

# Vitality



## Communities step up as wildfires devastate

Showing grit and resilience, neighbors reach out to help in disaster's aftermath

As the French Creek fire burned in the night outside of Glide on Sept. 7, Abigail Malek posted to social media: "If you have friends out there, check with them to see if they need any help." And while she helped evacuate her neighbors, offers of help flooded in.

"People started reaching out to me personally, saying 'hey, we've got a truck and trailer,' and 'hey, we have an excavator,'" Malek says. When the Archie Creek fire, burning to the south of the French Creek fire, began to threaten the town itself, she remembered the offers for help. Through a Facebook group she created, Glide Strong, she started connecting people with resources to people with needs.

And people from all over, it turns out, had resources to

assist. Offers to help evacuate and bring in equipment such as water trucks and bulldozers came in from Douglas County and beyond. Volunteers organized food and supply donations right away.

"If there was a need, we put it up on Facebook, and we had 10 people jump up and say, 'we can help with that,'" Malek says. These grassroots efforts were crucial for filling the void left by overtaxed firefighting resources. In early September, over a million acres of wildfire were burning in the state, five other communities were facing similar disasters, and even more fires burned out of control in the American West.

In Lane County, the Holiday Farm fire destroyed swaths of homes and several businesses in the communities of Vida and Blue River. The Santiam fire destroyed nearly 70% of the businesses and public buildings in Detroit, while the

*Continued on page 10*



On the front line. See page 6.

### I N S I D E

**Mental health:** Network of professionals aim to help infants/toddlers ..... **2**

**Disparities:** Latino community suffers from disproportionate COVID infections, mortality ..... **4**

**Ford Scholar:** An advocate for mitigating health risks ..... **6**

**Ag-tech:** Farmer-centric solutions..... **8**

**Wildfire Report:** An 'all-hands' approach needed. **12**

**Hallie Ford Fellows:** In the national spotlight... **14**

**Book Review:** *Mabel and the Fire*..... **16**

### ➔ The last Community Vitality

This issue is the last *Community Vitality* in its current format. We'll still be sharing stories about rural communities—just in new ways. Stay tuned.

We would like to honor and thank Nora Vitz Harrison, the visionary founding editor of *Community Vitality*, who will retire this summer after 21 years directing the Foundation's communications strategies. We'll miss you, Nora.

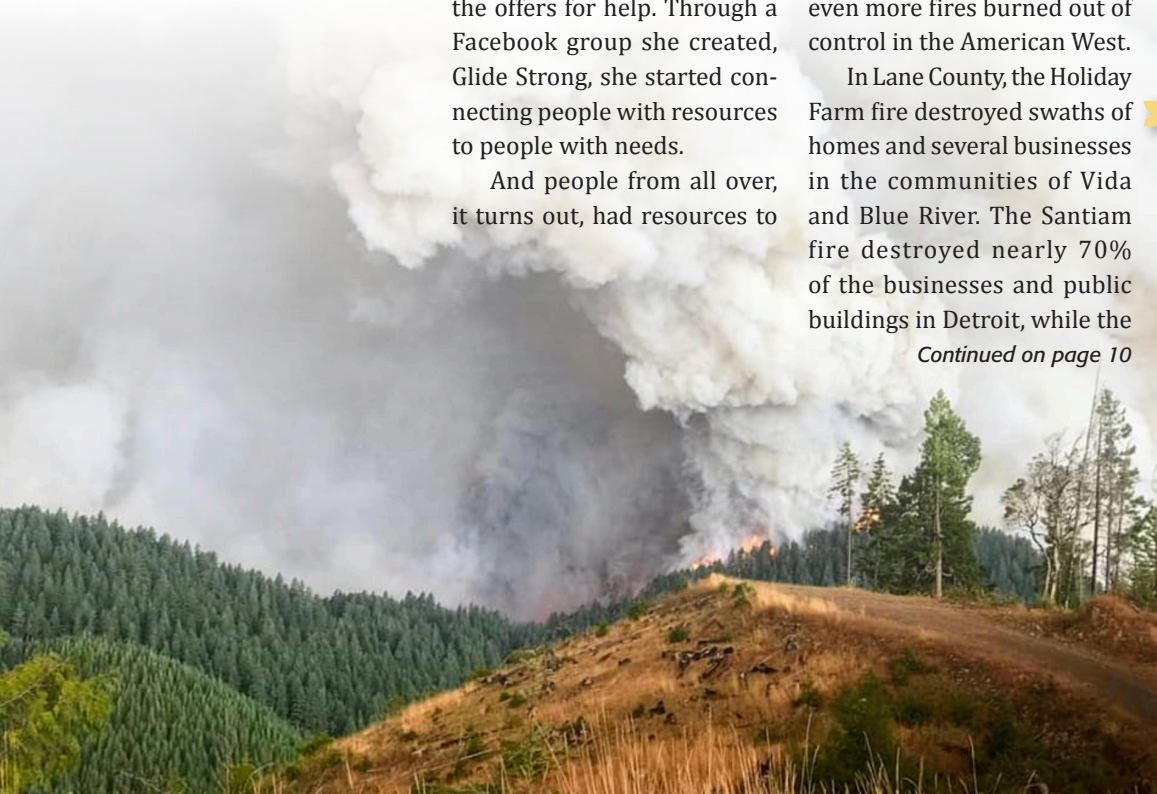




PHOTO: UV MAGAZINE

Casondra Reeves oversees the Select Books program.

## The face behind Select Books

**D**id someone say free books? Since August 2000, The Ford Family Foundation has offered a select number of books free to residents of Oregon and Siskiyou County, California. Casondra Reeves, administrative associate at the Foundation, oversees the program.

“We want to give people the tools they need to understand and engage in their communities,” she says. Reeves manages the purchase of inventory, the fulfillment process and the search for new titles. Topics cover a wide range – from community building and race relations to children’s books and family development. The book list features both local writers (Alison Hinson, *Mabel and the Fire*) and world-famous authors (Malcolm Gladwell, *Talking to Strangers*). Since its inception, Select Books has distributed 31,500 books to an estimated 28,400 people. ■

To order a book, visit [www.tfff.org/select-books](http://www.tfff.org/select-books).

*Community Vitality* is available in print and online at [www.tfff.org/cv](http://www.tfff.org/cv).  
© 2021 The Ford Family Foundation. All rights reserved.

