

Free radon presentation in Stateline

The University of Nevada Cooperative Extension's Radon Education Program is offering educational presentations and free radon test kits across Nevada.

One presentation is scheduled for 6pm Jan. 23 at the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency offices in Stateline. University of Nevada Cooperative Extension has partnered with the California Radon Program, so free radon test kits will be available at the event for residents of both states.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that is colorless, odorless, and tasteless. It comes from the ground and can accumulate in homes, raising the risk of lung cancer. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates 21,000 Americans die each year from radon-caused lung cancer, killing more people than secondhand smoke, drunk driving, house fires, and unintentional carbon monoxide poisoning combined.

In Nevada, one in four homes tested show radon concentrations at or above the EPA action level. The potential is higher in Stateline, where 67 percent of homes tested have an elevated radon level. Experts say living in a home with radon concentrations at the action level poses as much risk of developing lung cancer as smoking about half a pack of cigarettes a day.

This year's flu exposes flaws in medical system

By Morten Wendelbo and Christine Crudo Blackburn, *The Conversation*

Flu season in the U.S. typically peaks in February, but this year's outbreak is already one of the worst on record. As of Jan. 6, 20 children have died from the flu, and overall mortality caused by the flu is already double that of last year's.

One reason the flu is so severe this season is that the dominant strain is H3N2, which has an impressive ability to mutate and is particularly aggressive against Americans over 50.

Making the threat worse is the fact that most of the IV saline bags used in common medical treatments and procedures – including severe cases of the flu – are made in Puerto Rico, which is still reeling from Hurricane Maria. Hospitals in some areas around the country that are operating at or above capacity because of the flu are quickly running low on saline, resorting to time-consuming and potentially dangerous treatments of patients.

The IV saline shortage is unlikely to cause a life-threatening breakdown of medical treatments. But the shortage does expose a dangerous flaw in the medical supply chains that everyone relies on to counter disease outbreaks or bioterrorism. Many different types of important medical equipment and medicines either come from abroad or rely on a single producer.

Global supply chains

Globalization has changed the way we produce, transport and store almost anything, including medicines and medical

supplies. Now that it's inexpensive to transport goods, many can be easily produced abroad at substantially lower costs. In nearly all cases, that benefits producers and consumers alike.

For the medical industry, approximately 80 percent of all pharmaceuticals used by Americans are produced overseas. The majority of this production takes place in China and India.

Forty-three percent of saline in the U.S. comes from Puerto Rico. The U.S. was already running below optimal levels of saline when Hurricane Maria hit.

Rapid transportation of goods also allows most industries to rely on "just in time" deliveries. That means goods arrive only shortly before they are needed, rather than arriving in large shipments.

In most situations, and for most goods, that causes few issues. However, when there's an insufficient stockpile, delivery delays can be life-threatening. Many of our hospitals receive shipments of critical pharmaceuticals three times a day.

Unhappy coincidences

As researchers studying how countries can prepare for disease and disasters, it's clear to us that the IV saline shortage is just the tip of a gigantic iceberg.

There are two ways the "just in time" system can be disrupted: an unexpected surge in demand or a delay in delivery. In this case, both occurred simultaneously. The U.S. is dealing with an unusually potent strain of the flu, while Hurricane Maria brought production in Puerto Rico to a grinding halt. If only one of the two had occurred, it's unlikely the U.S. would have experienced a shortage.

Now, hospitals overrun with flu patients have to turn to alternatives to IV saline. One is an IV push procedure, in

which medications are manually “pushed” into the IV line. This can be deadly if not done correctly.

In the case of IV saline, the simultaneous occurrence of both demand and delay was accidental. Unfortunately, it’s not only possible that such confluence will occur in the future – it’s likely. In the case of pandemics or biological warfare, there will likely be both a surge in demand for important goods and a simultaneous disruption of production and delivery.

If a pandemic disease severely affected China or India, where large shares of medicines come from, production could be knocked out or slowed. That would leave the rest of the world vulnerable to the disease’s spread, because there would be no supply of crucial medicines to combat it. The 1918 influenza pandemic caused disruptions that prevented coal from being delivered to the northeastern U.S. That left some without heat in the height of winter, causing people to freeze to death and compounding the deadly pandemic.

Today, such a breakdown could leave hospitals and other crucial infrastructure without electricity. If the spread of the disease is intentional, as in cases of bioterrorism or bio-warfare, adversaries could target global supplies of crucial treatments.

Preparing for problems

The destruction in Puerto Rico and the impact it has had on the supply of small IV saline bags in American hospitals is a warning. This time, it’s IV saline. Next time, it might be electricity to run intensive care units or critical antibiotics to treat infections.

Global supply chains are a massive puzzle, but public health and emergency preparedness officials need to, at a minimum, understand every link in the chain of critical goods. Without a thorough understanding of the supply chain, it’s difficult to preempt problems that could arise in times of emergency.

Hospitals and other crucial infrastructure, such as power plants and the transportation industry, may want to diversify their suppliers of critical goods and encourage those suppliers to not focus production in a single area, especially not to an area prone to natural disaster. A final, but far more costly, option is to ensure we can produce most of these goods domestically in times of emergency.

