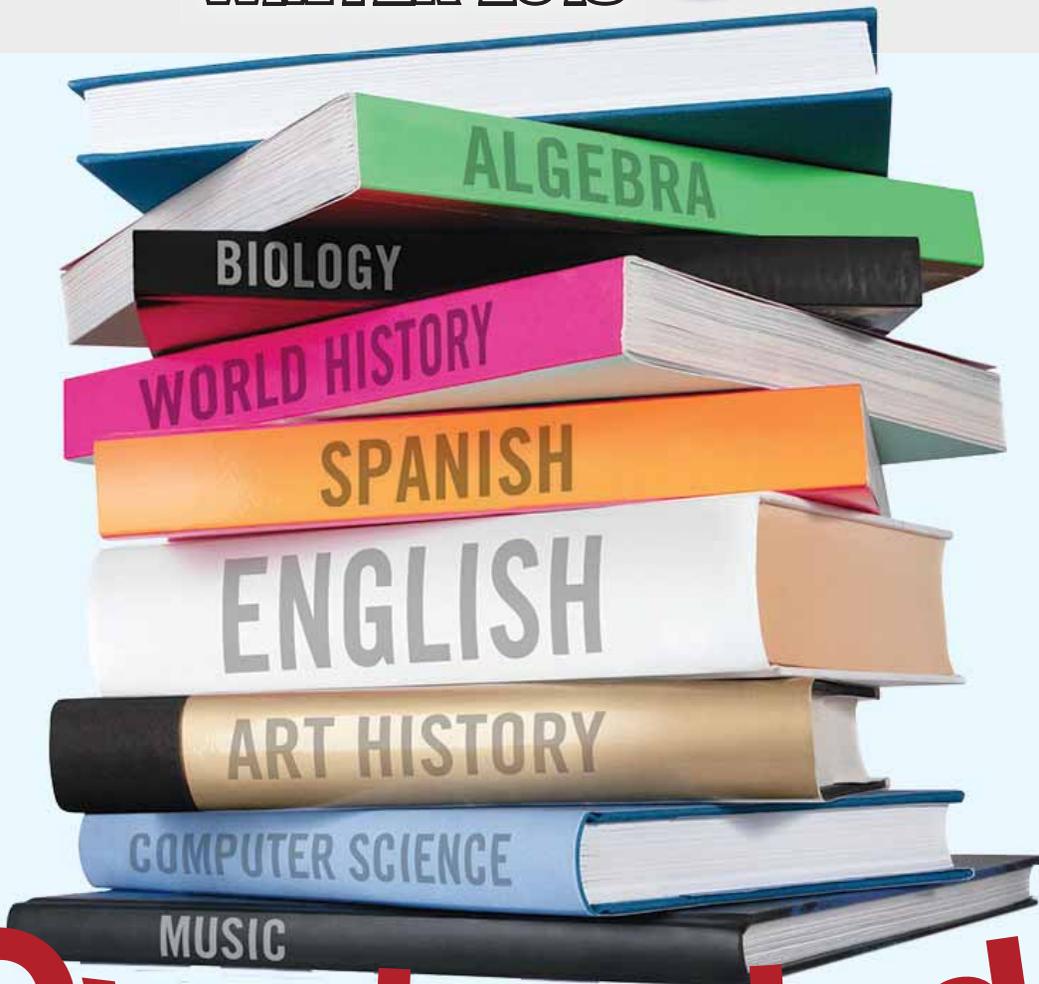


Staying Healthy

WINTER 2018

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Overloaded and underprepared

Second annual Parenting Forum to focus on youth stress

By JULIA BROWN

Across the country, kids are busy, stressed and sleep deprived.

Between homework, tests and extracurriculars — not to mention college applications for high schoolers — students are “super busy both in and out of school,” says Denise Pope, Ph.D., a senior lecturer at the Stanford University Graduate School of Education and co-founder of Challenge Success, which provides information and conducts research around best practices in areas such as assessment and school schedule.

“We surveyed over 150 schools across the U.S.,” Pope said in a recent interview. “We asked (kids) how many hours of homework they’re doing a night — not counting social media or procrastination — and asked about weekends and extracurriculars, and then asked them to self report their sleep.”

“Their average amount of sleep started with the number six,” Pope continued. “Some experts say you need at least nine hours at the high school level. Nobody would say six (hours of sleep is sufficient).”

Pope has observed this issue internationally as well. “We used to have to convince people this was a problem, but we don’t have to anymore,” she said.

Recognizing youth stress is a prevalent issue here in Pleasanton, the city in partnership with PUSD, PPIE and the Pleasanton PTA Council has invited Pope to serve as the keynote speaker at next weekend’s second annual Parenting Forum, part of the city’s free Community Education Series.