**Anne Kubisch**, President

**Nora Vitz Harrison**, Editor

**Megan Monson**, Assistant Editor

**Mandy Elder**, Writer; **Riley Rice**, Writer; **James Sinks**, Writer

The views expressed by the authors in bylined articles are not necessarily the views of the Foundation. If you have a suggestion or comments, send an email to [communityvitality@tfff.org](mailto:communityvitality@tfff.org).

*Community Vitality*

The Ford Family Foundation

1600 NW Stewart Parkway, Roseburg, OR 97471

Telephone: (541) 957-5574

[www.tfff.org](http://www.tfff.org)



**A relationship with a caring individual provides the best chance for lowering the incidence of chronic mental illness in children.**



# A mental hea

## Professionals come together to protect infants, toddlers

**A**uthorities are typically called to intervene in family situations when safety is a factor and immediate action is required. Living conditions, drug abuse or neglect may put children at risk; domestic violence may be present or threatened. In Douglas County, this kind of intervention and help for families with young children is being expanded, based on a growing understanding about brain development of infants and toddlers.

In short: When it comes to building healthy lives, the earlier you begin, the better.

That’s the logic — and science — behind a collaborative effort taking root in Douglas County by a new, informal network of mental health services,

with the help of a grant from The Ford Family Foundation.

“Living through hard times is not new,” says Angel Reeves, a program director at Compass Behavioral Health, Douglas County’s mental health agency and crisis team. “What is new is the level of evidence that living through those stressors is not good for the lifelong health of young people.” (See sidebar.)

The additional pressure from the COVID-19 pandemic is pushing some families to the breaking point, says Melanie Prummer, the director of Peace at Home in Roseburg, formerly known as the Battered Persons Advocacy. Oregon’s devastating wildfires also caused displacement and stress, she adds.

Shelter hotline calls have spiked during the pandemic, which is particularly alarming when national studies are showing that people are now less able to escape a bad home situation.





# lth network

The number of Peace at Home clients in 2019-2020 was 1,272, about 38% higher than the year before.

A shortage of people who specialize in infant and toddler mental health makes the situation worse.

## Keys to success

To help build capacity, in 2018 The Ford Family Foundation began offering 12 scholarships to Douglas County professionals for an Infant Toddler Mental Health Graduate Certificate program at Portland State University. So far, the Foundation has funded 40 scholarships to rural Oregon professionals. The certificate is a 20-credit, online program designed for professionals who work with

families with children age prenatal to 3 years old. A bachelor's degree is a prerequisite. The program has strengthened the informal network of mental health professionals.

Their focus: Address the issue of protecting and enhancing mental health for babies and toddlers. The key, Prummer says, is making sure parents and primary caregivers are able to provide the positive interaction and attention that young children need.

That means education, as well as reducing stressors for families. Preparation can start even before babies are born. A family advocate working at Peace at Home serves at-risk pregnant women or women with young children, who are identified primarily through the healthcare system. The help includes crisis interventions, safety planning, birthing support and financial assistance.

Alison Hinson runs the behavioral health program for 13 school districts through the Douglas Education Service District and also serves as the executive director of the Oregon Infant Mental Health Association. The Foundation is supporting the association's development of statewide professional standards and credentials around infant mental health.

Hinson helps coordinate a collection of 12 multi-disciplinary professionals from Douglas County (including herself), who have completed the infant mental health certificate program at Portland State University. The group meets to reflect on their learnings, brainstorm and create a new ecosystem to improve care for infants and toddlers.

"The substance abuse, generational poverty and trauma have always been here," Hinson says. "The big change collectively is being able to name it, and we have a better idea what to do about it."

Often, kids show early signs they need help, she says. However, identifying at-risk children has become more difficult since the pandemic has limited face-to-face interaction. Online conversations are better than nothing, she says, but that's a hard format — especially for children.

## Caring individuals

To help meet the need, Hinson opened a new Roseburg counseling clinic in 2020, known as Juniper Tree. Clients have included new moms with postpartum depression, victims of intimate partner violence and middle-income families navigating difficult times.

"The number-one thing research has found, to lower the

chance of chronic mental illness or other self-care needs, is a caring individual, a relationship with a safe and nurturing care provider of some kind," Hinson says. "That's the answer."

Hinson does see a mental health silver lining in the pandemic for some children. In many families, it has meant staying home and building more positive support for their children.

"Many people are struggling, but adapting," she said. "And yes, there is a subset of people who are more at risk, and we are trying to help as best as we can."

She sees hope in the collaborative effort of mental health professionals in Douglas County. "It's one way we can make that help better," she says. ■

## The science

Toxic stress caused by Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) affects brain development, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. ACEs are traumatic events that occur in childhood and can include violence, abuse, and growing up in a family with mental health or substance use problems. Toxic stress from ACEs is linked to chronic health problems, mental illness and substance misuse in adulthood. However, ACEs can be prevented.

According to the CDC, reducing or preventing such risk factors lowers the prevalence of substance abuse, makes people more employable, and reduces the risk of chronic disease, from pulmonary disease to diabetes to asthma. ■

Get a free copy of *The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study* at [www.tfff.org/select-books/](http://www.tfff.org/select-books/)

---

Shelter hotline calls have spiked during the pandemic.

# Cross-sector solution need

## Latino community suffers from disproportionate COVID-19 effects

When it comes to keeping the most vulnerable residents safe and healthy, the actions of community leaders throughout Oregon demonstrate that community building and public health create a powerful combination.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, public health professionals have spoken out about the disproportionate infection and mortality rates in people of color and in low-income communities across the country. Experts warn that social determinants of health, such as access to preventive care, safe employment conditions, housing circumstances

**In Oregon, Latinos make up about 13% of Oregon's total population, but are about 40% of the total COVID-19 cases.**



PHOTO: PATRICIA ORTIZ

**Ana Laura Piñeyro provides public health information about COVID-19 safety to residents in Boardman.**

and other environmental factors, cause some segments of the population to be at higher risk for illness.

Dr. Eva Galvez, a physician at the Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Clinic in Hillsboro, can attest to these findings. She sees the adverse effects of social determinants of health among her patients, many of whom are deemed essential workers — people working in food processing plants, construction and caregiving.

“In Oregon, Latinos make up about 13% of Oregon's total population, but are about 40% of the total cases,” Galvez explains. More on-the-job ex-

posure is one reason for this statistic. A lack of a coordinated strategy for distributing personal protective equipment and health and safety information to workers have meant that these elevated levels of infection have remained high throughout the pandemic.

So what does community building have to do with public health?

