charlotte

Village Movement California is a community of communities. Since early March, over 200 village members and leaders from nearly all of our 43 villages have come together over Zoom to wrestle with the challenges of COVID-19. Many of you have emailed me to share your gratitude for being part of a movement that allows you to learn and assures you that you aren't working alone. The gift of this difficult era is the strengthening of Village Movement California's web of connections.

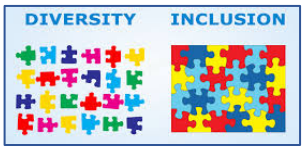
Our upcoming virtual conference series, *Innovation Can't Wait*, will introduce expertise and best practices so that your villages can accelerate their growth, deepen their impact, and ensure their sustainability. I am pleased to announce that the speaker for our first

session, *Building and Strengthening Community*, is Dr. Patrick Arbore, the Founder and Director of the Institute on Aging's Friendship Line. The Friendship Line is a national crisis and warm line for adults 60 years and older.

The four conference sessions will offer you opportunities to interact with each other in breakout rooms. Our best learning often comes through talking in small groups, and then following up with the people whose words switched on a "lightbulb" in our minds. By the end of the fourth session, you will have a new set of colleagues along with new ideas. This combination will strengthen Village Movement California as a community of communities. With our shared strength, we will be able to achieve so much more than we can alone.

Please register if you haven't done so already. There's more information about the conference in the **Upcoming Events** section below. You don't want to miss this time together.

Diversity & Inclusion



Charlotte sent a letter to our readership, *Racial Justice and Village Movement California*, on June 8. It included a number of resources to support learning about Systemic Racism and Anti-Blackness, White privilege, the Anti-Racist identity, and the framework of "Othering and Belonging." Learning about these topics is a necessary step toward achieving our desire for a diverse and inclusive village movement. Please take a look at them.

Village Movement California's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Team is hosting a Zoom conversation for designated village leaders on June 18. We will explore what villages are doing in response to the calls for racial justice, articulate challenges, and identify ways villages can leverage each other and our statewide coalition. The call will include Dr. Camara Jones's TED Talk about the levels of racism and the concept and practice of Racial Equity. The term Racial Equity is widely used now, and it's important that we understand it. Our July newsletter will contain a summary of the call.

Finally, there's a new page in development for the website dedicated to resources about the topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Watch for a special notice coming soon.

The Intergenerational Village

by Kate Hoepke, San Francisco Village

Since last September, I have been participating in the Encore Public Voices Fellowship, a 10-month immersion in how to communicate on a broad scale about issues affecting older adults. When I started, I thought I'd be writing about ageism and villages as an antidote to social isolation. In part, I did that, but I also discovered a deeper, fiercer voice that has taken up residence in my heart. A voice that's calling me to build intergenerational community; to bring generations together in open-hearted dialogue to create the transformational networks we need to address the perils of climate change, systemic racism, and internal threats to our democracy.

If the pandemic and recent protests against racial injustice have shown us anything, it's that we're all connected. As Martin Luther King said, "We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." At the same time, recent events have awakened us to the urgency of this moment. We can't stay silent, on the sidelines, or separate from those with whom we share the future. There's too much at stake.

I'm a 65-year-old mother, and I've experienced a lot of dark emotions the past year: anger, despair, and shame about the world I'm leaving my children and unborn grandchildren. These feelings are serious signals that I need to listen and act in a new way.

I've begun to imagine local coalitions, born out of village communities, where people of all ages are learning about different worldviews, discovering common priorities and co-creating an action agenda. As elders in the community, we bring valuable assets: deep listening skills, positions of power, influential networks, and a developmental imperative to support the next generation of leaders. Human nature demands that their vision emerge. Will we choose to be good partners and mentors? If so, we need to get curious and allow ourselves to be changed by what they have to teach us. We need to step up and step back at the same time.

As I began listening to this fierce new voice of intergenerational potential, brilliant and creative young people started showing up in my life; co-conspirators in their thirties eager to get close to their older neighbors. They've introduced San Francisco Village to live-stage storytelling, online improv theater, Medicine in Motion dancing, and civically engaged teenagers out to change the world.

Brittany Bare, founded My Life, My Stories (MLMS), a San Francisco non-profit that values legacy and intergenerational connections. They match elders with younger adults who are willing to listen them into speech, capturing their stories in writing. MLMS used to have live storytelling events in the Haight Ashbury, but since COVID, they've moved online. When their in-person events were cancelled in mid-March, Brittany redirected 100 volunteers to San Francisco Village.

Evan Johnson is a performer and teacher who founded Cosmic Elders, a theater arts group in San Francisco. When his program at a local senior center was cancelled due to the coronavirus, we hired him to create an intergenerational, online improv class and invited the Cosmic Elders to join us. They've been meeting weekly for 10 weeks, developing new skills for storytelling and learning how to use their imagination to cope with difficult feelings. The program will culminate in a short video that you will be able to access on our website in early July.

Liv Schaffer is a dance educator at the University of San Francisco and Lead Artist with the Medicine in Motion program. She was scheduled to start a new series of Dance Generators, her intergenerational dance company, with San Francisco Village members when the pandemic happened. She has since discovered the power of Zoom to achieve her goals of human connection and creative expression.

