



Happy Holidays!

Yes, the year flew by and here we are in the flurry of holiday preparations and end-of-year tasks. We wish all our California Villages the happiest and safest of celebrations!

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From the Executive Director



Charlotte

Recently, I was caught up in an attempted financial scam. It started with a call from a fraudulent tech support person who hacked into the anti-virus software I use and called me in response to questions I posed on the software’s online chat feature. It ended when he asked me to provide a routing number for a bank account and my inner “alarm bell” finally rang. I hung up. We had talked for 45 minutes, and I had allowed him to access my computer remotely. While remote access is a common practice for tech support personnel, this

person was exploiting my need for help.

When I reflected on the call, I recalled that small questions and quiet feelings of discomfort had arisen. It wasn’t until he offered the refund through my bank

account, not a credit card, that I realized “I’m being scammed!” After I hung up, I called a trusted colleague for advice. I then called my bank and my credit card companies to stop all payments and changed all my important passwords. I contacted the software company to alert them to the situation. The adrenaline didn’t subside for several hours.

I realized that an educated, professional, younger elder (I am 64) who is fairly well versed in Medicare Fraud can easily succumb to a scam. I learned two steps to prevent becoming a victim:

- Pay attention to uncomfortable feelings and questions and end a call as soon as they arise
- Never share bank account information

I learned four steps to take immediately following suspected fraud:

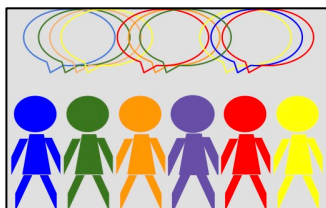
- Call someone you trust to calm your nervous system and make an action plan
- Notify all your financial institutions
- Change all affected passwords
- Do not let yourself fall into shame

I’m angry about the attempted scam I experienced. I am even angrier about the proliferation of fraudulent schemes on older adults. I learned that we all must stay hyper-aware of our vulnerabilities and use our village infrastructure to build fraud prevention resiliency among our members and volunteers.

And now for some good news: [California Health Advocates](#) is a new funder of our work to prevent and report Medicare Fraud. Village Movement California is channeling this funding to three rural villages--Sonoma Valley, Kern Valley, and Redwood Coast--to build the capacity of communities and older adults to recognize, prevent, and report fraud. Read our monthly *Medicare Fraud Prevention* newsletter column, below, so you can pass along information to your members and volunteers.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

By Charlotte Dickson



Recent articles in the New York Times and the Washington Post signal the growing demand among diverse older adults for community, volunteerism, supports, and information to guide their aging journey.

The first is from the Washington Post: [‘Villages’ for the aging coming to more Black communities](#). The article highlights the very successful Kingdom Come Village based at

an African American church in Washington, D.C. Village Movement California is working hard to build on the strengths of African American older adults with projects in Stockton, San Francisco, Pasadena, and Los Angeles. We are proud of our partnerships with Stockton's [Victory in Praise Church](#) and with [Sistahs Aging with Grace and Elegance](#), and with our member villages that are partnering with Black leaders.

The second is from the New York Times: [As Gen X and Boomers Age, They Confront Living Alone](#). This demographic shift is an opportunity for villages to expand their membership and volunteer corps. Since I started with Village Movement California in 2018, I've witnessed several villages build a *Solo Agers* program to explore the desires and needs of older adults who don't have partners or children to lean on. Their members understand that they are each other's companions and caregivers. Family composition is a dimension of diversity we can listen for when we are learning about our prospective members and volunteers and designing programs with them.

2022 Village Movement California Accomplishments in Review

By Charlotte Dickson



Village Movement California continued its successful journey from start-up coalition to the engine of California's village movement in 2022. Previous, successful advocacy for inclusion of villages in the Governor's Master Plan for Aging remains our steppingstone to government investment and a position within the aging services network. 2022 was focused on building the infrastructure to fulfill the Master Plan for Aging's village initiative, and to continue serving our members through communications, workshops, and coaching.

Footprint

Forty-six villages in 19 counties engage more than 10,000 members, volunteers, family members, and caregivers.

Growth

Statewide, village membership grew by 4.4% from late 2019 to late 2021.

Three villages are forming – Kern Valley, Sebastopol, Sonoma Valley.

Three communities are actively exploring village formation – Long Beach, Sacramento, Stockton.

Village Movement California staff expanded with the hiring of Carolyn Ross, Director of Strategic Development.

Impact

The Village Movement California Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Training Institute opened with 19 leaders from 9 villages. Participants are learning how to lead conversations within their villages about race and racism. These new skills, and the resulting conversations, will help villages engage communities that aren't yet involved.

Our fourth annual convening drew 100 participants and five sponsor organizations. The Director of the California Department of Aging, Susan DeMarois, opened the convening and encouraged the Village Movement to continue advocating for resources.

California Health Advocates and Village Movement California signed a funding agreement that sends \$60,000 to rural villages to build partnerships and provide communications and workshops to prevent and report Medicare Fraud.

Sustainability

A \$3 million budget proposal was submitted to the California legislature for the 2022 – 2023 budget to fulfill the village initiative of the Master Plan for Aging. It garnered Assembly and Senate support, and support from key statewide aging organizations. Although funding was not secured, the attempt lays the groundwork for a 2023 – 2024 budget request.

Village Movement California added two new funders, The Picerne Family Foundation and the May and Stanley Smith Charitable Trust. This funding supports our work to grow, deepen impact, and ensure sustainability of our movement.