The solution to racial and economic disparities in health outcomes, Galvez says, is not going to come from just the medical field or any one sector. “It's really going to require collaboration across different sectors.”

Community builders and Latinx leaders are one example. They often have direct contact and relationships with residents, such as essential workers, in rural areas where information and protective supplies are less likely to be distributed. They have been able to use networks of trust within communities to support public health efforts and save lives.

Over the last two years, an Oregonwide team of Latinx community leaders has convened regularly to share inspiration, strategize and support one another. This tight network of colleagues and friends, called *Fortaleza* (Spanish for strength), proved key for the resiliency and safety of the communities they serve.

*Fortaleza* team members created a social media group to share real-time information from state and community-based agencies. Community members knew the information they were receiving was trustworthy.

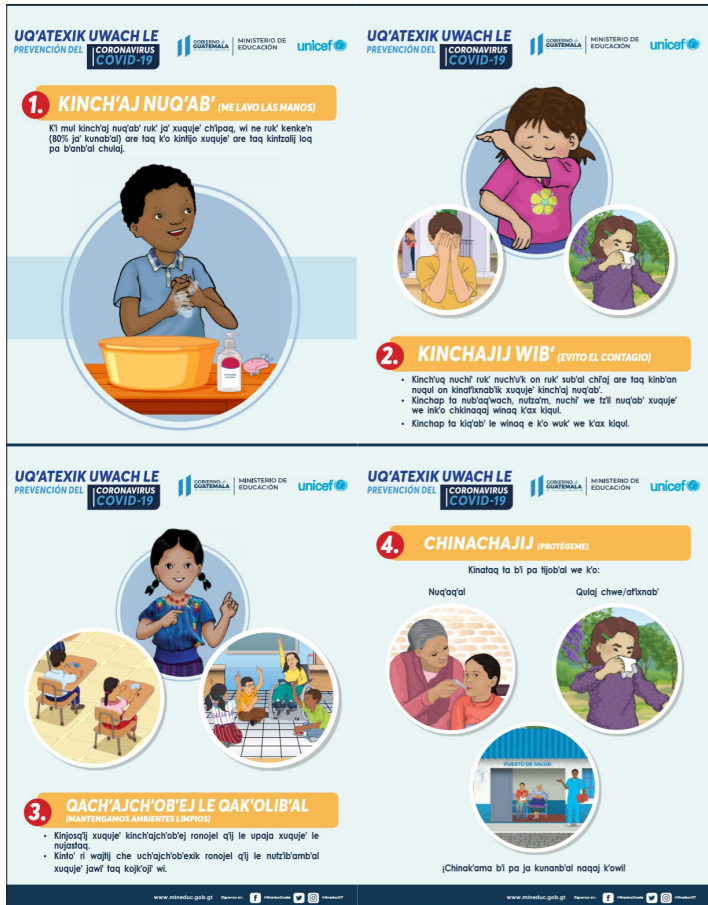
Team members also built new capacities. Some learned how to create podcasts to reach residents. Others joined statewide councils. One maintained a connection to the Oregon Health Authority. And each one made sure their community's voice was represented.

### Communication

Oregon's growing population of immigrants from indigenous communities in Latin



# ed to address disparities



**A COVID-19 prevention poster in Quiché. The indigenous language from Latin America is spoken by some of Oregon's immigrants. Community builders in the Boardman area found the posters online and distributed them in their community.**

America means accessible public health information needed to be translated to multiple languages — especially Mam and Quiché from Mayan areas of Guatemala.

“We have a language barrier. Unfortunately, information doesn’t usually circulate in Quiché,” explains community builder Ana Laura Piñeyro in Boardman. “We found information available online in Quiché

and distributed it around the community by hanging posters.” Piñeyro’s pioneering work has meant other community builders, from the Klamath Basin to Cottage Grove, have reached out to her for materials and support. Equitable communication doesn’t help just the Quiché community. “It also helps the rest of us be more aware that there are people who speak languages other than



**Molalla received evacuation notices in English when a huge fire threatened the area. Volunteers went door to door to spread the word in Spanish.**

## Lives at risk when evacuation notices are only in English

In 2020 Molalla resident Santa Ávila’s work proved just how essential community builders are to the health and safety of those they serve. By organizing with Fortaleza team members and other statewide networks, she made sure COVID-19 public health information was distributed to the farmworker housing community at Plaza Los Robles in Molalla. Then, during the September Oregon wildfires, she

quickly gathered a group of volunteers to knock on neighbors’ doors. Evacuation information was being sent only in English, and residents needed to leave their homes immediately. These two life-threatening events illustrate how critical community builders’ work can be. Ávila’s sustained work during the pandemic and her swift response during the wildfire is helping to keep community members safe. ■

Spanish and English,” she says. Organizations in Hermiston and Boardman are now hiring people who speak both Quiché and Spanish.

Dr. Galvez agrees. Her patients, many of whom work in essential industries and speak Latin American indigenous languages, also bring with them different cultural perspectives. As a public health professional,

she has expanded her practice and understanding to best serve such patients.

Community builders’ cross-sector work with the medical community is helping to offset the racial and economic disparities in COVID-19 outcomes, and the payoff: lives saved. ■

# Ford Scholar: Healthcare a

**Dr. Eva Galvez has become an advocate for mitigating health risks for Oregon's farm workers**

*Dr. Eva Galvez, Ford Scholar Class of 1994, received Oregon State University's 2020 Alumni Fellows Award in October.*



**Eva Galvez, M.D.**

PHOTO: OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY

**E**va Galvez was a senior at Hood River Valley High School in 1994 when Kenneth Ford selected her to be a member of the inaugural class of Ford Scholars. The daughter of Mexican immigrants who worked as seasonal farmworkers, Galvez and her twin sister, Olivia (who was also selected to be a Ford Scholar) attended Oregon State University, graduating from the College of Science's biology program in 1999. Both went on to earn medical degrees. Galvez graduated from the University of Washington School of Medicine in 2004.

Galvez has worked for Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center in Hillsboro since 2010, where many of her patients are Spanish-speaking migrant and seasonal farm workers. She regularly speaks on panels to educate the public around health disparities.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, she became a vocal

advocate for mitigating health risks for Oregon's seasonal farm workers, and she has addressed the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis in the U.S. House of Representatives.

