



# AGING. BETTER.



Carol Haig, Editor

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February 2022

## Black History Month

Black History Month provides an opportunity to learn about African American achievements and their central role in American history. This year's theme is *Black Health and Wellness*. Take this opportunity to explore the African diaspora and learn something new about Black healing practices and practitioners. Check out the [National African American History Museum's Black History Month page](#).

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## From the Executive Director

Last weekend I found myself walking by the Hotel Oakland Village en route to the Oakland Museum of California. I was going to see the museum's annual Lunar New Year celebration and their groundbreaking exhibit on Afrofuturism.

Passing the Hotel Oakland Village and my visit to the Museum tied together two important communities in the

*Charlotte*

Bay Area—Asian and African American—with my work as the Executive Director of Village Movement California. I felt grateful for the contributions of Asians and African

Americans to the shape of culture and politics here. I reflected on the many cultural experiences of aging being lived by older adults of Asian and African heritage, and how they enrich the Village Movement.



We featured an article and promoted a video about [Hotel Oakland Village](#) in our February 2020 newsletter. The village was all set to host a meeting of BRAVO, the Northern California villages, in the Spring of 2020 when COVID restrictions were announced and the meeting postponed. I hope to reschedule so that we can visit this village's unique setting and learn about its values and services.

Also related to meeting in person: we have decided to hold the Village Movement California Annual Conference virtually this summer. It seems that we should save our in-person reunion for a time when COVID-19 is truly endemic and gathering will be a joy rather than a risky proposition. Your stories about your villages' openings and closings influenced our decision to go virtual again this year. We will announce the dates in March.

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## Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: Black History Month

By Charlotte Dickson



Black History Month is one of my favorite times of the year. I am a “history nerd” with a particular interest in Southern and Colonial U.S. history. I take advantage of the many movies, public television, radio shows, and writings aired and published in February to learn more about the people who came before, our Country's origin stories, and my family's history. If you haven't dipped into the rich educational and artistic offerings, I encourage you to go ahead!

Last week, I spent an afternoon at the Oakland Museum of California (OMCA)'s exhibit, [Mothership: Voyage into Afrofuturism](#). It features multi-media installations covering “...the past, present, and future reimagined through a Black cultural lens. Visionary, spiritual, and generative, it is art, music, literature, and cinema that expresses a just future where Black people and Black ideas thrive.”

This future focus was revelatory for me. I have spent a lot of time and energy learning about the past so I can be effective in the here and now. I believe the current reckoning

with the truth of U.S. history is long overdue. This exhibit felt like a next step in my personal journey towards racial justice. It offered a new perspective to me, one that stands on the constraints of history and our current systems but focuses on what can be different in the future.

The exhibit asks: What do Black people want for themselves and the world? What are they imagining and bringing into the present? It evoked my own questions: How do I see Black people in my future? How do I treasure Black humanity, Black joy, Black imagination? How can I support new ways of building community and society? I was jolted in a positive way!

I admit I did not understand half of what I took in. I know that experiencing *Mothership* energized my heart and mind, and that I will bring that energy to the work at Village Movement California. We are joining with Sistahs Aging with Grace and Elegance to explore a Black woman-focused village. I can't wait to see how this exhibit influences how I work with them. I will read *The Parable of the Sower* by Octavia Butler, one of the mothers of Afrofuturism who occupies a center place in the exhibit. It's been sitting on my shelf for years now. It's time. Want to join me?

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## Tales From the Village

### Conejo Valley Village Wins Grant from City of Thousand Oaks

By Carol Haig, Editor



[Conejo Valley Village](#) has received a generous one-time grant for Non-Profits Supporting Social Services in the Conejo Valley from the City of Thousand Oaks. Congratulations!

Grants come in all sizes in a range of organizations—from local governments to foundations and local employers. They are a valuable source of funding for villages, helping to power critical initiatives and programs.

Valarie Fitch, Board Chair of Conejo Valley Village, graciously shared the details of her village's success in hopes that other villages can benefit from this information.

### Grant Requirements

Most grantors want to know, in some detail, how the village serves residents. The City of Thousand Oaks asked:

- How does your organization directly provide a social service?
- What is the community's need for your unique services?
- What underserved population do you help: low-income, special needs, youth, seniors, etc.?
- How long has your organization been serving the community?
- Include data to support your responses.

These requirements make clear that the grantor is interested in the services the applicant provides that no one else offers and that demonstrative data is critical to winning the grant.

## Application Evaluation Criteria

Grant applications are likely to have evaluation criteria like these:

- Demonstrates social services benefits to Thousand Oaks residents
- Shows the community's need for your organization's services—if another entity provides the same ones, explains the need for duplication
- Describes the unique services your organization provides
- Documents your organization's history of providing social services to Thousand Oaks residents
- Explains your organization's financial need for these funds to better serve Thousand Oaks residents

Like *Grant Requirements*, the *Evaluation Criteria* emphasizes the applicant organization's unique services provided to underserved local residents.