In our view, the solution depends on a partnership between government and industry. Federal, state and local governments have to alter procedures, but private companies involved in the production and delivery of critical goods have to plan ahead for emergencies.

If these weaknesses in our global supply chains are not addressed, especially as they relates to medical supplies, pharmaceuticals and other critical goods, we are headed for disaster.

Morten Wendelbo is a lecturer at Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University. Christine Crudo Blackburn is a postdoctoral research fellow at Texas A&M University.

STMS students learn through making



Teacher Jackie Tan and a roller coaster students made. Photo/LTN

By Lake Tahoe News

Jackie Tan's class at South Tahoe Middle School might be the only one where failure is encouraged, even rewarded.

"It's normal to encounter failure. We work through things," Tan said.

When something goes awry in class the students are encouraged to learn from their mistakes by trying again, and perhaps again.

Journaling is part of the learning. Students record what worked and didn't; using the information to document the process.

Tan and a handful of seventh-graders presented to the Lake Tahoe Unified School District board last week about the school's Maker Lab. This is a blending of science, technology, engineering, math and art – or STEAM.

Right now it is a standalone class, but what Tan would like to do is incorporate it into the curriculum. After all, STEAM crosses into the academic spectrum.

Electricity is one of the main things the students work with. Coding is something they all learn.

Through grants Tan has been able to buy more equipment and

tools for the class for the students to use. One thing she is looking to do is purchase a new 3D printer because what they use now is rather dated.

The other thing Tan is working on is getting more girls to participate in the Makers Lab.

Community rallies behind Bread & Broth



Hundreds of people on Jan. 18 help raise money for Bread & Broth 4 Kids at the chamber's mixer at Riva Grill. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

Food that rivals most restaurants on the South Shore – that's how good dinners are at Bread & Broth.

While it's only open one day a week, it is a lifeline for so many in the community. It's not unusual for 100 people to show

up at St. Theresa's Grace Hall in South Lake Tahoe on a Monday. Many are there every Monday.

Everyone is invited. No proof of income, or lack of it, is required.

Seconds are available for those who are still hungry. The stragglers are often able to leave with leftovers. Plus, there are always bags of food for the taking.

It requires money to keep this 29-year-old nonprofit in business, especially as it has expanded its services through the years. Bread & Broth has a partnership with the Presbyterian Church in town, which serves soup on Fridays. And now there is Bread & Broth 4 Kids.

The youth oriented program provides weekend food bags to more than 150 students in grades K-8. With more than 60 percent of the students in Lake Tahoe Unified School District eligible for a free or reduced lunch, it means many of them have little to eat when school isn't in session.

Bread & Broth 4 Kids is designed to be that bridge between Friday and Monday. Much of the food items are things youngsters can easily make for themselves like soup, macaroni and cheese, tuna and other canned products. It includes packets of applesauce and protein bars – things that can be eaten on the go, or stuffed into a pocket.



Bags of donated food will help feed local students. Photo/LTN

The community came together Thursday to help these kids. The evening marked the ninth annual charity mixer put on by the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce. For the past few years Bread & Broth has been the recipient, with the Jan. 18 event specifically for Bread & Broth 4 Kids.

"We choose Bread & Broth as the recipient because their supplies are often depleted after the holiday season, and we understand the importance of helping to alleviate the food insecure on the South Shore," Brittani Curtis with the chamber told *Lake Tahoe News*. "Through the help of the South Shore community, we raised \$1,299 at the 2017 Connect for a Cause Charity Mixer."

The goal this year was to raise \$1,500. The tally from the entrance fee, raffle ticket sales and silent auction have not been tallied yet.

The chamber hopes to host more Connect for a Cause Mixers with different nonprofit organizations.

In addition to raising cash for Bread & Broth 4 Kids, guests were asked to bring non-perishable food items. Bags and bags

filled a table and the space below it.

While the kids are getting quick items, those who show up for the Monday hot meal receive a well-balanced dinner that includes a protein like beef, chicken or fish, vegetables, bread, salads, and dessert. The latter is provided by area businesses.

All ages – including families – partake in the Monday meal.

While it's a restaurant grade kitchen where the cooking takes place, there are plenty of things besides the clientele that separates Bread & Broth from a traditional dining establishment. Cooks often don't have formal culinary training. Instead of having the luxury of a set menu to work from, they arrive that day to see what is in the kitchen and pantry. Creativity is essential.

(This reporter works one day a month at Bread & Broth serving food and working cleanup.)

The nonprofit might think about inviting a broader cross section of the community and charging a nominal fee or asking for a donation from those who can afford to give. The food is worth it.

For more information about Bread & Broth, or to donate or volunteer, go **online**.

Local nonprofits benefit from Vail Resorts

Heavenly Mountain, Northstar and Kirkwood resorts gave money and product donations to 92 nonprofits in South Lake Tahoe,

Meyers, Jackson, Stateline, Minden, Gardnerville and Carson City as well as organizations from Truckee, Tahoe City, Kings Beach and Incline Village.

For this year's EpicPromise grant cycle, Vail Resorts – the parent company of the ski resorts – wanted to make sure its contributions were pertinent and addressed the community's most critical issues.