In a video talk she delivered after being named an Alumni Fellow of Oregon State University, Galvez examines the social determinants of health, their role in shaping health, and how to better address these factors to achieve health equity for all Oregonians:

"Much of society believes that health is something that we have control over — eat the right food, exercise and take the right medications to be healthy" she tells her audience. But that is not the reality. Health is the sum of many factors. "Only about 20% of our health is determined by healthcare and our individual choice. And the rest is shaped by social factors, otherwise known as social de-

terminants of health, and those include cultural beliefs and your values."

While the pandemic has touched every community in the United States, it has hit the Latino community hard.

"In Oregon, Latinos make up about 13% of Oregon's total population, but are about 40% of the total cases. If you're Latino, you're almost three times more likely to die from COVID," Galvez says.

### **A story behind the data**

The statistics come alive through the story of one of Galvez's patients: Luis, a 68-year-old farm worker. When she met Luis, he was healthy and in his mid-50s. Five years later she diagnosed him with Type 2 diabetes and expected him to come in more regularly to manage his chronic condition. But he came in sporadically — only when work was slow.

Last spring, Luis called her to say he had fevers and body aches, symptoms of COVID. She encouraged him to come

to her clinic to be tested, but he declined. The following day he called saying he was feeling worse. "At that point, I told him he needed to go to the emergency room. But again, he declined because of his concern over the cost," she recalls. Instead, he insisted he wanted to be seen at her clinic the next day. But Luis never showed up. He had been taken to the hospital in respiratory distress and intubated; he died two weeks later, alone, without his family.

"So what did Luis die from?" she asks. "We could agree that Luis died from the complications of COVID-19. But what were the factors that led to his death? You see, Luis was a seasonal farm worker, so he did not have the luxury to work from home. Complicating matters, Luis was paid low wages. To afford rent, he lived in an apartment with six other people, conditions known to contribute to the spread of the virus."

Galvez argues that education, access to food, economic stability, neighborhoods, physical environments, and support systems play the biggest roles in a person's health.

"As a society we still tend to perceive health as an individual responsibility based on a series of good or poor choices," she says. "Sometimes, we might blame the individuals for their poor health." She encourages society is to think of health not only as an individual responsibility, but also "as the responsibility of an entire community."

---

**...my success is more than just a product of my hard work and my individual actions. I had the conditions that set me up for success.**

— Dr. Eva Galvez



# community responsibility'

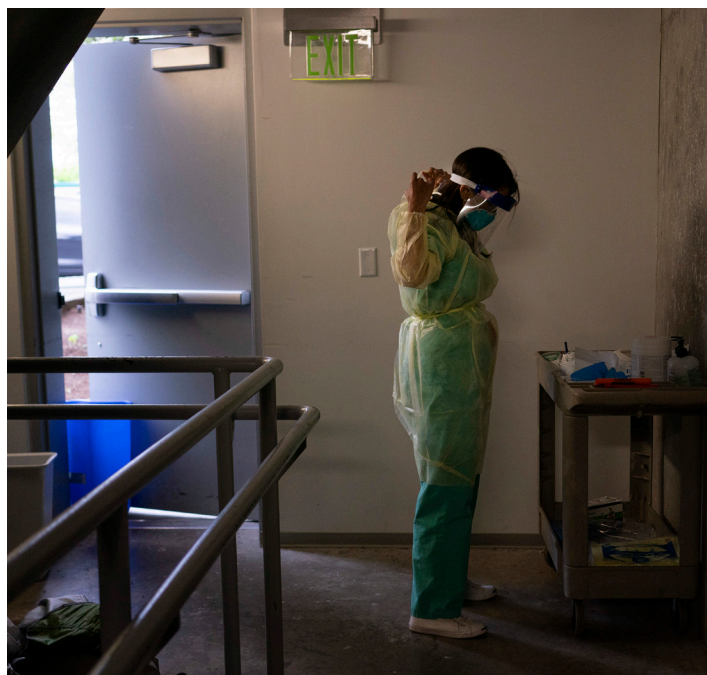
"As a woman, as a daughter of a Mexican immigrant, as a daughter of seasonal farm workers and now as a physician, I'm aware of the unique and privileged position that I have," she says. "But my success is more than just a product of my hard work and my individual actions. I had the conditions that set me up for success, starting simply by being born and raised in a safe community, that my parents had steady work so that I could establish roots, and that I had teachers who were invested in my learning.

"These are the conditions that are at the core of healthy

individuals and communities. So, I believe that health equity is not giving people things, but rather it's removing obstacles and ensuring the right conditions so that then with our hard work and our talents, we can achieve our goals, whatever that might be." ■

To view the full video of Dr. Galvez's talk at Oregon State University, go to: <https://bit.ly/3u1dGOv>

**Right: Dr. Eva Galvez, a family physician, puts on protective gear. Below: Galvez tests patients for the coronavirus at a clinic in Hillsboro.**



PHOTOS: RUTH FREMSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX

# Ag-tech creates farmer-centric s

## Mid-Willamette Valley provides fertile ground for innovations

An innovative partnership between agriculture and economic development in the mid-Willamette Valley is promising to flip the script on traditional startup and entrepreneurship activities. The Northwest Ag Innovation Hub aims to create farmer-centric development of technology and solutions.

The grower-focused initiative will connect local farmers with engineers, software developers, and entrepreneurs from across the country who are working to solve agricultural issues, from bulk seeding systems to crop monitoring technology. Farmers would get equity in a company in return for their knowledge.

“We are putting ourselves out there as a living lab for development,” says Shawn Irvine, economic development director for the city of Independence.

**We are putting ourselves out there as a living lab for development.**

—Shawn Levine



An experimental project in Iowa uses drones to spread seed. Garth Mulkey, owner of Mulkey Farms in Monmouth, provided seed to growers in the Midwest for a similar seeding project.

“The tech industry commonly develops solutions and then looks for problems. We are building a farmer network that will identify problems and then work as partners with the tech industry to develop solutions.”

“Agriculture is the heart of this region and its economy,” says Erik Andersson, president of Strategic Economic Development Corporation of the Mid-Willamette Valley, which recently received a \$469,150 federal grant for the project. “We’ve had food processors here for a hundred years. There’s innovation and product develop-

ment and markets to be had, and the potential is really exciting.”

### The beginnings

The Mid-Willamette Valley is fertile ground for a tech-based initiative. Nearly 15 years ago, the cities of Independence and Monmouth collaborated on an ambitious fiber broadband system to support economic development.

“The project was intended as a catalyst for further economic development for revitalization of the region,” Irvine says. About five years ago, he began to talk to tech companies and researchers about ways to leverage the system. The potential for smart

agriculture kept coming up.