Aanchal Dhar is a communications strategist with Encore who has introduced me to a number of groups including Generation Citizen. Through Generation Citizen, San Francisco Village members learned about Vote16, a ballot initiative to lower the voting age in San Francisco. The 17-year-old author of the legislation, **Arianna Nassiri**, joined me for a live-stage conversation weeks before physical distancing started. The standing-room-only crowd of members and community partners were bowled over by what she had to say! She and 12 of her friends are returning next month to engage with SFV members online in discussions about police brutality, racial injustice, and climate imperatives. I suspect they'll gain a few votes in the process!

I'm captivated by the generosity, ingenuity, intelligence and civic love of these young people. Together, we're making beauty, learning to care for one another, and imagining the future we want to live into.

From this place of shared experience and common cause, let's build intergenerational, multi-cultural communities where we can explore deeper topics, that will determine a sustainable future for our planet and redefine the social contracts we require to be a just society. I believe the future is a function of the choices we make today. As villages of elders who know how to build caring communities based on principles of mutuality, let's choose to work with younger generations to create the world we want them to inherit.

Kate is the Executive Director of San Francisco Village and Chair of Village Movement California. She will be leading a session on the Intergenerational Village at the Innovation Can't Wait virtual conference July 22, 2020.

New! Senior Medicare Patrol Monthly Alert

By Micki Nozaki, SMP

Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) and Village Movement California have established a formal partnership to educate village members and volunteers about Medicare Fraud. Carol Grey, Executive Director of Clayton Valley Village, has stepped up to assist with

this effort. Each month, we will provide the latest information about Medicare fraud. Right now, healthcare fraud is focused on:

- COVID-19 Scams
- Durable Medical Equipment Fraud
- Fraudulent Hospice Enrollment

COVID-19 Scams – Contact Tracers

Scammers contact people in several ways. They may come to your door saying they have tests for the virus, send you unsolicited text messages saying you've been exposed to the virus, or call you and pretend your doctor referred them. They may say they are from Medicare or that your Medicare will cover the tests they are selling. If they are offering services **you did not request** be careful. It could be a scam.

Scammers are now sending emails, text messages, or calling and pretending to be COVID-19 contact tracers and telling people they have come into contact with someone who has tested positive for the virus. Then they ask for private healthcare information such as numbers for Medicare, Social Security, or bank account. Legitimate contact tracers will never ask for this personal information. California Attorney General Xavier Becerra has warned residents to be on guard for this scam.

What to do:

- Close the door, don't respond to the text or email message, hang up the phone
- Contact your medical provider immediately to determine if they asked someone to call you
- Report anyone who states they are from Medicare or that Medicare will cover the tests to California Senior Medicare Patrol at 1.855.613.7080
- Report fraudulent contact tracer calls or messages to California Senior Medicare Patrol at 1.855.613.7080

Durable Medical Equipment Fraud

Scammers are calling Medicare beneficiaries to offer "free or low cost" orthotic braces for knee, back, etc. If you provide your Medicare number you may:

- Receive boxes of braces you don't want or need
- Have your Medicare number compromised
- Potentially be denied Medicare claims if you need such braces in the future

Medicare only pays for durable medical equipment based on medical necessity and requires a prescription from your personal physician.

What to do: See the SMP tip sheet in multiple languages here

Fraudulent Hospice Enrollment

Several hospice agencies are giving presentations, visiting seniors at their homes, and enrolling them in hospice even though they do not have a terminal illness with six months or less to live. These companies mislead people by offering them housekeeping, home health, nurse visits and/or medications for "free". The companies claim they are a different branch of hospice and that services are covered by Medicare

through “Obama Care”. This is a scam and can have serious consequences on beneficiaries’ ability to access needed treatment, medications and even their medical providers. In some cases, this type of fraud has caused severe decline in health and even untimely death.

What to do: See the SMP tip sheet in multiple languages here

Help keep villagers aware and safe. Please share the contents of this and upcoming SMP columns with your village members and volunteers.

Update

Master Plan for Aging

The state restarted the work to develop the California Master Plan for Aging late last month. The timeline for completion has been extended through the end of the year. Village Movement California is advocating for villages to be included under two goals: Goal 2: Livable Communities and Goal 3: Health and Wellness. For more information, click here.

Tales From the Village

Fall Risk Reduction Makes a Difference at San Clemente Village

By Carol Haig, Editor

“Falls are the major cause of mortality and morbidity in older adults,” says Dr. Debra Rose, director of the Center for Successful Aging at California State University Fullerton. As an internationally known expert, the Center’s director, and Professor of Kinesiology at the university, Dr. Rose developed an evidence-based program that reduces the chances of falling in older adults who are at moderate to high risk for falls.

With a membership that is generally older, and a number of people in their 90s, the program’s multi-faceted approach to preventing falls appealed to the San Clemente Village’s leadership. However, at 24 weeks in length with delivery by kinesiologists or physical therapists required, it called for modification. With considerable time and effort, the program, known as **Stay Well at Home** in San Clemente Village, was piloted there for 14 weeks.