“(Challenge Success’) message is promoting healthy, happy kids and they want to reduce stress in children,” said city of Pleasanton community services manager Andrea McGovern. “The city is in line with



CHALLENGE SUCCESS

Denise Pope, a senior lecturer at Stanford University and co-author of “Overloaded and Underprepared” (whose cover art is seen at left) is the keynote speaker at the second annual Parenting Forum on Feb. 3.

their message and the school district as well as the PTA.”

She added, “We meet once a year with our youth commission to talk about topics that need to be addressed. One of the top priorities was reducing student stress, so all those things led us to going with Challenge Success (for the forum).”

Besides her work with Challenge Success and as a Stanford lecturer, Pope is also the author of “Doing School” and co-author of “Overloaded and Underprepared,” the theme of this year’s forum.

The book’s premise is that “our increasingly fast-paced world is interfering with sound educational practices and harming kids both physically and mentally.” It offers information and strategies for teachers, administrators and parents to make changes at school and at home to “create a more balanced and academically fulfilling life for kids.”

Pope says the notion that students are “overloaded” speaks to how busy their schedules can be, and the “underprepared” point comes from “the fact that they’re doing all this work but don’t find it meaningful or useful.”

“We’re seeing from colleges that (some) kids in AP classes are not retaining the information, and CEOs

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Donor Network West sees record-high in donors

Beneficiary: 'I don't think people realize the impact it can have'

By ERIKA ALVERO

For Amanda Cerro, the timestamp of 10:38 p.m. on June 28, 2015 will forever be etched into her memory. It was a moment that changed her life.

The 26-year-old Livermore resident was living in Santa Cruz at the time. A year out of college at UC Santa Cruz, she had a place of her own and loved her job as a child welfare advocate in San Jose.

But that night, after a beignet-frying venture gone wrong, she ended up in the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center burn unit with third-degree burns covering a quarter of her body.

Skin grafts saved her life, she says. Now, she hopes to encourage others to become donors by serving as an advocate for Donor Network West, a San Ramon-based organ and tissue recovery organization serving Northern California and Nevada.

"It's such an important thing for people to be an organ donor, and I don't think people realize the impact it can have," she said in a recent interview.



Amanda Cerro waits for a skin graft at the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center after suffering burns in a cooking accident.

Founded in 1987, Donor Network West works to facilitate organ and tissue recovery for transplantation, serving 175 hospitals and over 13 million people across 40 counties.



AMANDA CERRO

Cerro receives a 'courage award' at a hospital gala a year and a half after suffering severe burn injuries. She now serves as an advocate for Donor Network West.

And last year was record-setting for the organization, as 2,732 people became donors — the highest number of organ and tissue donors in Donor Network West's 30-year history.

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Red Cross recognizes Livermore man for 100th blood donation

Organization calls for contributions during National Blood Donor Month

By JULIA BROWN

Thirty years ago, Thomas Petty was a young employee at Chevron when he heard about a blood drive the company was hosting and encouraging its workers to participate in.

"They had regular blood drives so I started giving here and there," said Petty, a 55-year-old Livermore resident who now operates a digital marketing agency. "I've been a long-time volunteer since I was a teenager and so that was one way of giving back."

Petty would meet his wife Joanne at Chevron, and she also took part in the blood drives. But upon retiring, she realized she no longer had a go-to place to donate.

"That was when I said, 'Why don't we start our own (blood drive)?'" Petty recalled.

And so in December 2002, the Pettys held the inaugural Asbury United Methodist Church blood drive, collecting around 25 units of blood.

Just over 15 years later, the Livermore church's blood drive has become a monthly event that typically nets around 50 units of blood each time. Petty estimates a little over 5,800 units of blood have been collected all told.

Earlier this month — which is National Blood Donor Month — the American Red Cross recognized Petty for his work and his own contributions to the cause. At the Asbury UMC blood drive on Jan. 12, Petty arrived to a festive atmosphere with cake and balloons. It was his 100th time giving blood, meaning he has donated approximately 12.5 gallons.