Although agriculture is not a traditional focus of economic development, “as a rural community, it seemed like a perfect niche between urban tech and rural agriculture,” Irvine says.

The effort began with a series of ag tech meetups, where people from all sectors interested in improving agriculture could share ideas and listen to experts in the field. “We had broad community support, with farmers sitting next to Intel people sitting next to state government officials,” Irvine says. He credits the meetups for a pilot project by Intel that created



# olutions

a sensor-based technology that monitors blueberry crops from harvesting all the way through final distribution.

## Innovation catalyst

The project got its next big push when, in February of 2018, funds from Polk County and The Ford Family Foundation helped SEDCOR create a staff position responsible for catalyzing rural innovations. Since then, Alex Paraskevas has worked to build relationships between farmers and tech creators.

The project also has built a relationship with AgLaunch Initiative of Tennessee and Ag Ventures Alliance of Iowa, which allows regional farmers to access a national farmer network.

That relationship is why drones in an experimental seeding project in the Midwest were stocked with cover crop seed from the heart of farming country in Oregon.

Garth Mulkey, owner of Mulkey Farms in Monmouth, provided seed to two different growers in the Midwest. "I'm really intrigued by auto seeding



**Farming blueberries is taking a high-tech turn. A pilot project from Intel uses sensor-based technology to monitor blueberry crops from harvest all the way through final distribution.**

**We had broad community support, with farmers sitting next to Intel people sitting next to state government officials.**

—Shawn Irvine

in the Midwest," Mulkey says. "They use robots and drones, and I'm interested in what will come out of that — what we can use in Oregon."

Mulkey is one of the farmers who collaborates with the Hub, providing guidance and general input. He considers it time well spent. "I don't farm the same way my dad did, and when my kids come along, they won't farm the same way I do," he says. "Being part of the Hub and talking to other growers highlights what the possibilities are in the future."

Besides building a regional farmer network, the innovation hub expands networking and events aimed at building relationships and spurring

creative thinking. In April 2020, SEDCOR, the Technology Association of Oregon and city of Independence hosted the Ag Innovation Challenge, a weeklong design competition pitching prototype solutions for agricultural challenges.

## Pinot eyewear

The April event was the project's first COVID-era event, and the virtual environment allowed participation from more than 70 people across nine states. A design team in Ohio won the competition, pitching a set of tinted eyeglasses for winery workers to differentiate between ripe and almost-ripe Pinot noir grapes, thus improving the quality of the final product.

Spurred by the success of the inaugural event, a second design sprint took place in late February 2021, and three more are planned over the next two years. All are hosted by the Tech Association of Oregon.

"For an economic development corporation to embrace the ag-tech and that entrepreneurial piece is exciting and unexpected," says Kathleen Flanagan, senior program officer for The Ford Family Foundation. "Innovation can happen in rural communities. It doesn't have to be just big city. It may look different here, but it can also thrive." ■

For more information about the Northwest Ag Innovation Hub, contact Alex Paraskevas at (503) 931-3148 or alexp@sedcor.com.

# Existing relationships proved

*Continued from page 1*

Slater fire in Northern California burned 150 homes in the small community of Happy Camp. In totally destroyed communities such as Talent and Phoenix, most of the homes burned were affordable housing critical to the community.

During the days after Douglas Forest Protective Agency's initial response and before taxed federal resources made it to Glide, community volunteers led the wildfire response on their neighbors' properties. Local contractors and loggers used their equipment to construct fireline. People with hand tools drove around putting out spot fires, and volunteers with trucks and trailers evacuated livestock, people and possessions.

At the end of the day, people lined up at the 138 Grill and Little Pizza Paradise for free,

volunteer-prepared meals.

"Successful communities begin working on resilience before they need it, and leaders in the Glide area have been doing that," says Roque Barros, director of the Ford Institute for Community Building. "When the fire came, they had community builders who could quickly pivot to disaster response through relationships they had already built. That's the power of community building."

After a summer of COVID-19 restrictions and a tense political environment, it was easy to forget the connection the community had, Malek says. "But after something like this happens, and people come together to help, I realized people are just awesome."

## Connecting help with need

By the time the Archie Creek fire was contained, most of the

residents of Glide had experienced a loss of home, property or timber. For Malek, who was busy coordinating people through the Glide Strong page, it was time to get to work. She grabbed some volunteers and a few laptops and took over a corner table at the 138 Grill to begin the recovery efforts.

Covering immediate physical needs was the first order of business, and Glide Strong organizers set up a donation center in the middle school gymnasium. The space was quickly flooded with food, clothing and supplies from donations throughout the state. Their needs were covered so quickly that they were able to send overflow goods to other nonprofits in places like Jackson County, where wildfires also devastated small communities.

"Glide Strong was just a so-

cial media hashtag at first," says Malek. "But now it's an important tool to keep up momentum, and keep people involved in the process."

Most of the official recovery work is done through an existing 501(c)(3) nonprofit, Glide Revitalization, for which Malek now serves as assistant director. Alison Doty, the director, says that she founded the organization to encourage economic development in the community. Now, Glide Revitalization is the trusted liaison for community members and organizations such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency involved in disaster response.

Initially, volunteers were busy helping residents register for aid through FEMA, find housing and get the household goods they needed from the donation center. Now, volunteers are committed to rebuilding the community physically, financially and emotionally.

"Our goal is to get people back to Glide and find a place for them," Doty says. Many people have donated unused RVs and camp trailers to house Glide families.

While Glide Revitalization helps families get their properties cleaned up, organizers are offering a host of workshops to help families navigate the sudden emotional and financial burden. The first sessions on



PHOTO: GLIDE REVITALIZATION

**After Douglas Forest Protective Agency's initial response and before federal resources made it to Glide, community volunteers mobilized to battle the Archie Creek Fire.**



# pivotal

mental health were a success. “They helped people share pent-up feelings of loss,” Doty says.

Many community members were counting on the timber on their property to fund their retirement, Doty says. Financial planning workshops helped people sort out disaster payments for destroyed houses and cash from the timber they were forced to harvest early, with the goal of a sustainable future life in Glide.

Community members are supporting each other in the rebuilding process, says Malek. That support is happening at important community hubs. “People come into places like the 138 Grill to sit and commiserate. It’s cathartic to be around neighbors that have suffered the same things,” she says.

## Long-term recovery

Now, organizers are focused on setting up the systems for long-term recovery that will help residents get to their “new normal.” FEMA’s voluntary agency liaison program is busy integrating with Glide Revitalization to set up the organization to manage individual cases and plan for rebuilding.

