



Patrick Shandrick & Carol Haig | A publication of [Village Movement California](#) | MAY / JUNE 2024

“Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.” – John F. Kennedy

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From Charlotte Dickson, VMC Executive Director

Dear Village Members and Colleagues,

I’ve missed you during these past seven months of medical leave and appreciate the opportunity to write this newsletter column.

I started my leave in mid-October after receiving a diagnosis of advanced ovarian cancer. I was stunned by this finding, and I quickly decided to focus entirely on treatment. I was confident that Carolyn Ross could excel in the position of Interim Executive Director and that Patrick Shandrick and the Board of Directors would work with her to carry the organization forward. This was a good decision as the chemotherapy and surgery were successful, and Village Movement California continues to thrive.

I am doing well emotionally, spiritually, and physically. I’ve been humbled by the vulnerability created by my cancer diagnosis, treatment, and recovery. I had to ask for a lot of help, and I had to give up control of many aspects of my day-to-day life and of my identity as your Executive Director. Does this sound familiar? The village movement addresses these human experiences of loss, vulnerability, and identity shift!

From Charlotte Dickson continued: One outcome of the medical leave is my decision to resign from my position of Executive Director. My priorities have shifted, and I will retire from professional employment at the end of May. It's a little earlier than I had planned, but I'm ready to let go of the responsibilities of leading a statewide movement. I heartily believe that change in leadership is good, and that the staff and Board are doing a superb job.

I am proud of all that we achieved in our years together. We built a solid, statewide organization with a powerful brand and portfolio of programs that will accelerate uptake of the village model across California. We successfully advocated for inclusion of villages in the state's Master Plan for Aging. We built relationships with powerful stakeholders crucial to implementation of the Plan's village goal: AARP California, California Association of Area Agencies on Aging, the CA Department of Aging, the CA Commission on Aging, the Alzheimer's Association, the California Collaborative for Long Term Services and Supports, Sistahs Aging with Grace and Elegance, and West Health, to name a few. I am confident that these relationships will grow and flourish.

I hope you will deepen your connections to Village Movement California. Each village and village leader has something unique and powerful to contribute to our collective, and it is through collective action that we will expand our movement to reach the thousands of older adults who need our model of care.

With sincere thanks and gratitude,

Charlotte



**From Kate Hoepke,
VMC Board Chair**

Dear VMC Members and Friends:

It is with both joy and sadness that we say goodbye to Charlotte. Joy because her treatment has been successful! She's ready for a new beginning in her life and I'm thrilled for her. Sadness because her time as leader of VMC ends. Charlotte has been an extraordinary champion for our work and I'm deeply grateful for all the ways she made our intentions manifest. She was the right person at the right time – full of passion, possibility and chutzpah.

From Kate Hoepke continued: Thanks to Charlotte, villages in California have a seat at the table in the statewide aging services network. We're known and respected by colleagues, funders and policy makers. Because of her leadership, VMC has built the nation's first Village Incubator, supporting new village development and promising to reduce start-up time. Up next is the Village Accelerator to expand village capacity in areas like strategic planning, social care navigation, and overall sustainability. The long-term goal is to demonstrate the immense value villages can deliver, thereby attracting reliable funding from government and health care sources.

Since early this year, VMC board and staff members have been developing a leadership transition plan to ensure continuity and take Charlotte's vision to the next level. We will have more to share in the weeks and months ahead. The Board of Directors thanks Carolyn Ross for wholeheartedly assuming the role of Interim Executive Director without missing a beat. It is a joy working alongside her and Patrick Shandrick, VMC Communications Manager. Together, we will navigate the changes to come.

I look forward to seeing you at the 6th Annual VMC Conference September 12 -13, taking place in La Jolla. The planning committee is hard at work lining up sponsors, speakers and workshops that will inspire you to imagine what's next for your village and the work we do together to revolutionize aging!

Grateful to be in community with you,



Tales from the **Villages**

Developing Research Capacity for Healthy Aging with Villages

Villages are designed to help people age in their communities with greater social connection and better mental and physical health. Yet research on how villages promote healthy aging is in its early stages. How can we evaluate the impact of villages? What kind of data and partnerships do we need? How can research help recognize villages as a platform for health and well-being?

A new report, "[**Developing Research Capacity for Healthy Aging with Villages**](#)" begins to address these questions.

Healthy Aging with Villages continued: The report was created by [Rutgers School of Social Work](#) in partnership with [Village to Village Network](#) and [RAND](#). Researchers present findings from a series of focus groups conducted with nearly 50 village members, officers, and professionals across the United States—including several Californian villages.

Some of the major themes that emerged were:

- A strong desire to reframe aging away from a focus on negative decline to a view that emphasizes healthy aging including being better prepared for changes associated with increasing age.
- Villages are perceived to support healthy aging in many ways, with social connectedness and preventive health services as dominant themes.
- Village members viewed healthy aging as highly dependent on the health care infrastructure, highlighting a need for villages to support connections between members and the health care system.



Village Movement California, researchers at Rutgers, and Village Ambassadors from Carquinez Village, Pasadena Village, and Westside Pacific Villages will hold a virtual summit to discuss the insights of this report and to continue the conversation on healthy aging research. **Join us at the California Virtual Summit on Villages Healthy Aging Research on Thursday, June 27, at 10AM. [Register HERE.](#)**

Connecting Across Communities: How San Francisco Village is challenging racial inequity and building a diverse membership

We are committed to the inclusion of our state’s diverse communities into our villages. This commitment led to a collaboration between Kate Hoepke, Executive Director of [San Francisco Village](#), Felisia Thibodeaux, Executive Director of [Southwest Community Corporation](#), and Carlene Davis, founder of [Sistahs Aging with Grace and Elegance](#) (SAGE). With funding from SCAN Health Plan, they launched a pilot program “Connecting Across Communities”.

