



FALL / WINTER
2019

ISSUE 1

BLINC

BREATHING LIFE INTO
COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY IN CRISIS...

One Year Later

**Community
Matters**

**Generosity
and Justice**

**Partnering
Serve our
Community**

**When
Community
Falls Apart**

**Events and
Resources
to Connect**

**CALIFORNIA'S
SUPERBLOOM**

Rebirth and beauty

MALIBU, WESTLAKE VILLAGE,
THOUSAND OAKS EDITION

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Image by Charlotte Glander

COMMUNITY MATTERS...

**PAY ATTENTION.
BE ASTONISHED.
TELL ABOUT IT.**

Mary Oliver



And I think, paradoxically, much of what matters in community is that which is invisible... the ripple effects of how we impact one another, anchor or destabilize one another, see one another and connect. We venture in and out of the safety of our homes and into our planned and controlled lives. Until one day we don't.

That perilous day happened for me last November. The surreal moment of driving out of my gates, following my sister and her family who had evacuated to mine earlier, with a few plastic tubs on the back seat randomly filled with an odd array of personal effects.

I had a Bridget Jones' moment when she's at her mum's turkey curry buffet (forgive me, I'm a Brit) - where one's life unexpectedly and suddenly freezes and you know a seismic shift is occurring. You vacantly move forward into the chilling uncertainty of the unknown when all you really want to do is reverse rapidly into routine. There is no way out. You pray, you hope, you call your neighbours, you call your friends ... and then you mourn. My beloved home had perished.

Life. And the breath of life. So very precious. The majestic mountains, as our constant neighbours and longest inhabitants of this land, still wear the ravages of the fire almost a year later. They remain strangely, and strongly, vulnerable. Green shoots are growing taller and their unique bright purple flowers show the hope of color; although, overall, the mountains are barren, burnt, charred, dressed in red from recent fire fighting efforts, and wearing the scars of skeleton trees.

Being a humble observer, the mountains became my teacher. My heartache for the land was also the realization that we are very much connected to it. We don't simply walk on it, plough it, and plunge into its core, we suffer along with it. As human beings, we hide our vulnerability with a tendency to shame. Google Earth now cruelly, although truthfully, exposes the violent destruction of my home with no sensibility to its devastation.

Strangely, my first gut-wrenching feeling was shame. Which is absurd and illogical. My home had become a place of protection, and a sacred space where I opened myself up within the safety and light of its walls.

COMMUNITY MATTERS...

The tearing down of that by fire exposed me. Driving out on that surreal morning, I was forced out of the comfort zone that lay behind my ficus hedge, and expelled and spat out of a community I had chosen and loved. Community, therefore, stared me in the face when I was displaced. Like some solid, very high stone wall that I couldn't see or touch. It was very real, always present and yet also temporaneous. I couldn't see this Community body, but it had a loud and clear voice. It had thousands of faces, and then it had none. The recognizable faces and friendships I had enjoyed in my previous home had dispersed into far corners of LA. The local businesses I enjoyed and who enjoyed my support had been ripped out of my life, and suddenly we were no longer part of each other's daily story. And so I thought about Community, and unifying community. What is it? What does it mean?

Philosopher and mathematician Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947) was emphatic, "there is urgency in coming to see the world as a web of interrelated processes of which we are integral parts, so that all of our choices and actions have consequences for the world around us". I recognized that community is proactive engagement, often simply a smile or a kind word. And community transcends borders and boundaries and a bad day.

It is so much bigger than our individual circumstances, and I believe through engaging in the reality and truth of our community we can come alongside and recognize the greatness and power of national and global communities. And so we expand our understanding, we courageously cross borders, we open our hearts, and we rise from the ashes.

Andrea Tennant

GENEROSITY AND JUSTICE

"Because Generosity is essential to the pursuit of Justice in Community"

I never imagined THIS could happen in my community. Violence, rooted in anger, or maybe something else. The mystery remains- how someone can hurt innocents, strangers, random or targeted. It haunts us still, a year later remembering young neighbors targeted at Borderline that fateful night.

It may seem futile; it happens over and over. Can anything be done to stop it? I believe we ought to try. We ought to challenge assumptions, and each of us "lean in" in some helpful way.

And so, with these thoughts I introduce "Generosity and Justice". Not because generosity cures injustice. Not at all. Justice requires accountability for actions, agreed to norms, and more. It's because 30+ years of community engagement I've witnessed that caring effort and sacrifice is essential to the pursuit of justice. Simply put, it takes generous spirit, in action, to "be for" the wellbeing of others.

We may never know how our generosity will impact another. The beloved film, "It's a Wonderful Life" provides the ultimate fantasy, that "George" got to see what would have happened if he hadn't been around to show caring and do his good deeds. We're not that lucky. Instead, we must trust that love's expression in tangible generosity will impart goodness; sometime and for someone.




And so, one goal of our publication, BLINC (Breathing Life Into Community), is to share stories of generosity.

Find something that speaks to you personally, and reach out to help with time, financial support and prayer. I share three local organizations, fueled by generosity, caring for troubled or disadvantaged youth/young adults.

Check out Teen Challenge, James Storehouse, and Women of Substance and Men of Honor. When you do, look a little more and discover even more terrific organizations working in our midst. And then-Join in!

Katherine Saigeon, Executive Director,
Christian Foundation of America



Christian Foundation of America

CFA's services will help you reach new levels of generosity with creative, tax smart charitable giving plans and services. Join our growing community of Donors who have created personal giving funds, called Donor Advised Funds. Learn how to unleash resources from income, retirement assets, investments and real estate. We can help you with Legacy/Estate plans that include giving to charity.