Getting community members involved is important to FEMA, Malek says. The FEMA program prioritizes hiring from within the community to get case workers and construction managers who understand, and are trusted by, residents. A local construction company has been carrying out the bulk of the ash and trash cleanup.

Once the cleanup is done, the process of rebuilding homes

will begin — work that will be ongoing for the next few years. Organizations like Habitat for Humanity have pledged their services, out-of-state contractors have volunteered to build several houses, and local businesses have donated gravel and lumber for Glide houses.

“We have a very generous community,” Doty says. “People have rallied to make sure that we help each and every one of our neighbors who were devastated by this fire. We can’t make them whole, but we can help get them to their new normal.” ■

## HOW TO HELP

The devastating fires that swept through Oregon are over, but many families and communities still need help. Here’s how you can make a difference:

- Make a financial donation at [redcross.org/donate](https://www.redcross.org/donate) or volunteer through [redcross.org/volunteer](https://www.redcross.org/volunteer).
- Visit [OregonRecovers.org](https://www.OregonRecovers.org) for how to volunteer and donate to organizations aiding in wildfire relief.
- Donate to the 2020 Community Rebuilding Fund at [oregoncf.org](https://www.oregoncf.org), launched in partnership with Meyer Memorial Trust, Oregon Community Foundation and The Ford Family Foundation.
- Donate to West Coast Wildfire Relief Funds at [unitedway.org](https://www.unitedway.org).
- Check out Southern Oregon Emergency Aid’s Facebook page. SOEA represents trained volunteers who transport and house livestock and companion animals in response to disasters. ■



PHOTO: GLIDE STRONG



PHOTO: MICHAEL SULLIVAN, THE NEWS-REVIEW

**Top: Community volunteer Celine Weber and Christina Hill, owner of Glide’s 138 Grill, set up a central food station during the Archie Creek Fire that offered three free meals a day to the community. Most of the food came through donations.**

**Bottom: American Red Cross volunteers Wayne Estes, left, and Bonnie Durick speak with evacuee Debi Campbell of Idleyld Park at a temporary evacuation point set up in Glide during the Archie Creek Fire.**

PAGE 1 PHOTO: GLIDE REVITALIZATION



# Thousands of homes, businesses de

## An 'all-hands-on-deck' approach needed for response

Anne Kubisch, president of The Ford Family Foundation, served on the Governor's Wildfire Economic Recovery Council. This excerpt from the Council's report offers key findings and recommendations.

In 2020, wildfires in Oregon burned more than 1.2 million acres statewide, with some of the largest and most devastating fires worsened by a severe windstorm on Labor Day that spanned eight counties (Clackamas, Douglas, Jackson, Klamath, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, and Marion). In the aggregate, these fires destroyed more than 5,000 homes and commercial structures.

The impact to communities across the state was devastating. Wildfires wiped out entire towns, leaving wildfire survivors to pick up the pieces of their lives, while also navigating complications related to the coronavirus pandemic, as well as systemic inequities. Communities that were already vulnerable, including undocumented workers and families in low-income communities, were among the hardest hit—and they are struggling the most to recover and rebuild. That so many wildfire survivors were already living in high-risk conditions is a direct result of systemic inequities that have been perpetuated by racism and poverty.

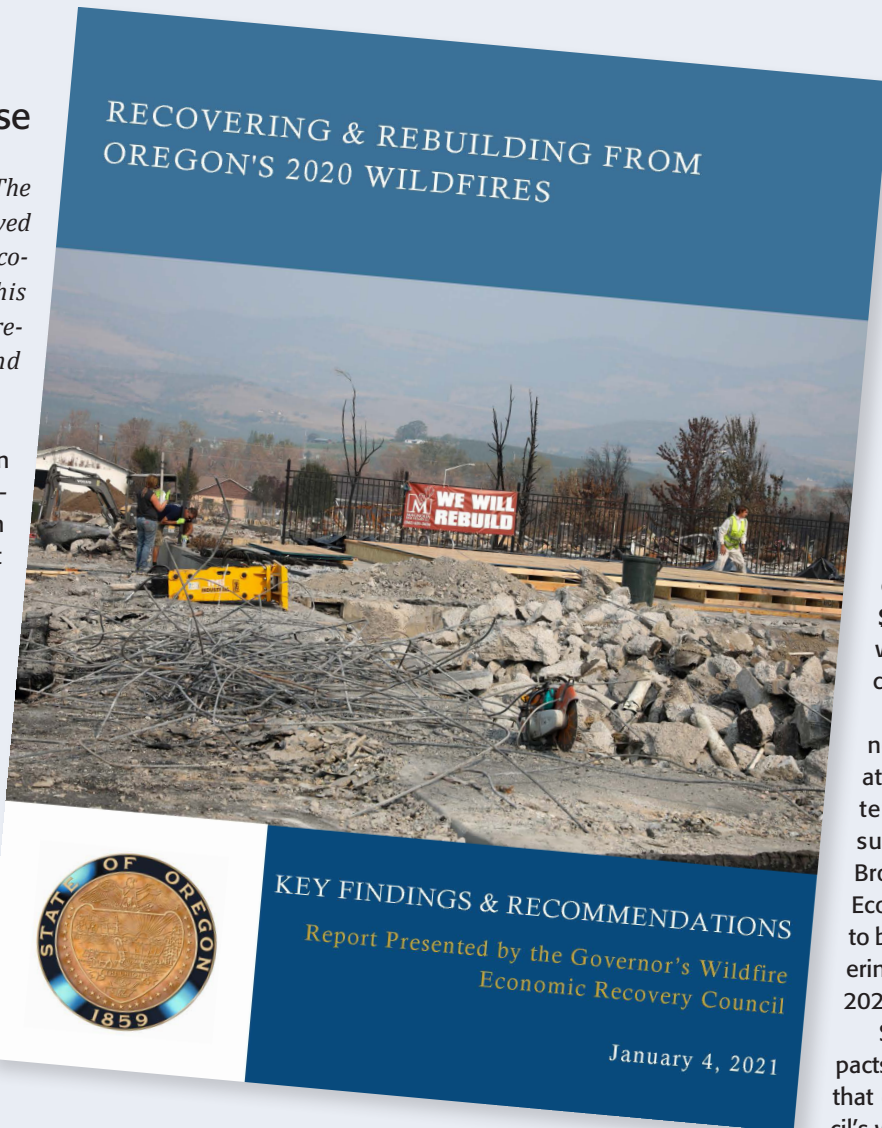
With over a million acres

burned and thousands of homes and businesses destroyed, the impacts of this wildfire season on jobs and local economies will last for months and years to come. Southern Oregon was especially devastated, with entire communities being wiped out

and Oregonians being left without homes, jobs, or even local businesses to go to.

