

# TAHOE FOREST HEALTH SYSTEM MAGAZINE

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 3 / 2014

## Professional Training, Personalized Care

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## Local Doctors Go to the Olympics

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## Wellness

Active Kids are Happy Kids

Page 33



# CONCUSSION EDUCATION + PREVENTION PROGRAM

Prevention and Education in Partnership with the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District

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## PUBLISHING INFO

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To add your name to our mailing list, change your address, or for questions on any topic, please call **(530) 582-6290**, or email us at [information@tfhd.com](mailto:information@tfhd.com).

## ON THE COVER //



**Concussions are all too common in our active community.**

Read our **Concussion Education & Prevention** (page 5) feature to learn more about TFHS' partnership with local physicians and the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District.

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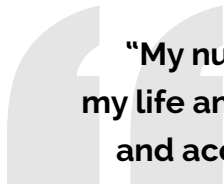
# WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

## Incline Village Community Hospital Emergency Room

I was treated so very well, with kindness from everyone. I am proud to have this fine hospital in our hometown!"



**About the TFHD Emergency Room**  
Best experience I have ever had in an emergency room. I wish all hospitals were like Tahoe Forest. Very pleasant experience."



## Tahoe Forest Hospital ICU

"My nurse got me through one of the worst nights of my life and the physician went out of his way to explain and accommodate my needs. All the staff are great!"



## Tahoe Forest Hospital Ambulatory Surgery

"All the personnel were helpful, professional and caring! I felt comfortable, safe and well cared for."



## Tahoe Forest Hospital OB/Maternity

"The nurses were amazing! I will never have a baby anywhere else!"



## OUR PRIORITY is Top Quality Care

At Tahoe Forest Health System, our focus is to provide you and your family with the very best health care experience possible.

If you have any comments or feedback during your hospital visit, we encourage you to talk to any staff member from the department you are visiting, or call our Service Excellence Hotline, (530) 582-6544.

**Striving for the Perfect Care Experience for Every Patient.**

## OUR HOSPITALS

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10121 Pine Avenue  
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Main phone line (530) 587-6011

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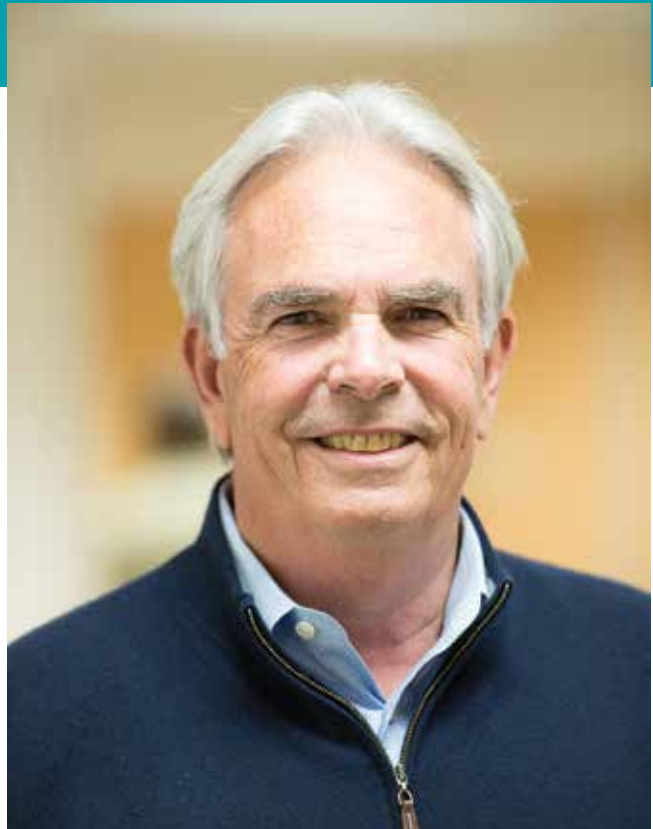
# A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

## BOB SCHAPPER

Keeping our children safe while playing sports is a big concern for many of us. With so much in the press today about concussion prevention and mild traumatic brain injuries (mTBI), we thought you would be interested in the concussion prevention work being done locally by Dr. Nina Winans and other local physicians, teachers, coaches and partners. There is a significant amount of collaboration in place right here in our community to address awareness and education of this important topic.

You'll also find an inspiring story about local Incline Village couple Megan and Gary Kasden, who won tickets to the Super Bowl XLVIII courtesy of the Gene Upshaw Memorial Fund Super Bowl raffle. Unfortunately, Gary Kasden, who had recently completed cancer treatment at the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center, was unable to make the trip. The story tells how the Kasdens generously donated their tickets to Spring Creek, Nevada, teenager Kody Beach, also a cancer patient, through the Northern Nevada Children's Cancer Foundation.

In our feedback from readers so far, a great deal of interest is expressed about our local physician profiles. In this issue we spotlight Drs. Arth, Barta, Burkholder and Palmer, as well as a special feature about a family of physicians' recent trip to Sochi, Russia to cheer local Olympian Travis Ganong. We



hope you enjoy reading about these exceptional physicians, and learn more about their backgrounds and personal interests.

As always, we welcome your feedback about our programs and services at any time. Contact us at (530) 582-6290, or 582-6266, or [information@tfhd.com](mailto:information@tfhd.com).

## ONLINE RESOURCES

**NEWS, EVENTS, BOARD MEETINGS & SERVICES OF THE TAHOE FOREST HEALTH SYSTEM**  
[www.tfhd.com](http://www.tfhd.com)

**TAHOE FOREST HEALTH SYSTEM**  
[www.tfhd.com](http://www.tfhd.com)

**GENE UPSHAW MEMORIAL GOLF CLASSIC**  
[www.GU63.org](http://www.GU63.org)

**GENE UPSHAW MEMORIAL TAHOE FOREST CANCER CENTER**  
[www.tahoecancercenter.com](http://www.tahoecancercenter.com)

**CANCER CARE ENDOWMENT**  
[www.endowment4cancercare.com](http://www.endowment4cancercare.com)

**CITIZENS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**  
[www.hospitalcoc.org](http://www.hospitalcoc.org)

**BEST OF TAHOE CHEFS**  
[www.bestoftahoechefs.org](http://www.bestoftahoechefs.org)

**MEASURE C**  
[www.measurecprojects.com](http://www.measurecprojects.com)

Get social with us!