Our Donors, and the charities they support form a powerful collective of knowledge and practice. When you are a part of the CFA community you will gain access to these insights, working with charities and churches locally, regionally, and overseas. We are committed to encouraging generosity so that God's love may be expressed in care for others. Let us help you pursue your personal expression of generosity.

Helpful Links:

www.cfa.charity
www.teenchallenge.org
www.jamastorehouse.org
www.wosmoh.org



IN REMEMBRANCE OF NOVEMBER

Has it really been a year? With wounds deep and pain unbearable, our community absorbed a blow that has forever changed us.

There is no remedy, no solace, just a sun that keeps rising and setting – 365 times since the deadly and senseless Borderline shooting and the multiple infernos which devoured homes and livelihoods indiscriminately. As much as we wish it weren't so, atrocities and disasters have been a part of our existence since time immemorial. How family, friends and community respond can make an enormous difference in the aftermath.

Part of the genesis for this publication grew out of the gratitude felt by the founder towards strangers in the community who reached out and helped put her life back together after her house went up in flames. As I write this, I am sitting in Stonehaus, my favorite community watering hole. Like so many other individuals, organizations and businesses in the community, Stonehaus offered support in the best way they could.

For them, part of their support was in providing food, beverages and lodging to the FBI and first responders in those critical hours and weeks following the shooting while much of the community was under mandatory evacuation.

For countless others, their sacrifices and support began the moment the first shots were fired and continue to this day. If much has been done by this community to console the inconsolable, has it been enough? Can it ever be enough?

We invite feedback from all voices in our community – the devastated and the empathetic. We believe that just as the pain never stops, so must the conversation keep going.

We dedicate this publication to having a community dialogue, a space where we shall endeavor to post insightful input from an array of writers and welcome input from the community.

Michael Cummings

I offer some poignant words penned by Oscar Wilde after the death of his beloved sister Isola.

TREAD LIGHTLY, SHE IS
NEAR UNDER THE SNOW,
SPEAK GENTLY, SHE CAN
HEAR THE DAISIES GROW.

ALL HER BRIGHT GOLDEN HAIR
TARNISHED WITH RUST,
SHE THAT WAS YOUNG AND
FAIR FALLEN TO DUST.

LILY-LIKE, WHITE AS SNOW,
SHE HARDLY KNEW
SHE WAS A WOMAN, SO
SWEETLY SHE GREW.

COFFIN-BOARD, HEAVY
STONE, LIE ON HER BREAST,
I VEX MY HEART ALONE
SHE IS AT REST.

PEACE, PEACE, SHE CANNOT
HEAR LYRE OR SONNET,
ALL MY LIFE'S BURIED HERE,
HEAP EARTH UPON IT.

WHEN COMMUNITY FALLS APART

Fear of the unfamiliar becomes strangely absent in the midst of tragedy. Yet, this was our reality in 2018. In the midst of the tragic shooting at the Borderline restaurant that ended lives and devastated families, and the fires of Thousand Oaks and Malibu that resulted in the loss of millions of dollars in property and an overall sense of community and well-being, hundreds if not thousands turned to neighbors and even strangers for help. Seeking support, information, transportation and even lodging, those with whom we journeyed through the chaos and crisis quickly became friends. In the aftermath we turned again and again to one another to renew our sense of normalcy; to regain a solid foundation underfoot. For most, our community in spirit is no longer.

We now embrace it and "cherish" it as one does the closest of family. A year later, we are now a community in truth. And though much of it burned to the ground or felt unwelcome in the resulting haze of violence, those of us displaced physically and emotionally still return to it each day with a renewed sense of connection to the only people with whom we share the reality and memory of the past year.

But what happens when community – the essence of human connection – falls apart? What happens when the very place that brought order in the midst of disorder ceases to be a safe space to return? What happens when in the fading memories of tragedy that same community turns on

itself, begins to rip at the fragile edges of its own fabric? When the unit created by God and man falls apart, to whom and where do we turn? In the 1996 classic, *When Things Fall Apart*, bestselling author Pema Chodron responds to this exact question: "how do we live our lives when everything seems to fall apart – when we are overcome by fear, anxiety and pain?"

The answer, Chodron suggests, is summed up in the following: "Things falling apart is a kind of testing and also a kind of healing. We think the point is to pass the test or to overcome the problem, but the truth is that things don't really get solved. They come together and they fall apart. Then they come together again and fall apart again...The healing comes from letting there be room for all of this to happen: room for grief, for relief, for misery, for joy."

On October 2nd, as many prepared to honor the life and loss of Sgt. Ron Helus, the deputy killed in the Borderline mass shooting in Thousand Oaks, CA on November 7, 2018, the extraordinary reality of our weakened national fabric somehow weaved its way into the newfound composition of our own.

No longer was our community a reflection of a people finding their way back to one another, but instead the division and polarization that is pushing our citizens farther and farther apart.

A community that once prided itself on its unity is now staring at a future where the letter "D" or "R" determines whether one is welcome. How quickly we forget.

Unfortunately, this lack of solidarity is the history of our broken world. In fact, current data shows that as a society we are more divided along racial, religious and political lines than ever before. This, and today's modern chaos, formed the foundation for my interest and curiosity regarding conflict and reconciliation.

Through my work at the intersection of global conflict and the fracturing of societies, I have been privy to untold conversations and theories on conflict and conflict resolution.

