



Carol Haig, Editor

A publication of [Village Movement California](https://www.villagemovementcalifornia.org/)

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## 2020 – The Year That Was

We are glad to see the back of 2020 and look forward to a more agreeable 2021. That said, we have learned so much about our own capabilities and creativity. Let's use our newfound strengths to propel us forward toward a bright future for all our villages.

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## From the Executive Director



At the beginning of 2020, Village Movement California set a strategic direction and a series of goals. Here are the highlights of our accomplishments.

**Incorporation** – Village Movement California gained its 501©3 status from the IRS in September and separated its finances from San Francisco Village in October.

**California Master Plan for Aging** – Villages are included in two goals of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee's recommendations: Livability and Health & Wellness.

*Charlotte*

**Social Isolation** – The Covid 19 pandemic amplified villages' purpose to address the epidemic of social isolation and loneliness. We supported this effort with:

- **Statewide Zoom calls and a conference** – VMC hosted eight statewide zoom calls and a four-session conference attended by 350 village leaders
- **A member recruitment video** produced in October 2020 that aims to boost villages' marketing efforts and connect more older adults to village communities
- **[The Rupe Foundation](#)** grant of \$50,000 to develop villages' capacity to support:
  - Family caregivers, a population at high risk of isolation
  - VMC's capacity to seed and support new villages

**Diversity Equity & Inclusion** – [NextFifty Initiative](#) awarded a \$25,000 grant to support VMC's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work in 2021

### Healthcare Partnership

- **Strategic Plan** – VMC contracted with [ATI Advisory](#) to build a strategic plan for entering the healthcare payment and delivery system
- **[Mynurse.ai](#)** – VMC is exploring a co-branded partnership with this tech-based healthcare company

### Communications

- **Newsletter & Eblasts** – the newsletter was distributed monthly from January to December (11 issues)
- **YouTube** – *Join the Village Movement* video views – 1,189 (as of 12.4.20)
- **Website** - We added content this year, in particular a COVID-19 page and a Diversity Equity and Inclusion page. Both contain links to videos, articles, and websites to support villages work in these important areas. We moved the *E-News Archive* to the home page.

Despite the persistent constraints of our pandemic-dominated world, villages continue to innovate, adjust, and sustain themselves in creative ways. We salute you and all your efforts!

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## Diversity Equity & Inclusion: New Grant From Next 50 Initiative



We are thrilled to announce that [NextFifty Initiative](#) is funding Village Movement California to expand our capacity to engage California's older adults with diverse identities. These include, but are not limited to race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical ability, income, and education. Scaling our movement requires us to enlarge our constituency. This entails work that is both internal and external to our organization.

Our internal work has two parts. *Part 1* is to educate our Board members and statewide village leaders about structural racism and the forms of oppression that impact the experience of aging. We will enlist expert consultants to guide us, selected leaders will attend an intensive training program, and we will host quarterly Zoom calls for our entire membership.

*Part 2* is to create a strategic plan to build a truly inclusive movement. Two likely components of the plan are:

- A blueprint for building new villages led by older adults of diverse identities
- Methods villages can use to rebuild their culture to be relevant to a more diverse constituency

Our external work is intentional outreach and relationship building with organizations that serve older adults not currently involved with villages. We will ask questions like:

- What do your constituents need to live independently in the places they call home?
- How might the village movement support you to support them?
- Does your community have a village-like model of care?
- How might we join forces to leverage greater financial support for our models of mutual care, support, and services?

Since the beginning of the movement, village membership has been predominantly composed of White, heterosexual, professional older adults. We've been questioned about that, and we've responded by trying to become more diverse. We haven't done so well. The grant from NextFifty will support the internal and external work we need to do to fulfill our vision: *A society where all stages of life offer meaningful opportunities for growth, connection, and joy; where people of all backgrounds and economic means can age with dignity, purpose, and self-determination.*

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## We Need Each Other – Fall Appeal

Village Movement California is the engine for villages across California. Our successes in 2020 ensure that villages will move towards growth, deeper impact, and greater sustainability in 2021. Villages need Village Movement California, and we need you.