# CONCUSSION

## EDUCATION + PREVENTION PROGRAM

Thor Retzlaff's memory of the crash is nonexistent. The now 18-year-old Truckee High School senior was competing in a freestyle skiing competition in April 2011 when he landed a jump and the impact sent his knee crashing into his face.

"I was on the chairlift, and then it felt like I blinked for five seconds and I was in the hospital," Retzlaff says.

In another era—not long ago—before coaches, athletes and parents were well-informed about the impact concussions have on brains, Retzlaff's injury may have been chalked up to 'having his bell rung.'

But, largely due to the efforts of Tahoe Forest Health System-affiliated physicians and local educators, when and how young Truckee/Tahoe athletes return to physical activity—much less competition—following a head injury is governed by a strict set of guidelines. Retzlaff went through a two-week period of rest and a subsequent mental acuity test known by the acronym ImPACT—Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing, developed by University of Pittsburgh-affiliated scientists—before he could return to action.

“Nothing impacts them as profoundly as a head injury. It impacts them in every aspect of life. You can be in a wheelchair and still go to work, still take tests... whereas with a concussion you can have this out-of-body feeling, impacted emotional ability and a hard time concentrating and getting through the day. That's why I care so much about it.”

**Nina Winans, MD**

Those measures were laid out in part by Dr. Nina Winans—board certified in Sports Medicine and the medical director of Tahoe Forest Health System's Tahoe Center for Health and Sports Performance. As a former college athlete herself and a parent of two Truckee High School athletes, Winans is

one of the most respected sports medicine physicians in the region. In concert with fellow physicians and educators at the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District (TTUSD), Winans built and administers a program to protect children following head injuries.

The need for the program is very real, says her colleague Dr. Eddie Mozen, an ER physician at Tahoe Forest Hospital in Truckee.

On a typical weekend during the ski season, Tahoe Forest Hospital Emergency Room physicians can see 10 to 15 children with concussions—some very severe, Mozen says. A ski racer himself, Mozen remembers an incident about eight years ago where he treated a teenaged boy for a concussion one day, advising him to stay off the slopes for two weeks.

"I saw him out there the next day," Mozen says. "At that time, coaches and parents weren't really paying attention; concussion awareness wasn't really in the news like it is now."

Awareness—both national and local, due in part to concussions suffered by retired NFL players becoming a major news story—has risen substantially during that time, and for good reason, Mozen says.

"The problem is when you get hit in the head you have certain symptoms—loss of reaction time and memory—and coming back too soon from an injury can cause those symptoms to last for years. Those functions can get stuck at a level below your baseline and not come back up," says Mozen.

With about a million concussions occurring annually in the U.S., "it's our job to make sure we protect these kids and don't let them come back too early," says Winans.

Winans—who ran cross country, and established and captained the women's collegiate soccer team at Allegheny College in Pennsylvania in the early 1980s—was among those at the forefront of concussion care during a fellowship at UC Davis-Berkeley's Sports Medicine program in the early 90's. Dr. Winans received her training at the UC Davis Sports Medicine program under the mentorship of Dr. Jeffrey Tanji, a foremost sports medicine physician. Throughout her training she worked extensively with UC



Nina Winans, MD. and Truckee High School Principal John Carlson

Berkeley Golden Bears athletes following concussions and established early protocols for dealing with head injuries. Winans was recognized by her professors for the high quality of her work.

In 1994, Winans moved to Truckee and took a job with the Truckee Tahoe Medical Group (TTMG), where she continued to emphasize the importance of concussion awareness to her patients. The issue gained attention when NFL players suffering the long-term consequences of concussions became national news in recent years.

About five years ago, Winans, with support from TFHS and a group of local physicians—including Mozen and TTMG’s Dr. Gina Barta—began buying and administering the ImpACT tests to TTUSD students with the help of Jaime Legare, Truckee High School’s athletic director. Athletes at the schools take the computerized test twice during their high school career to establish baselines for mental acuity and reaction times, says Truckee High School Principal John Carlson, a partner in the program.

The test, along with education for student athletes, parents, and coaches, is the first step in the school district’s

concussion management plan, Winans says.

After the tests—which every team takes in the first few weeks of a sports season, Carlson says—students are monitored during games by coaches, Tahoe Center for Health and Sports Performance’s Athletic Trainer Abbe Gage, or other volunteer medical professionals like Winans, Barta and TTMG’s Dr. Gregg Paul. If a student suffers a concussion, or is suspected to have suffered a concussion, the student is immediately removed from gameplay and not allowed to return until he or she is cleared by a medical professional trained in recognizing the signs of concussion, Winans says.

“Physical and mental rest are the most important treatment in the first 7 to 10 days following a concussion,” Winans says. “They may be out of school for a few days or a week or take on modified academic duties. Then, gradually, we build things back up to low impact exercise. The final piece is the post-concussion ImpACT test that we do when everything else looks like it has resolved. We sit them down at the computer and see if they’re back to their baseline or if we need to look at some continued treatment.”



Nina Winans, MD, and Truckee High student, Mackenzie Redner, work through an ImPACT test in the Truckee High School computer lab.

The entire process is cataloged by Corinne Harvey, executive director of TTUSD student services, to ensure a thorough process, Carlson says.

Injuries young athletes suffer to joints or muscles are critical and often urgent, but properly dealing with a concussion is also a matter of paramount importance, Winans adds.