And what I know without a doubt is that when conflict goes unabated, it isn't just the tightly knit fabric that is weakened, but the entire security blanket of community comes undone.

Years ago, I was given the best advice of my career and life. It was given by a mentor and longtime friend who has worked 50 years on religious conflict and just war and serves as an advisor to our nation's top intelligence and military leaders.

WHEN COMMUNITY FALLS APART

Her advice was that if I desire to understand the makings of global conflict, I only have to understand the interpersonal kind. In other words, all conflict ultimately begins with disagreements between people, and that sustainable peace, neighbor conflict resolution, is only possible when our commitment is to one another as humans, not to an agreed outcome or solution.

What we need now is a national conversation. What our community needs now is a communal one. Not focused on whether "Make America Great Again" is a polarizing or nurturing campaign slogan, nor whether conservatives or democrats have the market cornered on righteousness, but instead to cast a vision for the future of our community as the torch bearers for those no longer with us, and as co-laborers in the aftermath of tragic violence and loss.

To share the stories and narratives that, once woven together, reflect the diversity and fullness of the fabric of our community.

The process of creating and analyzing these narratives must encourage us to ask: What stories define the essence of our community? Where did these stories come from?


And, most urgently, what new stories can we tell to help create the future we desire? And how do we respond to them?



When things fell apart, it was each and every one of you who worked tirelessly to put things back together.

As a new member of this community, I am but a mere beneficiary of your incredible courage and commitment – courage to face tomorrow with grace and love, and commitment to one another as fellow survivors and co-laborers. I can barely imagine the trauma you experienced when things fell apart. Even more so the joy of watching it rebuild. It would be a privilege to help ensure we remain focused on the more glorious future before us, welcoming back neighbors new and old.

Christy Vines



**Christy Vines
is President
of the IDEOS
Institute**

Christy Vines is President of the IDEOS Institute, a faith-based and independent policy and practice center working at the intersection of narrative and identity to find transformative solutions to contemporary spaces of communal, cultural and geopolitical conflict. She is a published writer, international speaker and strategy expert, and has served as an expert and advisor to government leaders and agencies in and outside of the U.S. on issues related to women's leadership and global gender equality; conflict mitigation and peacebuilding; international religious freedom and countering violent extremism. Her work has been published in the Washington Post, Religion News Service, Capital Commentary and Christianity Today.

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THE TRAUMAS WE FACE

In 1958 I visited The Cloisters, a museum in Fort Tyron Park in upper Manhattan north of the George Washington Bridge and overlooking the Hudson River.

Twenty-five years later I built my home, a replica of these monastery gardens, including a chapel, overlooking Zuma beach.

In November of 2019 I lost my home in the fire with most all of my possessions. While I know many people were devastated by their losses, I felt no sense of loss.



The traumas I have experienced in life have taught me many lessons.

One is that, when we leave this earth, we take nothing with us but our memories. Another is that there are some challenges we cannot fix. I have also learned that wisdom does not automatically come with age.

Many people, as they age, rather than become wiser, often grow more cynical, negative and defensive. I believe we become wiser when, while holding onto our positive experiences, we transform the negatives into memories of value.

Rather than allow our disappointments to cause us to become discouraged and depressed, we can aim to become emotionally stronger and more resilient. Rather than take ourselves too seriously, we find the humor in our frustrations. Instead of marinating in our narcissism, we allow the adversity to renew our humility. We commit ourselves to the philosophy that we replace our losses with something of equal or greater value.

I also have learned that our losses set us free to take on new challenges. I feel fortunate that my insurance policy allowed me to buy a new home and begin a new adventure. I have discovered that when disappointed, by counting my blessings, by the fourth or fifth blessing, I am beginning to forget what was upsetting me.

Three days after the fire, while the four of us were having breakfast, I was also getting ready to fly to Tennessee to give my three-hour training program, and then another presentation for a real estate company in Michigan.

Our granddaughter, nine years old, was upset that we might have lost our home, as we had not yet heard what had happened. So I asked her, "Could you do me a favor and go to the front desk and ask when checkout is, and when then they tell you, ask for a late checkout, and if they give you a late checkout, then use your puppy dog eyes and ask for another thirty minutes."

THE TRAUMAS WE FACE

"A few minutes later she returned, no longer despondent, but happy, and told me that checkout was at twelve, they gave her until one, and when she used her puppy dog eyes, they gave her another thirty minutes. She then told me, "Grandpa, maybe they should stop teaching science, mathematics, reading and writing in school, but instead teach life lessons, such as how to ask for a late checkout." In only a few minutes she had gone from being depressed to joyful.

Recently I was asked by my dear friend Anthony Barton to speak to homeless people in a church on Skid Row during the December holidays. Driving through Skid Row is a Dickensian experience. A third of the homeless are mentally ill, another third sociopathic, and another just like you and I, having experienced loss with no-one to turn to when destitute.

How can I ever be upset, of what I have lost, when they have so little. So many of them are living in the shadows of the voices that have taken over their minds. Others would rather live on the streets than be in a homeless shelter where there are rules such as how long to take a shower.

Then there are those who have fallen through the cracks and are trying to comfort their children while living in their car. How can any of us, when blessed with our physical health, LA County removing debris of fallen homes without charge, insurance money allowing us to buy a new home and the opportunity to start a new life, as well as experiencing the humility of learning life lessons, allow ourselves to indulge in feelings of loss when we have so much to appreciate.