The recovery requires an "all-hands-on-deck" approach to meet people where they are, assess their needs, and work

**Wildfires wiped out entire towns, leaving survivors to pick up the pieces of their lives, while also navigating complications related to the coronavirus pandemic ...**



collaboratively for the best solutions in each community. In addition, it will be critical to listen to individuals in communities to gain a deep understanding of barriers and needs.

Based on a Preliminary Damage Assessment conducted by FEMA, the Oregon Office of Emergency Management, and other state agencies and local governments, the state estimates a **total cost of \$1.15 billion** in wildfire/wind damage, response costs, and debris removal.

Faced with an urgent need to provide immediate, short-term, and long-term support for wildfire survivors, Governor Kate Brown created the Wildfire Economic Recovery Council to build a roadmap for recovering and rebuilding from the 2020 wildfires.

Some of the greatest impacts and barriers to recovery that emerged from the Council's work include:

- **Loss of homes and affordable housing:** The biggest community impact was the loss of at least 4,021 homes. Southern Oregon was particularly hard hit, and some of the housing that was destroyed was also among the most affordable for families.

- **Debris and cleanup:** Debris and hazardous materials, such as fallen trees and destroyed buildings, covered many affected areas across the state, leaving entire communities with overwhelming amounts of wreck-



# stroyed

age. This has prevented some families from beginning the rebuilding process.

- **Lack of financial resources:** Many of the residents who were the most affected by this disaster were already living in inequitable conditions prior to the wildfires. Some families had lost jobs due to the pandemic, and many families were already vulnerable prior to the fires.

- **Citizenship status concerns:** Undocumented residents have been substantially affected due to language barriers and citizenship status concerns.

- **Lack of individualized case management:** Many residents have struggled to find resources and information about available programs, including FEMA programs, shelter, housing resources, food, and other basic necessities.

- **Rebuilding obstacles:** Many residents have had issues with starting the rebuilding process, from debris covering land, to accessing homeowner's insurance, to accessing FEMA resources, to contractor and land availability/use issues.

- **Lack of emergency alerts:** Residents in some counties, and specifically in Jackson County, reported that they did not receive any emergency alerts at all. ■

Find the full report at [www.oregon.gov](http://www.oregon.gov) and search for *Recovery & Rebuilding from Oregon's 2020 Wildfires*.

## Resources offer insights

A book to help bridge differences. A practical guide to planning meetings. A book to help children process the trauma of wildfires (see page 16). These and other resources are available through Select Books from The Ford Family Foundation. We provide these books at no charge to residents of Oregon and Siskiyou County, California.

**Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know about the People We Don't Know** by Malcolm Gladwell, 400 pages.

©2019. Available formats: book, audio CD, Kindle eBook, Spanish. In his much-anticipated new release, author Malcolm Gladwell presents a rich (and sometimes disturbing) collection of stories, coupled with research, to help readers understand how we interpret the actions of people we do not know. This book is an especially important read for those working to forge conversations and collaboration across differences in our state.

**The Art of Gathering: How We Meet and Why it Matters** by Priya Parker, 320 pages. ©2020.

Available formats: book, Kindle eBook. Author Priya Parker provides strategies for planning mean-

ingful gatherings of all kinds. She offers insights into why some fill us up while others deplete us. Parker's common-sense tools transfer readily to a variety of settings. A wonderful storyteller, Parker offers delightful ways to make all meetings more purposeful, inclusive and satisfying. ■

## Select Books Just for asking



Get one of these books for

# FREE

[www.tfff.org/select-books](http://www.tfff.org/select-books)

Log on and choose a book. Then, order. It's that simple. The full list of Select Books offers more than 70 titles. Questions? Please contact us: [selectbooks@tfff.org](mailto:selectbooks@tfff.org)

## Formats for Select Books



We make it easier than ever to access the resources on the Select Books list. We offer versions in Kindle e-book and audio CD, and provide Spanish translations when available. To access the book list, go to the Select Books web page ([www.tfff.org/select-books](http://www.tfff.org/select-books)), click on "Browse Books" and choose your preferred method of delivery. All titles are free to residents of Oregon and Siskiyou County, California, in return for your book review. ■



## Two ways to read

Online at [www.tfff.org/cv](http://www.tfff.org/cv) and printed issues on request. Send an email to: [communityvitality@tfff.org](mailto:communityvitality@tfff.org)



View past issues of *Community Vitality* online: [www.tfff.org/cv](http://www.tfff.org/cv)

# Earned recognition

## Two Hallie Ford Fellows in the Visual Arts grab national spotlight

A pair of Oregon artists recognized as Hallie Ford Fellows are receiving national acclaim for their artistic achievements. Earning headlines in art news recently are Portland artist Wendy Red Star, a 2016 Hallie Ford Fellow, and Chiloquin artist Natalie Ball, who received Hallie Ford Fellow honors in 2020.

### Wendy Red Star

Mixed media artist Wendy Red Star recently announced that her work “Accession” has been acquired by the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Red Star, a visual artist who grew up on the Apsáalooke (Crow) reservation in Montana, now lives in Portland.

“Accession” is a series of photomontages that link archival images of indigenous peoples with Red Star’s modern

interpretation of contemporary Native life. “Red Star builds on both her cultural heritage and her involvement in many forms of creative expression, including photography, sculpture, video, fiber art, and performance art,” says a release from The Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth, Texas, which acquired another Accession series in December.

Red Star was also interviewed by The New York Times last fall about her work on *Aperture* magazine. She served as guest editor for a special issue of the photography magazine, called “Native America,” that focused on indigenous lives. As guest editor, she curated, edited and featured a wide range of Native artists.

“I’ve always been really enthralled with images,” she told the *New York Times*. “I really



PHOTO: WALTERS PHOTOGRAPHY

**Natalie Ball, a Hallie Ford Fellow in 2020, was recently selected as one of 25 artists from across the country to receive a Painters & Sculptor grant from the New York-based Joan Mitchell Foundation.**

like to align my practice with research and investigation as the primary source of inspiration. Everything that I put out there visually is the way that my voice speaks the loudest.”