“Nothing impacts them as profoundly as a head injury,” Winans says. “It impacts them in every aspect of life. You can be in a wheelchair and still go to work, still take tests... whereas with a concussion you can have this out-of-body feeling, impacted emotional ability and a hard time concentrating and getting through the day. That’s why I care so much about it.”

To that end, physicians and educators have partnered to dispense education to athletes, coaches and parents.

In an effort supported by the TTUSD’s top educator—Superintendent Dr. Rob Leri—both Truckee and North Tahoe High work to get the message first and foremost out to students. At Truckee High, Retzlaff commented on the effectiveness of the Tahoe-based nonprofit High Fives

Foundation presentation to local schools to raise awareness about the impact of concussions.

“I would suspect 70 percent of our kids here ski or recreate outdoors or play a sport,” Carlson says when illustrating the need for continued education on the matter.

“Unfortunately, concussions aren’t so rare in a community where we have so many competitive skiers,” says Joanna Mitchell, principal of North Tahoe High School. To communicate with parents, general information on the school’s concussion management plan goes out to them at the beginning of the school year, Mitchell says. In addition, either Winans or one of her fellow physicians tries to attend and speak at as many local parents’ meetings as possible to raise awareness about concussion impacts and the testing program.

Physicians like Mozen help to educate coaches so they can identify the signs of concussion—impaired balance, focus and memory, to name a few. He also serves with the Far West Masters Scholarship Program, which buys the ImPACT tests for local ski racers.

To help students recover from concussions, the schools and





Joanna Mitchell, North Tahoe High School Principal

Wells Fargo Insurance have partnered on the Play It Safe program. The campaign provides free post-concussion consultations with Winans or other certified post-concussion doctors for students who have suffered concussions. It is paid for by the Tahoe Institute for Rural Health Research (TIRHR, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Tahoe Forest Health System) with funds from the Gene Upshaw Memorial Fund—the charitable body whose namesake was a legend with the NFL's Oakland Raiders and a part-time Truckee resident. The Play It Safe program has resulted in more students seeking qualified professional help and guidance on the return-to-play decision without worry about the cost of professional care.

TIRHR's scientists and engineers are developing a simple device to assist in the objective diagnosis of mTBI. The device would signal when participants should be sidelined and would also be used to determine when they are healthy enough to return to play. The goal is to prevent athletes from suffering successive head impacts when the brain is already injured, resulting in more severe brain trauma. This research is being conducted in cooperation with the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District, the Tahoe Forest Hospital Emergency Room, the Incline Village Community

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## PLAY IT SAFE CONCUSSION CARE PROGRAM

### Innovative program offered by Wells Fargo Insurance and ImpACT

Committed to protecting its student athletes, the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District, in partnership with the Tahoe Forest Health System, announced it is implementing the **Play It Safe Concussion Care<sup>SM</sup>** program. Wells Fargo Insurance, part of Wells Fargo & Company, developed the innovative concussion management treatment that provides medical expense benefits to athletes who sustain a covered head injury. Developed in 2011, the program also offers education, neurocognitive testing, access to medical professionals who are credentialed ImpACT consultants, and excess insurance coverage to protect the financial well-being of athletes and their families.

By offering the Play it Safe Concussion Care program, Tahoe Forest Health System and the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District will now be able to administer a series of pre-season baseline tests to their players, as well as provide an insurance policy for each player ensuring access to a concussion care specialist post injury, if needed.

The Tahoe Institute for Rural Health Research (TIRHR) sponsored the use of the Play It Safe Concussion Care program, whose efforts are supported in part by the Gene Upshaw Memorial Fund, ([www.gu63.org](http://www.gu63.org)).

The Play It Safe Concussion Care Program is available for all student athletes in contact sports in the school district, which provides excess insurance for proper treatment of concussion injuries. As a result of the program, more students can access qualified, cost-effective professional help and guidance on their return-to-play decision.

**The mission of TIRHR is to develop innovative technologies to improve delivery of health care in rural areas. The TIRHR and its partners are working within the Truckee/North Tahoe region to test athletes and educate parents, coaches and athletic trainers about concussion treatment and prevention.**

# CONCUSSION SYMPTOMS + PREVENTION

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS + SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

### Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians

If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes

### Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just "not feeling right" or "feeling down"

## HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD PREVENT A CONCUSSION OR OTHER SERIOUS BRAIN INJURY?

- Ensure that they follow their coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity. Protective equipment should fit properly and be well maintained.
- Wearing a helmet is a must to reduce the risk of a serious brain injury or skull fracture.
- However, helmets are not designed to prevent concussions. There is no "concussion-proof" helmet. So, even with a helmet, it is important for kids and teens to avoid hits to the head.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?

- 1. SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION RIGHT AWAY.**  
A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to regular activities, including sports.
- 2. KEEP YOUR CHILD OUT OF PLAY.**  
Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play the day of the injury and until a health care professional says it's OK.  
  
Children who return to play too soon—while the brain is still healing—risk a greater chance of having a repeat concussion. Repeat or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.
- 3. TELL YOUR CHILD'S COACH ABOUT ANY PREVIOUS CONCUSSION.** Coaches should know if your child had a previous concussion. Your child's coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

Source: CDC.gov



Continued from page 8

Hospital Emergency Room, the Truckee Tahoe Medical Group, as well as emergency clinics and ski race programs at local resorts. Representatives of TFHS and TIRHR are working within the Tahoe region to test athletes who have suffered a potential mTBI to perfect this technology.

Another aspect of concussion prevention and safety for student athletes in local schools is the Athletic Training (AT) program organized through the health system's Tahoe Center for Health and Sports Performance. The certified athletic trainer participates in soccer, football, volleyball, cross country and downhill skiing, as well as practice games, team meetings and community outreach. The goal of AT coverage is to improve the safety and availability of care for high school athletes and help physicians such as Winans, Mozen, Barta and Paul evaluate possible concussions for further follow-up care. The AT program also helps facilitate concussion testing, including ImPACT testing.