Art Mortell

Art Mortell is the author of many books, including *The Courage to Fail*, and has conducted executive conferences at Pepperdine University. He is a much sought-after lecturer and has lectured in a dozen countries. Art's most recent book, *The Qualities of Leadership - Personal and Professional Transformation*, was published in 2018.



Partnering to Serve **OUR COMMUNITY**

In partnership with Ventura County Children and Family Services, James Storehouse fulfills emergency requests to make the placement of babies and children less traumatic for them and their resource families. Our resource center is ground zero for babies, children, and youth who need immediate resources after they have been removed from their homes due to abuse and/or neglect or after they have been rescued from local sex trafficking. Our caring staff and volunteers and our peaceful environment provide

a much-needed shelter from the storm for these children and youth. We also help with family preservation, assisting families that are experiencing trauma and are at risk of losing their children due to lack of basic resources. James Storehouse serves as a county Faith Ambassador, training local churches in how to care for and support foster families, kinship caregivers, and aged out youth who have experienced many kinds of trauma. Many of the children, youth, and caregiving families we serve at

James Storehouse also receive counseling and support through Kids and Families Together or through Casa Pacifica.

Stacy DeWitt

Executive Director, James Storehouse

James Storehouse :

<https://www.jamesstorehouse.org/>

Kids and Families Together:

<https://www.kidsandfamilies.org/>

Casa Pacifica:

<https://www.casapacifica.org/>

GRIEF COUNSELING RESOURCES

Dr. Joan Rosenberg

310.876.2324

<https://drjoanrosenberg.com/>

Our House Grief Support Center

888.417.1444

<https://www.ourhouse-grief.org/>

Calabasas Counseling and Grief

818.222.3895

<https://www.calabasascounseling.com/>

Kids and Families Together

805.643.1446

<https://www.kidsandfamilies.org/>

Casa Pacifica

805.366.4040

<https://www.casapacifica.org/>

Pepperdine Graduate School of Education and Psychology clinics

<https://gsep.pepperdine.edu/about/clinics/>

Prakash Flagg

Grief and Trauma Coaching, Breath Work

Sound Therapy and Energy Work.

www.aumalchemy.com

inspiredlife@aumalchemy.com

1.626.818.8459

Malibu Foundation

*Launched two days after the Woolsey Fire by members of the community
to help with emergency relief, rebuilding and recovery, and advocacy*

www.TheMalibuFoundation.org

Wind Angry

by Art Mortell

HOT AND DRY
THE DEVIL IN LATE AUTUMN
SCREAMS
ACROSS THE RIDGES AND RAVINES
PAST OCTOBER
HALLOWEEN

EARTH
BRITTLE DRY
THIRSTY
WITHOUT RAIN
BECOMES THE FUEL THAT FEEDS THE

FIRE
ORANGE RED
YELLOW FLAMES
RACING
AGAINST A BLACK MIDNIGHT SKY

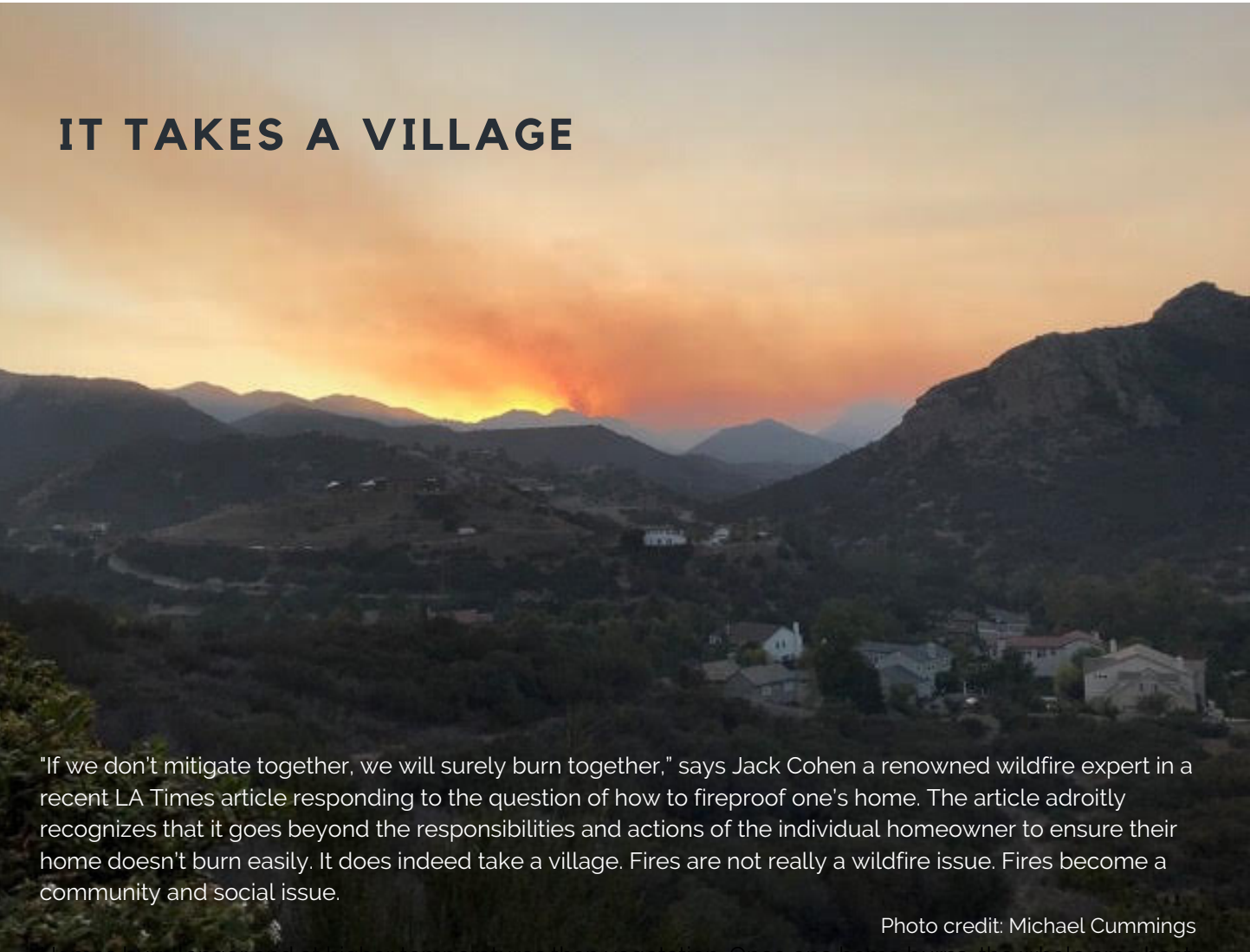
CREATURES RUNNING
RABBITS, DEER AND FAWNS
NO LONGER FEAR THE COYOTES AND COUGAR
WHO NOW ARE PREYED UPON
BY THEIR OWN FEARS
ATTEMPTING TO ESCAPE
AN INFERNO