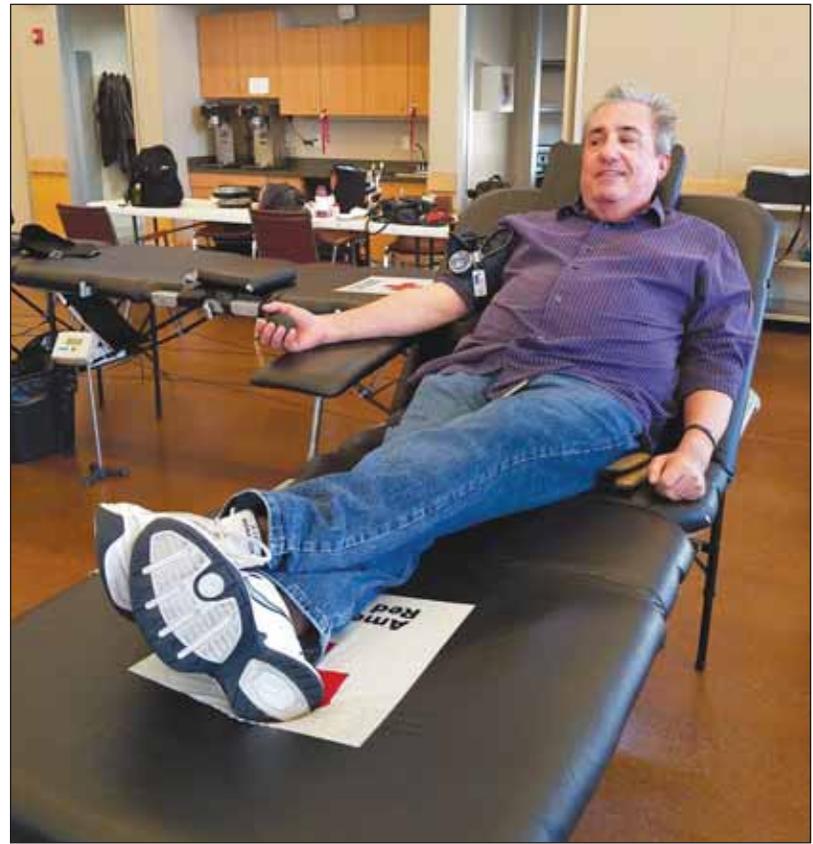
Reaching the milestone "gets me ready to gear up to get to 200," Petty said. He estimates getting there will take him nearly 17 years.

"It makes me feel good that my donations are going to people who are sick or injured," Petty said. "In the Bay Area we don't have enough blood donors, so the Red Cross actually has to import blood from other parts of the country."

"And with all the snowstorms out east, they've canceled hundreds of blood drives, so there's a shortage on the shelf," he added.

Severe winter weather, combined with seasonal illnesses and busy holiday schedules, led to more than 28,000 fewer blood and platelet donations than what was needed in November and December, Red Cross officials said in issuing a call for donations.

"Even temporary disruptions to blood



RED CROSS Livermore resident Thomas Petty was recognized for his 100th blood donation on Jan. 12.

and platelet donations can diminish the availability for hospital patients," Red Cross Blood Services senior vice president Clifford Numark said in a statement. "It's the blood on the shelves that helps save lives in an emergency, and that's why we're asking eligible individuals to make an appointment to give blood or platelets today."

With a lack of donors in the Bay Area, Petty encourages people to give blood if they can.

"Bay Area hospitals need over 300 units of blood every single day, and we don't have enough people donating," he said.

To schedule an appointment to give blood, visit redcrossblood.org, use the Blood Donor App or call 1-800-RED-CROSS. ■



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Flu season in full swing at local, national level

Officials encourage residents to get vaccinated

By JULIA BROWN

Fever. Achy muscles. Feeling weak.

These are telltale signs of the flu, which is rampant throughout the country this winter including here in California.

All U.S. states except Hawaii are reporting widespread flu activity, according to the Centers for Disease Control. For the week ending Jan. 13, the proportion of people seeing their health care provider for flu-like symptoms was 6.3% — the highest percentage recorded since the 2003-04 season.

Flu activity is widespread in the state. As of Jan. 13, 74 residents under the age of 65 have died from the flu this season, California Department of Public Health reported in an update last week. At the same time last year that number was 14. Only flu deaths in people less than 65 years old are reported to the state.

No flu deaths have been reported in Alameda County to date, according to county Public Health Department spokeswoman Sherri Willis.

"We have seen increased visits to emergency departments, hospitals and urgent care which is pretty typical across the state," Willis said. "We are encouraging people to get a flu shot — 'it's not too late to vaccinate' is our chant."

Willis added that although this year's flu vaccine is less effective than in years past, "it

does provide some protection."

"There is plenty of vaccine in Alameda County; we're not experiencing any shortages," she said.

"The rest of the preventative measures people can take are standard germ abatement precautions," Willis continued. "Stay home if you're sick, drink plenty of fluids, cover your cough and your sneeze with a tissue or your arm, and stay fairly isolated from other members of your family if you can do that."

County health officials have also been advising residents on when they should go the emergency room.

Typical symptoms of the flu include fever, cough, headache, muscle ache and weakness; a sore throat and runny nose can also be present.

But more serious symptoms in children include troubled breathing, a "blueish or grayish pallor to the skin," rash and an unwillingness to take fluids, Willis said. In adults these include shortness of breath, abdominal pain and sudden dizziness or confusion.