All of these tentacles spreading out from Winans' work are just tools in a kit, she says. Increased education is the name of the game. To that end, a free community concussion education program was held last fall, also sponsored by TIRHR. The program was designed for coaches, teachers, parents, athletes and school officials and was presented by doctors from the Sports Legacy Institute. More than 350 people attended the educational event held at Olympic Village Inn at Squaw Valley.

"One of the things about what I do that I love is that (Tahoe Forest) Health System has committed to bringing this education and awareness to our community," Winans says.

“One of the things about what I do that I love is that (Tahoe Forest) Health System has committed to bringing this education and awareness to our community.”

**Nina Winans, MD**

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## ABOUT ImPACT TESTING

### **ImPACT (Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing)**

is the first, most widely used and most scientifically-validated computerized concussion evaluation system. Developed in the early 1990s by Drs. Mark Lovell and Joseph Maroon, ImPACT is a 20-minute test that has become a standard tool used in comprehensive clinical management of concussions for athletes of all ages. ImPACT Applications, Inc. was co-founded by Mark Lovell, PhD, Joseph Maroon, MD, and Michael (Micky) Collins, PhD.

Given the inherent difficulties in concussion management, it is important to manage concussions on an individualized basis and to implement baseline testing and/or post-injury neurocognitive testing. This type of concussion assessment can help to objectively evaluate the concussed athlete's post-injury condition and track recovery for safe return to play, thus preventing the cumulative effects of concussion. In fact, neurocognitive testing has recently been called the "cornerstone" of proper concussion management by an international panel of sports medicine experts. ImPACT can be administered by an athletic trainer, school nurse, athletic director, team coach, team doctor, or anyone trained to administer baseline testing. ImPACT is the most widely used computer-based testing program in the world and is implemented effectively across high school, collegiate and professional levels of sport participation.



# PROFESSIONAL TRAINING,

# Personalized Care

Skilled Doctors,  
Self-Reliant and  
Passionate About  
Personalized Health Care



“I found that (children) were the people I enjoyed working with the most. They weren't particularly tainted by the world yet and there was an ability to influence their lives.”

**Chris Arth, MD**

## Chris Arth, MD Pediatrics

You may recognize Dr. Chris Arth from his long-time practice as Truckee pediatrician and his rotations at Tahoe Forest Hospital. You might recognize him from teaching local fifth grade sex education classes. Or his work for local juvenile obesity awareness. Or his efforts to immunize local school children. Or the prenatal classes he teaches. Or the athletic physicals at local high schools, or any number of other youth health initiatives he's been involved with during his 35 years in the area.

"When you're working with kids, either you love it or you don't," he says. His wife Christine—who also goes by Chris and was a longtime teacher of *Mommy and Me* and *Baby and Me* classes at Truckee's Recreation Center—and Dr. Arth get recognized at the grocery store constantly. "We're in touch with a ton of families, and I love it. I love the contact with the community and the schools."

Arth was geared toward a people-profession from his time as a Stanford psychology undergraduate in the late '60s and, after graduating, dove into medicine after doing a year of research at UC Davis on the impact of cigarette smoking. He entered the Davis medical school's third graduating class and by his third year began to lean toward pediatrics.

"I found that (children) were the people I enjoyed working with the most," Arth says. "They weren't particularly tainted by the world yet and there was an ability to influence their lives."

During his schooling, the Southern California native also took up skiing at Tahoe with a group of friends from Davis—the beginning of a lifelong love for the region.

After school, Arth practiced medicine at Oakland Children's Hospital and UC San Francisco, making valuable contacts in pediatric specialties he is still able to lean on for help to this day.

By 1978, he was looking to move on from the Bay.

"After being in the city that long I was ready to come out, so on a whim when I came up to Tahoe on a ski trip I looked to see if there was any pediatric need in (Truckee)," Arth says. Low and behold, the one-pediatrician town did have a need, and after testing the waters here on an interim basis during the summer of 1979, Arth set up shop for good that fall.

"I came here and it just became a fit pretty quickly because of the small-town atmosphere and a really, really excellent medical staff," Arth says. "I felt I was working with really good and well-trained people, and it was interesting because there

aren't so many specialists right here so you've got to do more on your own."

Arth also gained an affinity for the community—a place where he's raised four of his own kids, now 22, 28, 28 and 32.

Over the years Arth has been a natural teacher, working to educate local school children, nurse practitioners and aspiring medical students alike. In recent years he's assumed a role in the UC Davis-driven Rural PRIME (Programs in Medical Education) initiative as a Volunteer Clinical Associate for medical students. The goal of the UC Davis partnership with Tahoe Forest Health System is to prepare future physician leaders for rural practice in California. Medical school graduates gain an understanding of the unique strengths and needs of rural populations, and learn skills to provide excellent clinical care and work collaboratively to foster healthy rural communities.

"It's rewarding and nice for me in that it keeps me fresh by making sure I'm knowledgeable enough with the literature so I can converse with the students and faculty," Arth says.

In addition to his teaching duties, Arth serves as medical director of the immunization initiative of the hospital district's Wellness Neighborhood. Under those auspices, he heads up efforts to educate parents about immunizations and to combat obesity in local schools, which remains a problem even though local numbers are slightly better than national averages.

On top of all that, Arth's practice continues going strong to this day. In an effort to be as available as possible, the practice keeps 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. hours Monday through Thursday, as well as offering Saturday hours, and keeps a physician on call 24-7.

"We try to extend ourselves to parents so they're comfortable with us, and we'll never yell at you for questions—there are no dumb questions," Arth says.

### FOR APPOINTMENTS OR MORE INFORMATION:

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Pediatrics

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Truckee, CA 96161

**(530) 587-3523**

## Lisanne Burkholder, MD Internal Medicine

Patients have a tremendous opportunity when they visit Dr. Lisanne Burkholder, an internist with the Tahoe Forest MultiSpecialty Clinics.