NOW IN DEVASTATION, DISAPPOINTMENT AND DESPAIR
DEPRESSION AND DARKNESS
OR CHOOSE INSTEAD
TO COUNT OUR BLESSINGS

FROM THE ASHES
OF THE PHOENIX AND SHIVA
DESTRUCTION
IGNITES OUR IMAGINATION
STIMULATES OUR CREATIVITY
AND ILLUMINATES THE PATH
OF OUR PURPOSE

TO LIVE IN APPRECIATION
THAT WHATEVER HAPPENS
IS A GIFT

IT TAKES A VILLAGE



"If we don't mitigate together, we will surely burn together," says Jack Cohen a renowned wildfire expert in a recent LA Times article responding to the question of how to fireproof one's home. The article adroitly recognizes that it goes beyond the responsibilities and actions of the individual homeowner to ensure their home doesn't burn easily. It does indeed take a village. Fires are not really a wildfire issue. Fires become a community and social issue.

Photo credit: Michael Cummings

Homes burn longer and at higher temperatures than vegetation. Once one home burns, the whole area heats up creating hotter temperatures, more heat, more embers. In the Woolsey fire, embers were racing ahead of the fire storm by some five miles, flung from ridge top to ridge top igniting homes.

It is also a numbers issue. In this last fire, State resources were desperately inadequate and overstretched. Many of the out-of-state firefighters didn't know local geography, and local firefighters had been sent to fight fires at Paradise in northern California and other neighboring fires before Woolsey became the raging animal it did. Fire extinguishing efforts became fire rescue efforts as fire fighters were forced to become Emergency Medical Service providers to help injured and traumatized residents trying to evacuate.

Are we expecting too much from our local Fire Department? They may not want to admit they can't be there every time to save our homes. And do we want to hear that? Our extortionate property and State taxes have demanded unrealistic and great expectations of protection and safety from a failing system and questionable leadership. Do we need to enter into honest dialogue with council and service providers to avoid a false narrative and false hope? Are we too busy pointing a finger at them, rather than considering turning that finger around to ourselves? And what would that look like? Homes will continue to burn unless we grapple with understanding how we live amidst such spellbinding nature and beauty, admiring the wild and natural habitat around us and to coexist as responsible homeowners. Not necessarily responsibility for ourselves but responsibility for those we have the privilege of calling neighbors. When did we last check our gutters for pine needles? Or our vents to ensure they're not open to embers? Do we have a 5' defensible space around our home, giving it a 75% improved chance of not burning? Have we moved items away from our fire-proof wood siding walls and are we planting native vegetation in our gardens? Are we thinking? 80% of the task of fire-proofing our home is done before a wildfire has sparked.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

The tragedy of the fire compelled Keegan Gibbs to take action following the loss of his family home on Point Dume, although his and other's heroic efforts helped to save multiple other homes. In under a year, he started the Point Dume Fire Fighting Brigade which now exists as an active entity and a real force. Keegan, whose career is in film, took it upon himself to be the change. In speaking with him, he reminds us not to look to other people for the answers. So he did something about it.

The fire truck is located on Point Dume, his voluntary firefighters are friends and local residents from Topanga Canyon, Calabasas and other neighborhoods. The fire brigade is for their communities too.

He is developing a curriculum that can hopefully be scaled and transplanted to other communities. He organizes trainings (35 people so far), shares his knowledge to spread awareness, create community among friends and neighbors, and give a structure to the education of fire behavior, why houses burn, and where possible prevention.

His program emphasizes the intelligent and economic use of water resources, identifying a temporary safe area, and starting with home emissions. It is not a formal program, but addresses every critical need in the event of a disaster, working together to create community resiliency and assistance.

Keegan recognizes that the fire truck represents a symbol for not only safety, but taking control and taking responsibility. It is a functional obligation he says that prompts the question "how do you help each other?"

He notes, however, that the hardest thing to change is maybe not the system, but people's minds - taking responsibility, working together and being accountable in the fire-proofing of their homes.