Contributions:

South Lake Tahoe

- Connecting youth to nature | Grants to the Tahoe Rim Trail Association, Tahoe Institute for Natural Science, Marine Research & Education and the Lake Tahoe Unified School District will each highlight different aspects of local ecology and will grow the next generation of environmental stewards.

- Mental health | By partnering with Live Violence Free, children who are victims of domestic violence and/or child abuse will receive positive adult role models and guidance towards establishing lifestyles.

- Improving our community fabric | Support of Bread & Broth provides nutritious meals to families in need through the "Adopt-A-Day of Nourishment" and "Bread & Broth 4 Kids" programs.

Truckee and North Lake Tahoe

- After-school and life skills programs for youth | Grants to Adventure Risk Challenge, Aim High for High School, Arts for the Schools, the Boys & Girls Club of North Lake Tahoe, Girls on the Run and SOS Outreach will help local youth reach their fullest potential.

- Environmental organizations | By partnering with the Truckee River Watershed Council on their mission and River

Day event, grants will help bring the Truckee community together to restore, protect and enhance our beloved Truckee River.

- Hunger and basic need | Support of Project MANA, Truckee Community Christmas and the Tahoe Food Hub provides nutrition to Truckee and North Lake Tahoe families year round.
- Local school districts | Lift tickets to each school in TTUSD and Washoe County school districts and support of Sagehen Outdoor Education Program and the SWEP Program to promote sustainability.

New to EpicPromise this year, employees were asked to vote on the EpicPromise Kids Award for a nonprofit that was committed to making a tangible impact for kids of all demographics in the community in a way that meets critical needs. These \$2,500 awards were given to Tahoe Youth & Family Services in South Lake Tahoe and Arts for the Schools in Tahoe-Truckee.

Flu forces delay in opening of STHS play

The opening of “Thoroughly Modern Millie” at South Tahoe High School has been delayed.

More than a dozen student actors are out sick with the flu.

The play was to open Jan. 19. School officials hope the play will be able to performed on Saturday.

Tickets sold for Friday’s performance may be exchanged for another date.

Free movie night at The Loft on Friday

The North American premiere of the award-winning Italian film “Aeffetto Domino” (“Domino Effect”) will be shown at The Loft in South Lake Tahoe on Jan. 19 – for free.

The movie’s writer, director, and star, Fabio Massa, will be at the premiere, with Q&A and meet and greet after the screening. Fabio was awarded best actor for his role in this film at the annual GioCineFest in Italy.

The movie is about life and its transformation. It’s a story of Lorenzo: sad news about his state of health will change his existence, causing a domino effect on his life and on the lives of people he loves.

Doors will open at 8pm for a pre-premiere party in the lounge. Theater doors will open at 8:45pm, with the premiere starting at 9pm. There will be an open forum Q&A with the film’s writer, director, and star Massa. There will be post-premiere party in the lounge.

Free tickets and reserved seating in the theater are available **online**.

Keith Urban, Dave Matthews coming to Tahoe

It's time to start thinking about summer concerts at Lake Tahoe.

Here is the lineup so far for the Harveys Outdoor Summer Concert Series:

- Keith Urban, July 21-22, 7pm – tickets from \$59.50-\$139.50. Kelsea Ballerini will be opening.
- Charlie Puth, Aug. 18, 7pm – tickets \$39.50-\$69.50. Hailee Steinfeld opening.
- Dave Matthews Band, Sept. 7, 7:30pm – tickets \$95. This is a general admission show.

LTN subscriber wins latest book club book

Lake Tahoe News **subscriber** Davey Paiva is the lucky recipient of the next book being read for the LTN Book Club.

LTN started a book club this year as a way to get people reading and ideally participating in a discussion online via the comments.

Here is a **link** to the first book that was reviewed/discussed.

Susan Wood's review of "What Unites Us" by Dan Rather and Elliot Kirschner will be published Feb. 1. That is the book

Paiva will be reading.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

All the money thrown at happiness is not working

By Mary Pilon, *Outside*

Today, there are happiness consultants, happiness coaches, happiness summits, and happiness workplace seminars, which in some cases may be mandatory for employees. There are more than 70 TED Talks tagged with “happiness” or related themes, with tens of millions of views. Amazon’s pages contain more than 100,000 hits for happiness literature as the self-help shelves continue to brimmeth over. Some companies have even enlisted in-house happiness experts, most notably Google’s Jolly Good Fellow, hired for the purpose of making sure employees report that they’re not just doing their jobs, but are doing them with delight.

Globally, wellness is a \$3.7 trillion industry, according to trade group Global Wellness Institute, which estimates that the staggering sum includes everything from beauty and anti-aging (\$999 billion) to wellness tourism (\$563 billion) to nutrition (\$648 billion). Yet despite the trillions of dollars, the branding, and the brassy platitudes, Americans remain among the most miserable people on earth.

Happiness in this country—if you were to even try to measure

it–has plunged. In 2007, the United Nations ranked the United States as the third happiest nation in the world, but in 2017, it dropped us to 19th place.

Read the whole story