Our first Fall Appeal is underway. While we could be concerned that our statewide appeal conflicts with your village appeals, we believe that they are complimentary. We seek to strengthen the movement at the local and statewide levels to make our lifegiving model of care available to thousands of older adults – those currently engaged in villages, and those who haven't yet found us.

Thank you to those who have generously donated money to the Fall Appeal. We are especially appreciative of the Villages of San Mateo County which made an organizational gift of \$2000. We encourage more villages to do the same.

*"We are grateful for the leadership of Village Movement California, and the greater exposure our statewide organization gives us. We look forward to continuing to receive the benefits of membership in 2021."*

*Scott McMullin, President, Villages of San Mateo County*

Here's Charlotte's [video](#), and here's the donation [link](#).

### Thank you to:

Andra Carol Haig  
Lichtenstein  
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Pat Brown  
Scott McMullin  
Steve Lustig  
Sue Kujawa  
Tauria Linala

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*Note: Contributions as of December 7, 2020*



## Advocacy Day

Village Movement California joined the [California Collaborative for Long Term Services and Supports](#) (the Collaborative) in 2019 to bring villages into the statewide aging services continuum. The Collaborative is a coalition of 60+ organizations that exchange information and work toward consensus on the design of an integrated system of long term services and supports in California. The Collaborative also serves as a sounding board for the State Legislature and the administration as they consider changes in services for seniors and persons with disabilities.

Every year, the Collaborative hosts an advocacy day to educate state legislators about policies impacting Collaborative members' constituents. This year's priority policies centered on the Master Plan for Aging's recommendations for reforming the long term services and supports system, and for advancing a long term care financing plan for all Californians.

Charlotte Dickson joined three Bay Area agencies to meet with Senator Wieckowski's (District 10), legislative aide, Tim Orozco. Wendy Peterson and Kweli Kitwana of the Alameda County Senior Services Coalition, Katherine Kelly of On Lok, and Sheri Burns of the Silicon Valley Independent Living Center spoke with Tim last month.



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# Senior Medicare Patrol Update



Thanks to Carol Hanson Grey, Clayton Valley Village Executive Director, and Wayne April, Pasadena Village for stepping up to become Village Movement California's liaisons to the [Senior Medicare Patrol](#) Ambassador Program. They will get a heads-up about fraud and scams as they are revealed so that we can alert our village constituents. They will also receive training and up-to-date educational materials.

Carol Grey plans to use her training to provide workshops to organizations and leaders in Concord, CA, thereby increasing her villages' value to the community and opening recruitment channels. Please email Carol at [carolgrey@claytonvalleyvillage.org](mailto:carolgrey@claytonvalleyvillage.org), or Wayne at [wayneapril51@yahoo.com](mailto:wayneapril51@yahoo.com) if you'd like to join the SMP Ambassador Program.

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## Tales From the Village

### Members Helping Members: Intentional Caring Groups

By Carol Haig, Editor



The oldest member of Palos Verdes Peninsula Village is a 100-year-old woman. Until last year, her 80-year-old daughter lived with her providing extra help and companionship. The daughter suddenly passed away, leaving her mother grieving and isolated. With only her two grandsons checking in on her, how was Palos Verdes Peninsula Village going to make a difference?

This village has 100 members, several of whom are frail elders who participate in village life in limited ways. With a small staff it has been challenging for Marianne Propst, the village's Executive Director, to regularly check on these members to make sure they are getting the support and connections they need.

#### Support for Frail Elders: The Prototype

Marianne wanted to be sure this member was supported by the Palos Verdes Peninsula Village and used this as an opportunity to develop a model for more *intentional* connections. After asking the member if this would be helpful to her, the first *Intentional Caring Group* was formed.