Her work is also on display in Kidspace, Massachusetts Museum of Modern Art’s child-centric gallery. “Apsáalooke: Children of the Large-Beaked Bird,” offers accounts of American history that rectify the frequently flawed narratives about Native people through Red Star’s beautifully annotated photographs and installations. “It is critical to preserve and pass along culture, heritage, and shared values while also providing future generations with a sense of identity, solidarity, and empowerment,” she says.

### Natalie Ball

Chiloquin artist Natalie Ball was recently selected as one of 25 artists from across the country to receive a competitive Painters & Sculptor grant from the New York-based Joan Mitchell Foundation. The 2020 Hallie Ford Fellow is one of two artists



PHOTO: HAROLD HUTCHINSON

**Wendy Red Star (shown with her daughter at the awards reception) was honored in 2016 as a Hallie Ford Fellow. Red Star has had her work “Accession” acquired by the Museum of Modern Art in New York. She was also interviewed by The New York Times for her work on *Aperture* magazine.**





Natalie Ball, *When I Go Missing, North Star*, 2019

from Oregon to win a \$25,000 unrestricted award. The other is Portland artist Arvie Smith; the Foundation's Visual Arts Program recently supported an exhibition and catalog of his work through a grant to Disjecta Contemporary Art Center in Portland.

Artists selected for the Painters & Sculptor grants are first nominated by artist peers and arts professionals from throughout the United States and then chosen through a multi-phase jurying process, which this year was conducted virtually. In addition to the financial award, grantees also gain access to a network of arts professionals, who can provide consultations on career development and financial management. They also become eligible to apply for residencies at the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans.

Ball was born and raised in Portland, and earned a bachelor's degree with a double major in ethnic studies and art from the University of Oregon. She returned to her ancestral

homelands in Southern Oregon after obtaining a master's degree from New Zealand's Massey University, focusing on indigenous contemporary art. She earned an MFA degree in Painting & Printmaking at Yale School of Art in 2018.

"I developed my studio practice using visual archives, history, gesture, materiality, and personal experience as the foundation to create painted textiles and sculptures as Power Objects," Ball says. "Through auto-ethnography, I attempt to move 'Indian' outside of governing discourses to offer a visual genealogy that refuses to line up with the many constructed existences of Native Americans."

Her work has been shown nationally and internationally at venues including the Half Gallery, New York; Vancouver Art Gallery, British Columbia; Nino Mier Gallery, Los Angeles; Portland Art Museum; Gagosian, New York; Seattle Art Museum; Almine Rech Gallery, Paris, France; and SculptureCenter, New York. ■

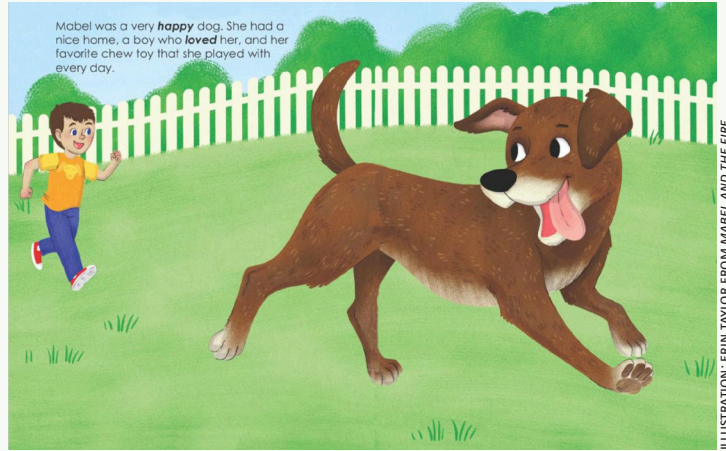


ILLUSTRATION: ERIN TAYLOR FROM MABEL AND THE FIRE

## Helping kids process loss

*Continued from page 16*

feelings of loss and displacement due to fire.

"Such a timely book in light of the recent wildfires and so many Oregon families being displaced," said one reader recently. "This book helps children identify their feelings and lets them know it's okay to be angry and scared. It also reassures them that, although things may never be the same again, they can get better."

"This book was moving and really touches the heart with its

message of being able to have so many feelings around multitudes of change and disaster," said another reader. "But also that it is okay to move on and be thankful for what you do have."

And what about Mabel? After moving into a new house, her story ends with a sense of hope:

*So even though things weren't exactly the same anymore, Mabel was still a very happy dog. She had a nice home, a boy who loved her, and her favorite chew toy that she played with every day.* ■

### A reader's review of *Mabel and the Fire*

★★★★★

Bless this therapist! We've lived through a wildfire and also have wildland firefighters in our family. I read this book to our 4-year-old and was amazed at the questions he had about it. I had no idea some of the things being processed about fire, smoke and losses in that little brain. The book was simple and brought enough detail to hint at the scariness without dwelling in it or glorifying it. Perfect tone. Helpful.



ILLUSTRATION: ERIN TAYLOR FROM MABEL AND THE FIRE

**Mabel and her family escape the forest fire.**



BOOK REVIEW

# Processing wildfire trauma

Mabel, the pup, helps children make sense of their fears, sadness and loss

When Roseburg author Alison Hinson published her children's book *Mabel and the Fire*, she had no idea how quickly it would become relevant in her home county. The brightly illustrated tale of how a dog named Mabel and her boy navigated the loss of their home in a forest fire was published in May 2020. Just four months later, Douglas County, along with several Or-

egon and California counties suffered devastating wildfire losses.

The book was written to help children process their experiences with natural disasters, in this case the loss of a home that forced Mabel and her family to flee their home and take refuge in a shelter.

The simple words of loss experienced by the dog gives voice to the same feelings felt by the boy. Hinson's technique of emphasizing emotion-laden words helps identify the feelings that young children may experience, allowing them to be discussed and processed.

*Mabel hoped the fire would not come closer to the house, but it did. Mabel's family packed up the clothes and toys that would fit in the car. They had to hurry. Mabel felt very sad and confused about leaving her house and toys behind.*

The book can be used to support families, social services workers, natural disaster relief groups and therapists in helping children share and express their own thoughts and

*Continued on page 15*



This book is yours for the asking

[www.tfff.org/select-books](http://www.tfff.org/select-books)



We believe everyone has the potential to succeed in life.

We believe in the power of rural communities.

We believe in finding common cause and mobilizing collective effort.



PHOTO: ASHLEY POTTER

*Mabel and the Fire* helps children process their experiences with natural disasters, in this case the loss of a home to a forest fire.