They can pick the brain of a doctor who has practiced on both sides of the Pacific—here in California and in rural Australia. They can check in on their health beyond their immediate worries with a physician who has a Yale undergraduate education and medical training from University of California, San Francisco—an opportunity she hopes they take advantage of.

“It’s easy to see a doctor when you have a cold and have a five-minute visit to get a prescription and walk away,” says Burkholder. “What is missed in that opportunity is to talk in general more about your health and if there are some preventive behaviors you could engage in. What I try to be is very opportunistic when I see patients. I’ll see a 60-year-old man who’s never heard someone say ‘it’s time for you to be screened for colon cancer—it’s time for a colonoscopy.’ It’s important to take advantage of that time.”

Burkholder, a second-generation physician (her father is a retired pathologist), emphasizes putting patients at ease when they enter her office so they can honestly share the facts of their current state of health, she says.

“I try to be myself with people so they can be themselves with me,” says Burkholder. “I want to hear where they’re honestly at with their health. I’m there to help them.”

Raised in Madison, Wisconsin, and lured west, after spending time in the Peace Corps, by memories of a childhood road trip to the western national parks, Burkholder took up residence in San Francisco. During that time, she would take trips to Truckee to cross-country ski and became enamored with the area.

Her medical school training focused on internal medicine, a career suited to her personality, Burkholder says.

“I really admired my teachers because they were very gifted diagnosticians. They could think through a complex problem and take care of something unusual and not just look at someone coming through the door with a cough and think ‘this is bronchitis.’ They had to have a deeper, more inquiring mind.”

After spending time in Seattle at the University of Washington Medical Center and another stint in the Bay Area, Burkholder met her husband, an Australian native, while recreating in Tahoe. The pair decided their best chance at seeing if a marriage would work was to start by living on the same continent, so in 2000, Burkholder began searching for jobs in Australia. By coincidence, she was speaking to a colleague who had been hired to run a rural medical school down under. The Australian government—recognizing the lack of rural doctors—established a collection of rural medical schools in an attempt to boost the number of rural physicians and hired Burkholder to help run a school in rural Shepparton in Victoria, about two hours outside of Melbourne.

“In Australia they have a very hard time getting doctors to move to rural areas. The perception is that the medicine is better in Melbourne and Sydney than it is in rural areas, which is false,” but it’s difficult to get doctors to give up both their professional and personal comforts for rural life, she says.

Burkholder spent seven years there seeing patients and training medical students. The experience shaped her in ways practical—with a two-hour trip to major medical centers, Burkholder had to treat and stabilize patients suffering from heart attacks before they made the journey, something unheard of in more urban settings—and in her philosophy as a physician.

“Paternalism is still very much practiced there,” she says. “The other internists I worked with had consultation rooms with the big chair, the big desk and the two small chairs on the other side. Patients accepted what a doctor said without question, and there was very little regulation or oversight on how they operated.”

Professionally, Burkholder prefers the more open environment enjoyed by her and her peers in Truckee at Tahoe Forest Health System.

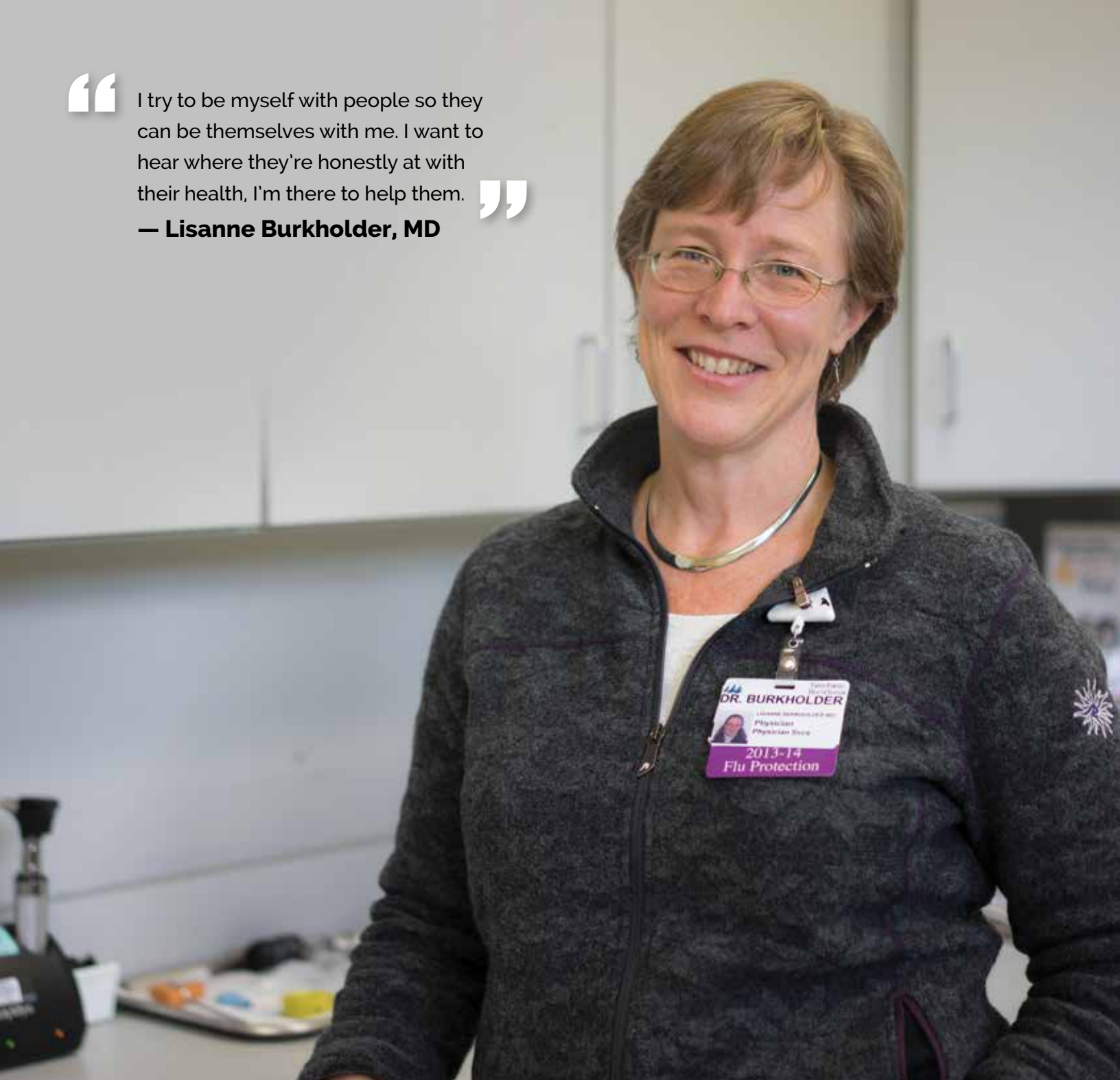
### FOR APPOINTMENTS OR MORE INFORMATION:

**Lisanne Burkholder, MD**  
Internal Medicine

Tahoe Forest MultiSpecialty Clinics  
10978 Donner Pass Road  
Truckee, CA 96161

**(530) 582-1212**

“ I try to be myself with people so they can be themselves with me. I want to hear where they're honestly at with their health, I'm there to help them. ”  
— **Lisanne Burkholder, MD**



“One of the best parts is the quality and collegiality of the medical staff here,” Burkholder says. “In Australia, that didn’t exist. Everyone was on an island; everyone was a little bit of a maverick. It makes a huge difference to work in a place

where people welcome questions and welcome inquiry. It’s a much more enjoyable environment to work in, and it is also far better for patients when their doctors communicate well with each other.”





“You get to live in a beautiful place and you get to know the families. It’s wonderful. Sometimes that’s the hard part, too. You get attached to families during the whole life cycle.”

**Gina Barta, MD**



## Gina Barta, MD Family Medicine

“From babies to 100 year olds.” It’s the variety that Dr. Gina Barta loves about her job as a family medicine practitioner and president at the Truckee Tahoe Medical Group’s (TTMG) Tahoe City and Squaw Valley offices. She also serves as chief of staff at Tahoe Forest Health System. Whether it’s repairing broken limbs off the ski hill or dealing with chronic illness in the elderly, Barta enjoys doing it all.

“You have to like variety and you have to be comfortable not knowing everything, but knowing you can help people find the answer,” Barta says. “Perseverance is an asset in family medicine. Sometimes I think it’s more important than being the smartest person in the room.”

The enjoyment of wearing different hats as a physician and in life is part of what drew Barta into family medicine. Her father is also a doctor, and her mother a nurse, so medicine is in her blood.

Her undergraduate career at UC Berkeley was spent as an English major—a path she says is especially appropriate to working in medicine.

“The longer I’m in medicine, the more I think it’s a relevant major, because communication with people and understanding how human beings act and their motivations helps you be a better physician,” Barta says.

During a period after her undergrad, Barta—who grew up in the Bay Area taking family ski trips to Tahoe—taught wilderness first aid and CPR and later began working at TTMG, first as a receptionist then as a medical assistant, learning to take vitals, among other skills. That experience and a health worker class at Berkeley pushed her to enroll at the University of Nevada, Reno’s School of Medicine.

Barta went on to study family medicine and served a residency in Utah, where circumstances again pushed her to expand her expertise.

“In Utah, if you’re a woman and you deliver babies, you end up with a lot of women and babies on your patient list,” Barta says. “The staff there joked that I was really a gynecologist.”

Barta eventually landed back at TTMG in 1999, and she’s been there ever since.

“You get to live in a beautiful place and you get to know the families. It’s wonderful,” Barta says. “Sometimes that’s the hard part, too. You get attached to families during the whole life cycle.”

### FOR APPOINTMENTS OR MORE INFORMATION:

**Gina Barta, MD**  
Family Medicine

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925 North Lake Boulevard  
Tahoe City, CA 96145

**(530) 581-8864**

Barta, who is involved in Tahoe Forest’s Wellness Neighborhood’s work around chronic care management, has an interest in prevention programs and is the medical director of the TFHS Home Health department. She enjoys the challenges she faces as a family medicine practitioner.

“Sometimes you have patients who don’t fit into a nice, neat little box when they go to specialists, and they end up coming back here with the same problems,” she says. “We still have to figure out an answer, together.”



# Tailored treatments

## Sequencing key to quicker clinical score

[ Cancer is secretive.

Tumors grow without us knowing, migrate and hide in other organs and resist treatments for reasons we don't fully understand. For years, a major clinical and scientific goal has been to drag cancer into the light. We are almost there.

Clinicians and researchers at UC Davis now have a state-of-the-art genome sequencing tool to expose cancer, technology that can quickly read cancer genomes and tell us which mutations are making it grow and spread; providing, in essence, a shop manual for tumors that clinicians can use to guide treatment.

### **A genomic revolution**

When talking about cancer, clinicians and researchers speak a different language. They use abbreviations like EGFR, KRAS, PI3-kinase and many others, references to the mutated genes and proteins that

drive cancer birth, growth and metastasis. Entire generations of scientists have devoted their careers to understanding how these mutations generate disease, but that knowledge hasn't always translated into improved patient outcomes. However, recent advances in genomics — the ability to read the letters in a DNA sequence — will soon allow clinicians to translate this information into better patient care.

“We're creating gene panels that will identify the mutations in each patient's cancer,” says Clifford Tepper, technical director of the UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center's Genomics Shared Resource. “For any patient that comes in the door, we want to be able to precisely molecularly characterize their tumor.”