Fire fighters, Jim Prabhu and Danny Cortazzo, and Jim's brother Michael, are also effecting change.

Having grown up in Malibu and working and living through the threat of California wildfires, they created the Fire Defense Service. FDS is a customizable pump and hose system, using the homeowner's pool as a water source to protect homes and giving a 360 degree coverage of the entire property. It can be operated by the homeowner, and fire fighters, and a prototype of the patent-pending system was used to save two homes in the Woolsey fire.

FDS will come and assess your home and advise how to fire-proof it most effectively, and then follow up on a quarterly or semi annual basis once their system is in place. They will put a sign outside your home, indicating that there is a fire fighting system that can be utilized.

An average pool holds 20,000 gallons, whereas a fire engine's capacity is 500 gallons.

These additional resources enable firemen to split their efforts between two or three homes rather than focusing on one.

The fire defence system is a rental program, where the company provides the equipment, an initial assessment of the property, and a written report for a quarterly maintenance fee.

The pump is renewed on an annual basis. FDS offers a community based approach to the concept of fire protection in terms of educating, connecting, training and communicating, including between the homeowner and first responders.

It recognizes that people will tire of going through the devastation of wildfires, and that our neighborhoods will lose their character as residents increasingly choose to leave.

Wildfires are an occurrence that we must learn how to live with, and arm ourselves with as much knowledge and resources as possible, to fight for the protection of our homes and communities.

Andrea Tennant

REFLECTIONS ON A COMMUNITY BUSINESS

Malibu, as we know it, is a very special place. There's actually no place quite like it: its beauty, the nature, the people, it's an amazing town and very resilient. This has been an extremely difficult year and as the people who lost homes have tried to settle into different places, the community has shifted. Even those who didn't lose homes feel the effects of change in the community; their neighbors who faced so much devastation are now living somewhere else. Empty lots are a common sight.

As a retailer we've also seen a shift in the community at Cross Creek. Business has been very challenging this year but more importantly we haven't seen all the faces of the people in our Malibu community. The people we do see, however, are strong and starting to rebuild, and we see a lot of locals helping locals which is a wonderful thing and it's the mantra of our business.

Please remember to support the community that is home to Malibu. We don't want to lose any more businesses and restaurants that had been, for so many years, a staple part of the community we love so much. The small retailers, restaurants and banks need everyone's support to continue to make Malibu the idyllic, strong and engaging community it is.

Elizabeth Lamont
Room at the Beach

Opening a world of resources, Guidance and Leadership

Vision Resourcing Group provides specifically designed market-ready and proprietary products and services through a variety of methods including consulting, training, and coaching to church leaders, Christian schools, and college leaders worldwide. Our mission is to equip these leaders to counsel God's people in the areas of vocational, financial, and generational stewardship in order to build God's Kingdom.

Our Career Services provide coaching and materials to church's internal resources so that they can better serve their church members.

Career Services include STRIVE, our 4-hour career insights workshop which is aimed at high school and college students to help them get their careers started; our 4-hour Career Transition Workshop is aimed at adults who find themselves in job transition; our Career Direct Assessment helps students and adults by identifying career paths based on their personality, interests, talents, and values; our Career Direct Certification affords internal church resources the ability to distribute and consult utilizing the Career Direct Assessment; finally, our CareerCoach Certificate provides internal church resources with the information, tools, and materials to provide career coaching to both students and adults.

We at Vision Resourcing Group "are called by God for the training of the saints in the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ ..." – Ephesians 4:12



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The 2018 wildfire season was the deadliest and most destructive wildfire season on record in California, with a total of over 8,000 fires burning an area of almost 1.9 million acres. These fires caused over \$3.5 billion in damages and resulted in nearly 100 lives lost including 6 firefighters.

Many different factors led to the 2018 California wildfire season becoming so destructive. Research indicates that a combination of an increased amount of natural fuel and compounding atmospheric conditions led to these destructive fires. As such, wildfires are expected to worsen in the future.

During most wildfires, resources are limited. The Fire Department is often unable to utilize fire hydrants as the demand for water overwhelms the supply. Additionally as we know from the Woolsey Fire, sometimes there simply is no water available when the electrical power delivery system is lost and the pumps that support the hydrant system fail. Most fire engines carry approx. 500 gallons of water whereas a medium sized pool is approx. 15,000 gallons.

A homeowners water resource coupled with this fire defense system increases the odds of saving the home in the event of a wildfire event. Danny Cortazzo and Jimmy Prabhu are two firefighting veterans who, together and along with their partners, developed an auxiliary fire defense system for homeowners to have available in the event of a fire.

The equipment utilizes the homeowners pool as a water source for their patent pending fire defense system. This equipment has already been successful in defending a home during the recent Woolsey Fire event.

Each system will be customized by a firefighter during an onsite assessment. Recommendations on how to reduce the homes' vulnerability to fires will be provided. A schematic drawing specific to the home will be prepared to provide the fire department with a map of where the equipment is located and how to deploy it.

An official FDS sign and strobe light is part of the system and is used to alert the fire department of the available water supply and fire defense system that a fire crew would require to defend the home. This will include a summary and diagram of the equipment on site, map of the water supply, and gas supply and power shutoffs.

Most importantly, this equipment is the same type that firefighters nationwide are familiar with. In addition, training and step-by-step instructions will be provided to the home owner in the event the homeowner is unable to evacuate. The training will include instructions on the pump system, setup and operation. All equipment will be maintained and serviced quarterly by a skilled technician and assessments will be updated as needed. Monthly rental pricing will be provided once an assessment of the home has been completed and the size and configuration of the fire defense system has been determined.