I encourage you to invite me to an upcoming Board meeting to share in more detail and to answer questions you may have. Download this [one page summary](#) of accomplishments and share them with your leaders.

Request for Information - COVID-19 Policies for Your Village?



As COVID-19 continues to develop new variants, and guidelines from health authorities change, it is challenging to determine how best to keep village members and volunteers safe. Ashby Village would appreciate knowing what COVID-19 protocols other villages are currently requiring.

- What are your safety requirements for members and volunteers for in-home services?
- What about in-person events held indoors? Outdoors?
- Are you considering making changes to your guidelines in February 2023 when Governor Newsom says he will end the COVID-19 State of Emergency [protocols](#)?

Please respond to Bab Freiberg at bab@ashbyvillage.org

National Family Caregivers' Month



President Biden proclaimed November *Family Caregivers' Month*. Since this newsletter covers November-December we think it appropriate to highlight the critical importance of caregiving in all our lives and share helpful resources for now and the coming new year.

As the President said, "The truth is, at some point in our lives, each of us will likely need to be a family caregiver..." His statement is very much in line with this year's theme: #CaregivingHappens, and it often happens at unexpected and inconvenient times. You might get a call from a family member or a friend asking you to spend a day or a few hours taking care of someone who needs help or you may suddenly find yourself the main caregiver for your parent, spouse, or partner.

The [Caregiver Action Network](#) chooses how to present this important event every year and provides resources and information for caregivers and their families and friends. You can find out more [here](#), and read President Biden's full proclamation [here](#).

Village Movement California has valuable caregiving resources on our website [here](#). They include:

- Our caregiving workshop series
- Support Group Toolkit
- A list of organizations that can help

The Missing Middle Update



The [October newsletter](#) included an article about research on California's *Missing Middle*, older adults whose incomes range from \$25,000 to \$101,000 annually. The researchers recently published the list below to describe this population and its challenges. This is a good summary of the circumstances shared by many of our village members and

volunteers. Village Movement California is using this research to craft our messages and programs. California is estimated to have 1.6 million middle-income seniors aged 75 and above in 2033

- Between 2018 and 2033, the number of middle-income seniors aged 85 and above is expected to double
- California will be more diverse in 2033, with nearly half the middle-income senior population (47 percent) being people of color
- A majority of California's middle-income seniors will have mobility limitations and three or more chronic conditions
- Without selling their homes, 89 percent of California's middle-income seniors will not be able to afford assisted living rent. The full article is [here](#).

Follow-up Materials for Meeting with Your State Legislator

By Charlotte Dickson



Our recent workshop, *On the Road to State Funding for Villages: Tips for Meeting with Your State Legislators* was packed with information to help village leaders reach out to their representatives and invite them to learn about villages and our part in the California Master Plan for Aging.

Here are links to materials and resources you can use to make the all-important connection to your state legislator as well as your city council members, supervisors, or Federal legislators:

- The workshop recording is [here](#)
- The slides are [here](#)
- A comprehensive guide to meeting with your legislator is [here](#)
- The *Village Brand Toolkit Message Recommendations* is [here](#)
- The *Village Movement California Fact Sheet* is [here](#)

An excellent strategy that came up during the workshop is to attend events that your legislator is holding or community events where your legislator will be speaking. Many legislators hold parties, receptions, and open houses during the holidays. Check your legislator's website for events. Then find members and village leaders who like this sort of thing and equip them to talk about your village.

Elections are over, the holidays are here, and it is the perfect time to request to meet with your legislator before the end of the year.

Need more help? Contact Charlotte: charlottedickson@villagemovementcalifornia.org

Medicare Fraud Prevention

By Charlotte Dickson



California Senior Medicare Patrol and the Center for Medicare Advocacy co-hosted the webinar "*Medicare Advantage Overview & Concerns*". The presenters outlined differences between Traditional Medicare and Medicare Advantage. The recording is available [here](#).

Redwood Coast Village recently mailed this one-page [Medicare Fraud Alert](#) to their supporters as part of their annual solicitation. It is co-branded with Senior Medicare Patrol, designed by a graphic artist in Humboldt County.

Are you interested in distributing a customized version to your village community? If so, Village Movement California's SMP funding is available to support the design and printing of a flier for your village. Please let us know by **January 5, 2023** by completing this [request form](#).

How to Get the Most Out of Your Doctor's Visit

By Carol Haig, Editor



Think about the last visit you had with your doctor. Did you get the information you needed? Did you feel heard? Were your questions answered? Did you leave with confidence that your needs were met? If your answers are no to any of these questions, you are not alone. Most doctors are limited in the amount of time they can spend with patients and many of us leave these visits feeling rushed and sometimes confused.

The [National Institute on Aging](#), part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), has thoughtfully assembled a list of actions you can take to maximize your doctor visit:

- Decide what questions are most important to ask
- Stay focused on why you are there
- Be honest with your doctor
- Share your point of view about the visit with your doctor
- Remember, the doctor may not be able to answer all your questions
- Four tips to help you remember the doctor's instructions

See the complete article [here](#).

RSV, Flu, and COVID-19 Impacts on Older Adults



The California Department of Aging recently presented a briefing on current information about RSV, Flu, and COVID-19. Most of the information was on COVID-19 and all of it was about older adults. Dr. Tomás Aragón, Director of the California Department of Public Health, shared valuable data about the virus in California.

The session was 30 minutes long. You can watch it and access the recommended resources as follows:

- The Outreach Toolkit is [here](#)
- The recording is on Facebook [here](#) and on YouTube [here](#)

Notices

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

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