Though clinicians have been able to profile some cancer mutations, their range has been



“**Genetic sequencing** can analyze all the genes **simultaneously** and **do it much faster.**”

~ Jeff Gregg

“For any patient that comes in the door, we want to be able to **precisely molecularly characterize** their tumor.”

~ Clifford Tepper

limited to one or two genes per test, an expensive and time-consuming process. In addition, biopsies haven't always produced enough material to test for all relevant mutations.

“Genetic sequencing can analyze all the genes simultaneously and do it much faster,” says Jeff Gregg, professor and senior director of clinical pathology

in the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine. “We can then get the results to clinicians, who can start molecularly guided treatment significantly earlier.”

The new panels will analyze selected regions of a tumor's genome rapidly, picking out mutations from as many as 400 choices. This approach, called

massively parallel sequencing, will provide the big picture on a tumor and influence a variety of clinical decisions.

“This is a revolution in the way we approach and treat patients,” says gastrointestinal oncologist Thomas Semrad. “Patients will receive profiles to tailor the right treatments to their specific needs.”

### Personalizing Treatment

The new gene panels will read mutations that are “clinically actionable.” In other words, they will pinpoint genetic variations that directly affect patient care. This could mean finding a mutation that can be targeted by a specific drug, determining whether the cancer is resistant to treatment or precisely classifying a particular tumor.

“Once we get the results, we will create a detailed report,” says Tepper. “We’ll list and prioritize all the aberrations we find, the impact they have on protein function, which drugs target those specific mutations and whether there are any clinical trials available.”

With this genetic report, oncologists will have a powerful new tool to build a treatment plan. For example, a

comprehensive list of mutations will tell them whether a given therapy will have any effect against a patient’s cancer.

“Certain mutations in the KRAS gene indicate that colon cancer will not respond to a particular antibody drug,” says Semrad. “If a patient’s cancer has that mutation, we know to administer a different treatment.”

Other variations might allow physicians to recommend less toxic treatments. Semrad notes that certain mutations in the EGFR gene in lung tumors allow patients to take an oral medication that is much gentler than traditional chemotherapy.

Equally important, the panels will provide more information than previous methods — like going from a magnifying glass to a microscope. This will expose mutations that are either uncommon or may exist in only a few cells.

“The beauty of the targeted approach is that we’re able to sequence at high depth — sequencing each gene a thousand times,” says Gregg. “If you have a rare mutation in a population of cells, the panel will pick that out.”

### Finding New Therapies

Genomic sequencing will also have an enormous impact on clinical trials and drug discovery. Limited genetic information has hampered oncologists’ ability to refer patients to trials. It simply does not make sense to test a potentially toxic drug on a patient who may not have the mutation being targeted.



In addition to investigating cancer, the **new genomic capability** will also help clinicians **better target** cardiovascular disease, seizure disorders, developmental delay and **other conditions with genetic underpinnings.**



“This is **a revolution** in the way we approach and treat patients. Patients will receive profiles to **tailor** the right **treatments** to **their specific needs.**”

~ Thomas Semrad

“This gives us a great ability to survey all these genes and then put patients in clinical trials,” says Gregg. “We wouldn’t have been able to do this in the past because you have to demonstrate the patient has that mutation.”

In addition to helping patients, this new approach could boost clinical trial enrollment. Low participation can limit a trial’s ability to determine a therapy’s effectiveness, short-circuiting the ability to advance new therapies.

“This is going to be really great for patients participating in clinical trials because there are many trials for targeted therapies but, without sequencing, we might not test for that mutation,” says Gregg. “Having the additional information will get more patients into trials, and the larger

cohorts will tell us more about a drug’s effectiveness.”

#### **The future is now**

The cancer center will start with two panels, a large 400-gene approach that encompasses mutations from multiple cancers and a more targeted, 55-gene panel for melanoma, lung cancer and other conditions. Eventually, new panels will be designed to catalogue mutations from other cancers.

The researchers expect to implement the sequencing program in early 2014. The genomics facility will be housed in the Molecular Diagnostic Laboratory in the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine and will be certified under CLIA, the standards all clinical laboratories must meet before testing patient samples.

In addition to investigating cancer, the new genomic capability will also help clinicians better target cardiovascular disease, seizure disorders, developmental delay and other conditions with genetic underpinnings.

“This is an amazing advance,” says Semrad. “We’ve come from sequencing the first genome for several billion dollars, and taking years to do it, to sequencing individual patients for only a few thousand dollars in less than a day. It’s going to change cancer care forever.”

*This story has been reprinted with permission from Synthesis, (Volume 16, No 2) the magazine of UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center.*

# LOCAL DOCTORS

# GO TO THE OLYMPICS



Rest easy knowing the same doctors who mend your scrapes, sprains and fractures in Truckee/Tahoe do the same for some of the best athletes in the world. Truckee Tahoe Medical Group's (TTMG) Paul Krause, MD, Family Medicine, and Rick Ganong, MD, Internal Medicine, as well as Ganong's daughter and Krause's wife, North Tahoe Orthopedic's Alison Ganong, MD, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Sports Medicine and Spine, serve as team doctors for the U.S. Ski Team during the ski season, and work as team physicians for the German Ski Team at World Cup events, in addition to their U.S. duties. The work has taken this family of doctors throughout Europe and South America to work with the likes of Lindsey Vonn, Julia Mancuso, Ted Ligety and Bode Miller.

But the trio recently had a special honor—traveling to Sochi, Russia, during the Olympics to cheer on local Olympic ski racer Travis Ganong, Rick's son and Alison's brother.

"We went as tourists and family members to support Travis," says Krause, adding that the doctors got to be off-the-clock for the event. "We wore some crazy hats, which got us a lot of attention, and cheered for all the athletes."

Travis Ganong took fifth in the downhill competition—the top American finish for the athlete considered to be the country's future in the discipline.