Stay Well at Home Pilots

In San Clemente Village, each member is matched with a volunteer when they join. These pairs develop strong connections and mutual trust, important elements in a fall risk reduction program. This existing structure helped facilitate the selection of six members and their matched volunteers to participate in the first **Stay Well at Home** pilot. Jan Montague, the village's executive director, was trained for the program as were the six volunteers.

Materials for **Stay Well at Home** include a manual and supporting videos. Sessions are composed of exercises that trigger sensors related to falling. These can be customized for the needs of each participant.

The **Stay Well at Home** duos met twice each week, working one-on-one through a range of sessions, each with a different focus: Home Safety, Medications, Shoes, Eyes, and other topics. **Stay Well at Home** has been well-received by the pilot participants. Several of the pairs continue to meet after the pilot's conclusion.

Subsequently, a second pilot of 10 weeks was offered. Still considered to be too long, an eight week pilot was in development when COVID-19 arrived and put plans on hold amid discussions about trying it using Zoom. As we go to press, Stay Well at Home videos are available on the San Clemente Village web site for members and their volunteer facilitators to access.

How Stay Well at Home is Different

I asked Dr. Rose what makes this program different from the many other fall prevention programs offered. She told me that **Stay Well at Home** "takes a health action approach," focusing on health behavior change from less beneficial behaviors like being sedentary to more beneficial health behaviors like walking daily. It combines individual assessment, exercises, and home modification with attitude and behavior change. Each session takes place one-on-one in the member's home.

How it Works

The program works like this:

- Program participants are selected using specified screening criteria
- The initial meeting explores the participant's expectations of the program—what do you expect to like/not like about the program
- Myths about falling are dispelled, e.g. falling is inevitable when you are old
- Strategies for changing existing attitudes about falling are carefully explored
- Pairs meet two days each week for 60-90 minutes for discussion and selected exercises

The trainer conducts a home hazard assessment to evaluate what is present in the home and, most significantly, *how the person uses it.* For example, the trainer will ask the member to get into the bathtub to see what the person holds onto, and determine what should be done to make that action safer. Then the trainer and the member develop a detailed action plan to make the desired change, naming who, what, when, and how this will be done.

Is Stay Well at Home Right for Your Village?

Dr. Rose is interested in partnering with other villages that would like to offer **Stay Well at Home** to their members. The benefits to participants are significant and the continued addition of participant data helps refine the program and further demonstrate its value to older adults. Please contact Jan Montague, Executive Director San Clemente Village, janm@scvillage.org if you are interested.

Statewide Coffee Chat #2 Report

The second statewide coffee chat drew 30 people from 20 villages. Participants enjoyed a lively discussion in breakout rooms. Village Movement California's conference planners are drawing upon the positive experience callers reported during both coffee chats and scheduling breakout rooms during each of the four upcoming conference sessions.

Upcoming Events

Village Movement California's 2020 Statewide Conference Series: Innovation Can't Wait

Innovation can't wait – it demands to be created now. The COVID-19 era insists that the village movement embrace innovation to succeed. In lieu of a face-to-face convening, we're launching a statewide **Innovation Can't Wait Series**: **June 24, July 8, July 22, and August 5, from 2:00pm – 3:30pm on Zoom.**

Each session will feature presentations and discussion.

- June 24: Building and Strengthening Community featuring Dr. Patrick Arbore, Founder and Director of the Friendship Line
- July 8: Marketing and Membership featuring Tricia Smith, Executive Director of Sausalito Village, speaking about the 5 steps of strategic partnership
- July 22: The Intergenerational Village featuring Kate Hoepke, Executive Director of San Francisco Village and Chair of Village Movement California
- August 5: Financial Sustainability, speaker TBA

Conference Registration

- Individual Registration for $75.00
- Group Registration for up to four people for $200

- Additional group members (more than four) can register for $50 each

One registration covers all four sessions.
Register **here**

Conference Sponsors

We are pleased to announce these sponsors:
Partner: AARP California
Champion:

- Able Access
- ATI Advisory
- MyNurse.ai

Please contact charlotte@villagemovementcalifornia.org with questions.

Weekly AARP Tele-Townhall Calls continue with helpful information during COVID-19. Calls take place every Thursday. Find detailed information and topics **HERE**.

Special COVID-19 Resources

FCC's Lifeline Program Offers Discounts for Phone and Broadband Service

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Lifeline program provides monthly discounts on phone and broadband service to qualifying low-income consumers. For more information and how to apply, please click **here**.

Many fixed (landline) Lifeline carriers already offer unlimited local and toll-free calling to their subscribers.

To find Lifeline carriers in your area, please visit **this webpage**.

Ask the Expert

A daily COVID-19 feature on the San Francisco Bay Area all-news radio station, KCBS, each Q&A session has a pandemic-related subject and compiles listener questions into a 20-minute discussion with a subject matter expert. All discussions are available in recorded and transcribed formats **here**.

A recent program featured yet another enlightening discussion about the science behind

face masks and why we should wear them.

All newsletters are archived here

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