Connecting Across Communities continued:

The pilot project brought San Francisco Village together with the IT Bookman Community Center in the Lakeview community, a historically Black neighborhood. Gatherings were held that were centered on sharing life stories, breaking down barriers, and exploring ways to work together to help all older adults in the city.

With each meeting, bonds and genuine connections grew between members of both communities. The Connecting Across Communities pilot has concluded, but the long-term partnership between the communities is still strong. Members of IT Bookman join San Francisco Village and explore a new side of the city. Similarly, San Francisco Village members are actively joining IT Bookman programs and invite their new friends into their social gatherings, programs, and circles. [Read more HERE.](#)



Villages in the News



It takes a Clayton Valley Village

Being in a small town has its advantages if you like a quaint neighborly lifestyle. But it also has some disadvantages, especially when it comes to amenities and the absence of government provided services.

With approximately 38% of Clayton's population over the age of 55, Clayton Valley Village was founded in 2017, committed to helping their members live independently in their own homes in Clayton for as long as possible.

[Read more HERE.](#)

Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon

NEWS FOR SAN FRANCISCO'S RICHMOND AND SUNSET DISTRICTS

Golden Gate Village Program Helps Seniors with Household Chores

It's no surprise that older people have a harder time taking care of their homes. Whether it's weeding, clearing clutter, cleaning hard-to-reach areas, flipping a mattress, seniors often don't have the strength, energy or stability to handle these chores.

That's where "One Hard Thing" comes in. One Hard Thing, a project of the Golden Gate Village, matches able-bodied volunteers with village members needing help with the difficult chores they cannot handle on their own.

[Read more HERE.](#)



Village Movement Thriving in Pasadena: Aging-in-Place older adults find community, connections

The Pasadena Village was established in 2012 and continues to grow to allow more older adults to thrive through the development of new friends, meaningful experiences and involvement in our wider community.

The organization has grown from 130 older adults, pre-pandemic, to over 180 older adults today. Villagers range in age from 65 to 99 and live in the west San Gabriel Valley and adjacent areas.

[Read more HERE.](#)

Upcoming Events

May 1 to June 30

Older Adult Social Isolation and Loneliness Awareness Campaign



A report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine shows that approximately one-quarter of Americans aged 65 and older are socially isolated, and a significant proportion report feeling lonely.

Join us for the Older Adults Social Isolation and Loneliness Awareness Campaign from May 1st to June 30th, organized by several Los Angeles County organizations, to shed light on the impact of social isolation on older adult health and well-being. Find more [information and a social media toolkit HERE](#).

Wednesday, May 29, 10AM

Area Agencies on Aging (AAA): The Cornerstone of a Future – Ready Network Webinar

Join the California Department of Aging to discuss the evolving demographics of aging populations, the fundamental programs in the Older Americans Act, and funding for sustaining aging services. [Register HERE](#).

Thursday, June 27, 10AM

California Virtual Summit on Villages Healthy Aging Research

Village Movement California, researchers at Rutgers School of Social Work, and Village Ambassadors from Carquinez Village, Pasadena Village, and Westside Pacific Villages will hold a virtual summit to discuss the insights of a new report “[Developing Research Capacity for Healthy Aging with Villages](#)” and to continue the conversation on healthy aging research. [Register HERE](#).





September 12-13

WEST HEALTH INSTITUTE
LA JOLLA, CA



6th Annual Statewide Conference

EXPANDING
THE POSSIBILITIES

Thursday-Friday, September 12-13

Our 6th Annual Statewide Village Conference: Expanding the Possibilities

The West Health Institute, 10350 N Torrey Pines Rd, La Jolla, CA 92037

- Thursday, 9/12: Program from 1:30-4:00PM, cocktail reception to follow.
- Friday, 9/13: Breakfast served, program from 9:00AM-4PM.
- Program details and conference agenda will be coming soon.

We invite you and your village to join over 100 village leaders, elected officials, sponsors, stakeholders, and researchers who all are helping to transform the experience of aging across California.

- Join a growing coalition of 10,000 engaged older adults, intergenerational volunteers, and caregivers.
- Engage in peer-to-peer learning that develops programs and opportunities to age with independence, dignity, and purpose.
- Network with colleagues and learn from thought leaders in aging.

Early-bird ticket specials and sponsorship opportunities are now available.

Thank you to our sponsors!



Does your village have an extraordinary volunteer aged 50 or older who deserves recognition?

At the heart of every village are the volunteers that help keep older adults safe, supplied, and confident about aging in the places they call home. AARP California is seeking nominations for the Andrus Award for Community Service. AARP's most prestigious volunteer tribute recognizes outstanding individuals who are sharing their experience, talents and skills to enrich the lives of others.

California's 2024 Andrus Award for Community Service recipient will be presented with the award and a \$1,000 check made out to the non-profit of their choice.

Review the eligibility guidelines and submit your online nomination [HERE](#).

The deadline for the California Andrus Awards for Community Service nominations is July 15, 2024.



[Join Village Movement CA](#)

Notices

- Have a contribution to share with other villages? Send to: patrick@villagemovementcalifornia.org.
- Articles and notices published here are also available for use in your village newsletter.

All newsletters are archived [here](#) | Follow us on social media: [Facebook](#) & [LinkedIn](#)

Our mailing address is: 3220 Fulton Street San Francisco, CA 94118

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