Not to be confused with a *Caregiver Support Group*, the *Intentional Caring Group*, in the case of this member, consists of three village members and one volunteer. Each person takes one week of the month in which they have one visit with the member, spending time primarily as a companion and new friend. If needed, medicine pick-ups and other errands are taken care of by the Group member whose week it is.

Before COVID, visits took place at this member's home and were welcomed by the both the member and the Group volunteers. Now the visits are by phone and still greatly valued by everyone in the Group.

This first *Intentional Caring Group* became the prototype for a structured yet casual process that is easy for Marianne to monitor and serves participating villagers well. One Group member is now the official coordinator of this group, ensuring that all visits are taking place as scheduled and that communication among the group members takes place.

## **And So it Grows**

From this modest beginning, the *Intentional Caring Group* program has grown to support another member, age 90 and very independent, who grew sad and depressed with the isolation imposed by COVID. When offered this program, she accepted and now has her own group of four non-member volunteers. They visit by phone and safely in person, and one volunteer has even come to garden with the member while another coordinates the Group.

Currently, a third *Intentional Caring Group* is forming to support a member who is gradually becoming more isolated. A fourth village member has a caregiver and is a candidate for her own Group as she is needing more social interaction.

## **Program Benefits**

With a structure that encourages both village members and volunteers to step up for a member in need without a huge time commitment, participating members see the same Group members regularly. Genuine friendships are formed that benefit everyone involved.

The program provides yet another way for village members to help each other and expand their own social connections. It is also a way to pull in new volunteers who would prefer this type of service over fulfilling service requests such as transportation and handyman help. And the Executive Director has a program that is easy to form and administer, serving what is sure to be an increasing need in our communities.

Interested in exploring an *Intentional Caring Group* for a member at your village? Marianne Propst is happy to share information. Reach her at: [www.peninsulavillage.net](http://www.peninsulavillage.net).

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# **ELDER ACTION? It Takes A Village**

By Rochelle Lefkowitz, Co-Chair, ELDER ACTION/Ashby Village

Last month, 75% of California voters 65 and older turned out to vote early (1). We were the highest percentage among registered voters! Yet much of what matters most to us wasn't on the ballot. How can we help change that?



Left to age without dignity, community and joy, we got together, tapped our networks and know-how, and formed our villages. Now dozens of villages strong, we've forged a



statewide network. This year, we pivoted to safely guide our members through a pandemic.

Some of us took our passion for social justice to start ELDER ACTION. From a spirited exchange between two Ashby Village Board Members in 2018, it quickly grew into an active, 80-plus member Ashby Village social justice interest group (2). ELDER ACTION has enabled our Village to offer the kind of civic education and engagement that gave us the strength and support to weather ELECTION 2020 amid kindred spirits.

As part of a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, we can't support candidates or political parties. So, during this election cycle, ELDER ACTION educated our Village on key ballot measures, registered voters, helped get out the vote, and explained new voting procedures. Plus we began to reach out to our elected officials to weigh in on key issues, including systemic racism.

Starting in 2018, ELDER ACTION's Prop 15 Task Force joined a broad, diverse, statewide campaign to amend Prop 13. It would have protected older residents, small business owners and agricultural landowners from property tax hikes while getting major California corporations to pay their fair share of property taxes. This would've increased our state's public school and local service funds by \$12 billion/year.

What did ELDER ACTION do? We gathered over 4,000 signatures to help re-qualify Prop 15 for the 2020 ballot. After training, we spoke with small groups. We called, texted and wrote registered voters, especially our peers, targets of extensive, expensive "scare mail." Prop 15 failed. Most "No" voters were older voters. We plan to use what we learned to further equip ourselves to defuse disinformation.

A plan for state-funded, long-term care is gaining traction in Sacramento thanks to ELDER ACTION's help to shape our state's Master Plan on Aging. Our Task Force began encouraging Village members to see how likely we are to need Long-Term Services and Support (LTSS). We lobbied our state representatives and were part of a delegation that met with the Stakeholders Advisory Committee. The result? Universal LTSS is the first of more than 700 recommendations the Committee presented to Gov. Newsom. We'll continue our work once there's a legislative initiative.