"Those may be flu complications that you really want to be aware of," Willis said. "But if you're in doubt, call your doctor first before you dial 9-1-1 or definitely before you go to an emergency department. The worst place you could actually be in is

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PARENTING

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are telling us kids coming out of even these top-tier schools are not prepared with what we call 21st century skills," she said.

Pope's keynote will touch on some of those strategies for parents of kindergarteners through high school seniors while also presenting supporting data from surveys of youth.

"There's a lot that families and kids can do immediately and there are some things that are more long-term that schools should probably consider because we're all in this together," Pope said. "In our society right now it's kind of a thing to be busy, and they take it as a good thing but at some point there are a lot of health issues associated with lack of sleep and stress, and that goes all the way up through adults."

After the keynote, parents and educators will take part in breakout sessions facilitated

by PUSD staff. Sessions include "Raising healthy, happy kids" — which will focus on finding balance in playtime, downtime and family time, McGovern says — and "Choosing the right fit college," among others.

"It's really quite positive that Pleasanton the city is taking on this initiative," Pope said. "This is basically saying as a city, parent education and child wellbeing is a priority for us, and that's great." ■

Overloaded and Underprepared

What: Second annual parenting forum

Who: Keynote speaker Denise Pope

When: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Feb. 3

Where: Harvest Park Middle School, 4900 Valley Ave.

To attend: Registration is free; visit pleasantonfun.com and search for course 6698.

TRANSPLANT

Continued from Page 15

"There are many moving parts to make donation a reality for the more than 10,000 people who are waiting for an organ transplant in Northern California and Nevada," said Cindy Siljestrom, CEO of Donor Network West. "We are very proud to have worked as a team to give them hope. We thank the donors and their families for saying 'yes' to donation in 2017 and for helping to heal lives."

These deceased donors could potentially help nearly 70,000 people — people like Amanda Cerro.

Cerro remembers the details of her accident vividly. She and her then-boyfriend had begun frying beignets in her kitchen, when the pan started to smoke — the oil in the pan had caught on fire. Within seconds, Cerro said, the flames were two or three feet tall and rising.

Her boyfriend carried the pan outside, while she grabbed her dog and laptop and then followed him through the front door. After putting her dog on the front lawn, she ran back up the porch steps — and was hit by the inflamed pan.

"I walked up the porch, into this inferno," she said.

Her boyfriend had spilled some oil onto his hand and thrown the pan in pain, unwittingly into Cerro's path. Her hair on fire, she ran screaming from the porch.

When your body is on fire, all thoughts of "stop, drop and roll" are erased from your mind, Cerro said.

"All you can think about is 'I'm on fire,'" she said.

As she ran, she tripped and fell onto some wet grass, which extinguished the flames.

Two passing tourists found her and called 9-1-1. The ambulance that arrived didn't depart for 30 minutes, though, as the

medics were trying to fly in a helicopter. But rough weather conditions prevented a helicopter from flying in, so emergency personnel drove Cerro to Santa Clara Valley Medical Center in San Jose.

She arrived at the burn clinic 90 minutes after she was injured with burns on 35% of her body, most of which were third degree. She received skin grafts on her right hand, entire right leg and both her feet.

Cerro spent five weeks in the burn unit, recovering and learning to walk again. But the effects of the incident were more far-reaching. She ended up leaving the child welfare advocacy job she had loved, as she said it was too difficult to deal with others' trauma while she was still dealing with her own.

"It's only the last seven months that I've started to feel a sense of normalcy," she said.

Now, Cerro works as a substitute teacher and a paraeducator in the San Ramon Valley Unified School District. And about six months ago, she became an advocate for Donor Network West, attending events and visiting schools to talk about what it means to be a donor.

According to Donor Network West, almost 1,400 people in Alameda County are currently waiting for an organ transplant, and every day 22 people in the United States die while awaiting a transplant.

"I would just highly encourage people to be informed about what it means to be an organ donor," Cerro said. One organ donor can save up to eight lives, she said, and one tissue donor can heal up to 75 people.

"It is wonderful news that Donor Network West saw record high donors this last year," she added. "We hope to have another record high year in 2018!"

For more information on Donor Network West and organ donation, visit www.donor-networkwest.org. ■

FLU

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an emergency department unless it's really necessary because you'll be exposed to even more germs."

Federal officials say flu activity is expected to continue for several more weeks.

A yearly flu vaccine is recommended for

everyone six months of age and older. The nasal spray vaccine is not available this season, so all flu vaccines are being administered as shots.

To find the nearest location administering flu vaccines, visit <https://vaccinefinder.org>. For more information on this flu season, visit the Alameda County Public Health Department website at www.acphd.org. ■

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