Call 424-388-1960 or visit our website at www.firedefenseservice.com.

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EVENTS AND RESOURCES TO CONNECT

211: A 24/7 referral to human and health services. Call 2-1-1 or go to 211ventura.org

Interface Children and Family Services: A nonprofit provider of social services, including mental health and trauma treatment, youth crisis intervention, domestic violence and child abuse prevention, human trafficking prevention and intervention, and incarcerated reentry services. Main office: (805) 485-6114 or <https://www.icfs.org/>

Conejo Valley Guide: A resource for things to do and organizations to connect with in the Conejo Valley. Go to <https://www.conejovalleyguide.com/>

Malibu Chamber of Commerce provides connection to events and activities. Go to www.malibu.org/events

All Things Malibu lists events, clubs, services and more. Go to www.allthingsmalibu.com/

Christian Foundation of America Grant Program application deadline is November 8th. The purpose of these Grant Awards is to support activities that expand the Kingdom of God through multiplication and sustaining of healthy, effective reproducing and sustaining churches and ministries. For more information go to: <https://cfa.charity/cultivating-generosity/>

CFA Grant Banquet : Thursday, February 6th in Westlake. Soar with us as we award grant checks to charities that are making an IMPACT for the Kingdom! For more information, tickets, and sponsorship opportunities, go to <https://cfa.charity/cultivating-generosity/>

Lunch N Learn: Current Estate Planning Trends on November 6th in Westlake Village, CA. For this and additional events, go to <https://cfa.charity/cultivating-generosity/>

ACTION Christmas Shoppe : This is a Ventura County tradition. This event serves under-resourced families by providing toys for Christmas. Opportunities to volunteer and donate toys. <https://www.actionvc.org/>

State of the City, Thousand Oaks: December 3rd, , 11:30am – 1:30 pm. <https://www.conejochamber.org/signature-events>

Pepperdine Library has a place to share Woolsey fire stories: <https://library.pepperdine.edu/collections/woolsey-fire-project/>

This Malibu program is produced by local artists and creators of all sorts of mediums to share their Woolsey angst: <https://www.smdp.com/radical-beauty-malibu-rising-reflections-on-the-woolsey-fire/179557>

Christian Foundation of America's Affiliated ministries to consider connecting with: <https://cfa.charity/affiliated-ministries/>

A photo exhibition one year on in Malibu on November 5: <https://www.themalibufoundation.org/events>

DR. JOAN ROSENBERG

In considering Community, and how deeply moved I've been to witness the multiple losses in my own devastated neighborhood, I felt compelled to speak to leading, local psychologist, Dr. Joan Rosenberg, about addressing trauma, rebuilding and restoring the fabric of ourselves, and therefore our community.

AT : It was some months before our local neighborhoods began to settle into the new normal following great loss and tragedy after the Borderline shootings and Woolsey fire. What needs and responses were vital during that time?

JR : The immediate need is to recount the experience. I heard many stories of fright, terror, rushed escape, fear of not getting away from danger, how quickly events happened and how terrifying the experience was and has been.

Those who found places to go to, and friends to stay with, were fortunate. Some who lost homes transitioned from a family home to a small apartment, and found solace in limited space. Some walked out with a briefcase and others faced the reality that all they own can now be packed in half a suitcase. Those few items become the symbol and recognition of all you materially own at that moment. And that takes time to absorb.

Three main things are super important:

1. Recounting. The way we start to make sense of our life experiences is by telling the story, which may need to be recounted many times in order for us to move through it.
2. Understand the profound nature of what has been lost. Some things can't be regained on a material level and therefore we have to live with the profound state of helplessness and sadness around losses. It is not simply loss of material possessions, it's the loss of familiarity, a place that I'm anchored to and go home to, the loss of routine, community, and of an imagined

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future from the place of the present. The total disruption on virtually every level.

3. Someone to bear witness to those experiences. It is extremely important not to isolate, and to connect with community.

AT: How do we maintain an open heart to the unknown, amidst the fear and anxiety we perceive in great and irretrievable loss?

JR : I think again it is part of acknowledging what is, and accepting the truth of what has occurred. I encourage people to recount the story, for example, the physical home and everything in it is lost, and one can do nothing about it. We cannot undo what was done. We have to acknowledge and move to a place of acceptance. And again, I want people around people, and make a conscious effort not to

isolate.

Opening one's heart to receiving is part of this. To accept the compassion and love of others and to know that people can be there to help take care of, support, find resources, and come alongside. Be open to the fact that love and support may come from unexpected places and cross multiple levels and aspects of ourselves - material, financial, emotional.

Another element of keeping an open heart is to try and understand the benefit of painful experiences. What is it that I can extract for good and who am I, and who do I want to be, as a result of that experience. Holding an attitude of what can be learned, and how to show up. Also to be realistic there may be some measure of sadness over the years, and that's ok. The goal is that the level of sadness not disrupt someone's functioning over time.

The recognition of loss - and with it the uncertainty, fear and anxiety of the situation - heightens our sense and awareness of our vulnerability. That anything can happen at any point in time.

If we are open to it, it can force us to grapple with the awareness of the psychological life, and learn what is truly valuable. Our places and possessions have importance, but through adversity we realize there are probably higher values that one comes to appreciate.