What's next for ELDER ACTION? We plan to continue to make older adults' concerns a key part of larger social change agendas. To defend and expand past gains, we're forging partnerships with local groups, from the [Gray Panthers](#) and the [League of Women Voters](#)/BAE (Berkeley, Albany & El Cerrito), to [CARA](#) (California Alliance for Retired Americans) and [CADA](#) (California Aging & Disability Alliance).

We've also been approached to explore three new initiatives: a joint, multigenerational effort with San Francisco Village on climate change; a Task Force on racial justice in the East Bay; and a campaign to save a local hospital from closing.

ELDER ACTION General Meetings are the third Tuesday of the month, from 2:00-4:00pm. The next ones are December 15 and January 19. You're welcome to attend! For the Zoom coordinates, please email us at [elderactionnow@gmail.com](mailto:elderactionnow@gmail.com).

We hope you'll be moved to start an ELDER ACTION interest group in your Village! Please let us know if you do. We look forward to hearing from you—and to working together!

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(1) Zachary Fletcher, Cal Matters, 11.2.20.

(2) For a copy of the Ashby Village ELDER ACTION Concept Paper and Achievement Lists, please email [elderactionnow@gmail.com](mailto:elderactionnow@gmail.com).

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## Village Request



San Clemente Village is preparing for new Shelter in Place orders, and is looking for transportation options. Specifically, the staff want to know if any villages use *Go Go Grandparent*. Please contact Jan Montague, Executive Director,

directly. [janm@scvillage.org](mailto:janm@scvillage.org)

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## Upcoming Events



### Statewide Zoom Call: Villages and CA's Renewed Shelter In Place Order

Thursday, December 10, 11:00am – 12:00pm

On December 3, Governor Newsom announced imminent Shelter in Place orders for five regions of the State. How is your village taking this news? What questions are you and your leadership taking up? What are you communicating to your members and volunteers? This call will provide an opportunity for member villages to share questions and concerns. Register [here](#).



**Weekly AARP Tele-Townhall Calls** continue with helpful information during COVID-19. Calls take place every Thursday. Find detailed information and topics [here](#).



### Equity in Aging Webinar Series

January 6, 2021 – July 2021, Every 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday, 10:00am – 11:00am

Monthly peer-led webinars will feature national, state, and local leaders exploring how we can help make our communities more just and build a California for *all* Ages. Sponsored by the California Department of Aging.



Join us for the next webinar: ***The Culture of LGBTQ Older Adults***, January 6, 10:00am – 11:00a.m. Register for the webinar [here](#).



## Villages and Family Caregiving Webinar Series

All sessions will run from 10:00am – 11:00am

- Jan 21 – Family Caregiver Challenges and Opportunities – Dr. Donna Benton, USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology

Register [here](#)

- Feb 18 – The Pasadena Caregiver Support Group – Esther Gillies and Monica Hubbard, Pasadena Village Caregiver Support Group
- March 19 – Caregiving for a Loved One with Dementia – Wayne April, Pasadena Village, Alzheimer's Assn (TBD)
- April 21 – Caregiving and Couples – Barbara Kivowitz, San Francisco Village



## Statewide Zoom call The Intergenerational Village

- Jan 14 11:00 am – 12:00 pm – Kate Hoepke

A number of villages are working on intergenerational programming. Kate Hopke will lead a networking call for those interested. We will share information, questions, concerns, and plans for building and

expanding intergenerational components of the village. Register [here](#).

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## Special COVID-19 Resources

### Ask an 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](#).



### Risk Assessment

Assess your risk of catching COVID-19 indoors with this app developed by the Warren Alpert Medical School at Brown University:

<https://mycovidrisk.app>

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*Correction –In our October issue, the Alfred N. Rupe Foundation was mistakenly identified. The correct name is the Arthur N. Rupe Foundation.*

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All newsletters are archived [HERE](#)

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