## Required Use of Grant Funds and Accounting

Grantors want to know how you allocated their money and what benefits to the community were realized. Some will have specific requirements for their funds. All grantors will require a report, with documentation, on how their money was spent. Here's what the City of Thousand Oaks asked Conejo Valley Village:

- Did you use the funds as specified in the agreement with the City of Thousand Oaks?
- How many Thousand Oaks residents did this grant benefit?
- How many low-income households were served?
- How did this grant benefit the Thousand Oaks community?
- How did this grant benefit your organization?

## What Your Village Can Do

Has your village applied for a grant in the past? Were you successful in winning it? If you haven't explored grants for your village, we encourage you to research the



opportunities in your area. Consider your local government, your partner agencies, other organizations that serve older adults, past funders, prospective funders, large local employers.

Since good data is critical for winning a grant, review the information you currently collect and any additional information you'd like to track. Then identify gaps and expand or enhance your systems to make them more responsive to your data collection needs. Good data pays off.

Contact Valarie Fitch, [valariefitch@gmail.com](mailto:valariefitch@gmail.com) for more information.

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## What if AARP Joined the Climate Fight?

By Bill Haskell, San Francisco Village



Are you a member of AARP? Did you know that AARP has 38 million members across the US and is a potentially powerful body that could impact significant governmental action on climate change?

AARP membership represents about 17% of the voting public across all partisan divides, and it has the political clout to elevate the climate crisis above politics and break the Congressional logjam on needed action. Critical to making that happen is getting a lot more AARP members to raise their voices, asking the organization to get involved, and volunteering to help. Please read the petition and sign:

<https://Petition2AARP.org/open>.

After you sign, you will be given an opportunity to send an email with a personal invitation to others you know who may be AARP members, asking them to add their names to the **Climate Petition** at the link above. If you have any other ideas about how to spread the word through your own or other networks, let us know at

[support@petition2AARP.org](mailto:support@petition2AARP.org). Together our generation can help assure a livable future for our children and grandchildren.

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## February Executive Director Reflections: Random Acts of Kindness

By Caroline Gangji, Executive Director, [The Village Common of Rhode Island](#)

## Aging Better Together

Did you know that Random Acts of Kindness Day is February 17? How about we all try and do a random act of kindness *every day for one week* in February, starting on Thursday, February 17th?

Maybe that sounds daunting but imagine being the stranger who receives this unexpected kindness. What a wonderful gift for them! Random acts of kindness can range from complimenting a stranger or holding the door for someone all the way to donating old blankets to an animal shelter or baking cookies for your neighbor.

We would love to hear what you did for your random acts of kindness. Send them to Carol Haig, Village Movement California newsletter editor, [carolhaig@earthlink.net](mailto:carolhaig@earthlink.net), and we'll include some of them in our March issue. Please join us on this journey of kindness and let's spread it throughout our villages and beyond!

By Charlotte Dickson



As the Master Plan for Aging is implemented, Village Movement California is in communication with our stakeholders in the California legislature and the aging services system.

Part of the work we're doing is helping our stakeholders better understand what our villages provide. Examples of the kinds of support members experience through village volunteers and staff will help clarify the value of villages to communities in California.

Please ask your members and volunteers to tell us, in their own words, how the village helped a member:

- Stay in their home longer than expected
- Find a needed service
- Stay connected and mentally healthy during COVID-19
- Improve their quality of life

Brief is better—one paragraph or less, please. Send anecdotes to [charlotte@villagemovementcalifornia.org](mailto:charlotte@villagemovementcalifornia.org).

## Upcoming Events



### What Does it Mean to Live in the Most Age-Diverse Society in History?

February 24, 1:00 – 2:00pm

Join Marc Freedman — [Encore.org](https://encore.org) CEO, boomer, and author of *How to Live Forever: The Enduring Power of Connecting the Generations* — and Sasha Johfre, PhD candidate in sociology at Stanford, millennial, and author of an important new paper on intergenerational relationships. They will discuss what it means to live in a radically age-diverse world.

Register [here](#).



### Village Movement California Annual Conference

Dates to be announced next month

To be held virtually. Details to come.

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## COVID-19 Information & 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](#).

A recent offering was: [When is it Really the Right Time to Remove Our Masks?](#) with Dr. Kim Prather, Director of the NSF Center for Aerosol Impacts on Chemistry of the Environment at the University of California, San Diego,

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# Notices

Have an upcoming event you'd like to open to other villages? Send the information to the newsletter editor: [carolhaig@earthlink.net](mailto:carolhaig@earthlink.net)

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