A friend who lost their home said they could still see in their mind's eye the art pieces that filled their home. However, they realized they never took time to stand in front of each one and take in the beauty. Following the experience of loss, they are more

aware in mind and heart to the moment in a way they weren't before. If one can hold an attitude of learning, there's probably a shift into a different state of being. Community is a central piece of this. Being connected to others can help decrease fear and anxiety.

AT : Recognizing that we are all connected, does community play a part in helping to heal trauma of the individual?

JR : Community plays a massive part. The individual though will need to be willing to ask for help, and open hearted to receive.

There is a level of vulnerability in asking and receiving, and one feels totally exposed when one has nothing. Where can one go in terms of emotionally or psychologically reframing that? Realize that although you have nothing material, you have life and everything you stand for. That is a critical, and massive shift.

In my book 90 Seconds to a Life you Love, I talk about our wounds being a portal to our growth. This kind of experience doesn't just invite, but demands, we grow. Often times the growth is spiritual as well as mental; one's heart and level of compassion can grow bigger.

AT : As communities eventually reconnect and return to their neighborhoods, how does community recognize its power in healing the collective, and humbly co-operate? What are those first steps? Does it take the individual, rather than the leadership of a city council, to start the conversation?

JR : I don't know to what degree people are making efforts to stay in touch. The first step is to begin to find part of the previous community and connect. Once this has been established, foster community at that level, and be foresightful in what the group wants to create.

There is an opportunity to collectively rethink the nature of rebuilding, and create a community place to gather on a routine basis. Homes don't have to be siloed, and thought can be given to create a space to foster community. It is almost an opportunity to return to the thread of earlier times, of growing up in tribes, extended families

and smaller communities, and connecting, telling stories.

AT : How can we walk in freedom and not carry the paralysis of pain as we are forced to address unexpected and massive change and transformation?

JR : Again, stay connected. Acknowledge and accept the loss is there. Change one's language around it. And understand the activation of trauma, is the activation of grief. I explain this in my Ted Talk, around the concept of disguised grief. Grief happens having been through trauma, and the feelings of sadness, helplessness, anger and disappointment evoking that.

To move through disguised grief, you have to know and accept

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IN MY BOOK 90
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that you can never do what was undone, nor undo what was done. One is grieving over what one got and didn't deserve, and the other is grieving over what one deserved and didn't get. In the case of the fire, those who lost homes experienced a house that burned and no safety, which was not deserved. And then there is the grieving over what may never be, and what never was.

One doesn't carry the paralysis of pain if one is ready to deal with loss, although it does mean a change of attitude, belief system and an openness to vulnerability. Change the narrative, by

adopting the philosophy that every experience is a learning experience. And at some point it will be a story to tell in the narrative of one's life. What am I supposed to gain from this, how do I want to show up and own a sense I'll be ok. To be empowered. As much as one's material possessions and routine may have gone, one has a capacity to think, feel and make decisions.

AT : What is the single most effective thing an individual can do on a daily basis to impact the good of the whole?

JR : To show up each day.

The first reaction is to be grateful one is alive. To express gratitude. My things are lost; I am grateful I am here.


The second might be to think what can I do today to be a better person, to help me grow, and to enhance my life. Not in a greedy way. In a growing way.

And the third might be to consider what can I do to support someone else today? Who do I want to be, to be a person of increase? How can I be a person that enhances other's lives?

AT : Can you tell us about your book, 90 Seconds to a Life you Love, and how it might help those dealing with extreme feelings around trauma.

JR : 90 Seconds to a Life you Love is centered on helping people deal with difficult feelings, including vulnerability, with one chapter dedicated to resolving grief. So there is quite a bit in the book to help and encourage people to move forward around uncomfortable feelings. When one is able to do that, one is emotionally strong.

Dr Joan Rosenberg is a psychologist, innovative thinker, speaker and trainer. She is a TedX speaker and member of the Association of Transformational leaders, a professor of graduate psychology at Pepperdine University and a United States Air Force Veteran. She has been seen on CNN, the OWN network and PBS, and featured in numerous documentaries. Dr Rosenberg's latest book, 90 Seconds to a Life you Love, was published in February 2019.

A photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a bright orange glow across the sky and reflecting on the water. There are some clouds in the sky. In the foreground, the ocean waves are breaking onto a dark beach. A small figure of a person is visible in the water near the horizon.

**EVEN AFTER ALL THIS
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THE SUN NEVER SAYS TO
THE EARTH,
“YOU OWE ME.”
LOOK WHAT HAPPENS
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SKY.**

From The Gift by Hafiz
Version by D.Ladinsky



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GIVING BACK



Breathing Life Into Community, or BLINC is created to inspire our readers. Breath is indeed Life, and Life Abundant happens In Community. We hope you are inspired to Breathe Life into your Community, and find tangible ways, to do so.

Christian Foundation of America will provide you with services and resources to facilitate charitable giving services that YOU the Donor can use to support causes that matter to you.

This is our invitation for you to be involved. Our Communities need us. Community thrives when we turn towards one another to support, nurture and build.

A large part of our Legacy and Inheritance to loved ones is the Community we will pass on to the next generation.

We have options for you to create a Personal Impact Fund at Christian Foundation of America. This charitable Donor Advised Fund can accept gifts of cash, securities, real estate, and more with tax smart strategies.

Have a really big idea? Explore our Enterprise Impact Fund, a charitable Donor Advised Fund for significant charitable investment, leadership and strategic engagement to solve Community Issues. We provide effective planned giving services, coupled with social enterprise strategies designed for impactful change.

Thank you for exploring BLINC! Go to cfa.charity/blinc to engage, learn and follow.