When they aren't treating athletes around the globe, Krause and Rick Ganong are focused on providing medical care to patients out of TTMG's Tahoe City, Truckee and Squaw Valley offices. Rick Ganong began volunteering with the U.S. Ski Team in 2000 and says it's rare to deal with serious medical issues.

"Often, it is an ill coach or athlete," he says. "Occasionally a wrecked knee, laceration, concussion or back injury."

Sometimes, though, things get exciting in his ski team work. On one particular incident in Flachau, Austria, Rick Ganong's skills were called upon to sew up a lacerated hand in a dimly lit hotel room.

"My wife held the chandelier for light, and the victim held a cigarette lighter," he recalls.

Krause joined the U.S. Ski Team as a volunteer physician in 2006. His experience treating ski injuries locally is a valuable skill for his work there, Krause says.

"(Alison) and I started with medical coverage for the U.S. Nordic Ski Team, but after (Travis) made the U.S. Alpine Ski Team, we have been volunteering as medical coverage annually for the U.S. Men's Alpine Team in order to be able to travel to his races, watch him race and take care of his friends," Krause says. "It's fun to be a doctor for the U.S. Ski Team. We are able to use our expertise in treating ski injuries to help the members of the U.S. Team and athletes from other countries at the races. I've taken care of Americans, Germans, Canadians and a Finn."

Alison Ganong provides local sports medicine and spinal care to patients out of North Tahoe Orthopedics' Truckee office. She specializes in physical medicine and rehabilitation, focusing on non-surgical treatments for sports and orthopedic injuries. She recently taught a course on musculoskeletal ultrasounds at the American Medical Society for Sport Medicine's annual conference.

A former ski racer herself at the Junior Olympics and Western States team levels with skiers like Julia Mancuso, Alison Ganong went into medicine instead of pursuing the sport in college, but enjoys staying close to it and her family through her ski team work.

"I began working with the U.S. Ski Team during my residency training in 2008," she says. "I applied to be a team physician because of hearing about my father's great experiences traveling with the team, in addition to my sister Megan's experiences being on the ski team at that time."

Skilled skiers and skilled physicians, Truckee/Tahoe is in good hands with the Olympics-connected trio. They were most recently in action with the U.S. Alpine Championships held at Squaw Valley in March 2014, where Dr. Rick Ganong was Medical Director for the event, and Drs. Krause and Alison Ganong were the U.S. Ski Team physicians for the event.



**Left to right:** Richard Ganong, MD,FACP, Paul Krause, MD, and Alison Ganong, MD



**Left:** Local Olympian Travis Ganong after finishing fifth place in the men's downhill at the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014, in Krasnaya Polyana, Russia. (AP Photo/Christophe Ena)

“ We went as tourists and family members to support Travis. We wore some crazy hats, which got us a lot of attention, and cheered for all the athletes.”

**Paul Krause, MD**



**Left to Right:** Carolyn Dee Wallace, Trinkie Watson, Eileen Knudson, Caroline Ford, Alicia Barr, Martha Simon, John Marlin, Betsy Cole, Pam Hobday, Patrick Flora, Dale Chamblin, Tom Hobday, Wyatt Henderson, Carey Hood (seated)

## Dream Home Volunteers Make It Happen

The Tahoe Forest Health System Foundation was chosen as the official charity for the 2014 HGTV Dream Home at Schaffer's Mill. While proud to be chosen, the Foundation was also faced with filling over 550 volunteer docent shifts serving 22 days of tours. As soon as the call went out, more than 300 generous volunteers offered their time and talent. Many filled multiple shifts, even entire days, ensuring that every tour guest was greeted with a smile and a warm welcome. Volunteers traveled from as far as Incline Village, Reno, Sparks, Carson City and South Lake Tahoe to offer their help.

After the final tours, which ran from January 9 through February 14, a Dream Home Volunteer Reception was held to honor all the tour volunteers and to share the excitement as the net proceeds of the event were awarded to the Tahoe Forest Health System Foundation, benefitting the Wellness Neighborhood. At the reception, Schaffer's Mill managing partner, John Marlin, along with Wyatt Henderson, partner of Marlin Atlantis Group, presented the Foundation with a

check for \$51,047.11. Along with the cheers and hugs, there was a profound sense that not only were the funds raised for a great cause, but new friendships were forged and the spirit of philanthropy was stronger than ever.

"We are so grateful to all our wonderful volunteers," said Martha Simon, Director of Fund Development for the TFHS Foundation. "They truly made this possible!"

Proceeds from the Dream Home tours were donated to the Tahoe Forest Health System Wellness Neighborhood and will be used to develop a collaborative community-based system of care to transform health in the High Sierra region. The Wellness Neighborhood's mission is to fund community wellness in the Truckee/Tahoe region. It partners with community-based organizations to increase access to local healthcare services and focus on important healthcare issues to optimize our community's health through outreach.





**Clockwise from top:** Toast to all of our volunteers!

Left to Right: Carey Hood, John Marlin, Martha Simon, Wyatt Henderson

Volunteers in Dream Home, Left to Right: Melinda Cash, Kirstin Horn, Jodee Weaver, Pat Castellucci, Lonnie Detrick, Linda Johnston, Cinnamon Steinhardt, Matt Steinhardt

Wyatt Henderson, partner, Marlin Atlantis, and John Marlin, managing partner, Schaffer's Mill

## Paying It Forward

Megan and Gary Kasden, the winners of the Gene Upshaw Memorial Fund Super Bowl Raffle, paid their good fortune forward. In December, the Incline Village, Nevada, couple won the grand prize of an all-expense paid trip for two to Super Bowl XLVIII in New York. The news came at just the right time: Gary had just completed a long series of chemotherapy treatments at the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center, and the couple was looking forward to the trip as a celebration to start the new year.

A compromised immune system and a bout of the flu put Gary in the hospital just days before they were supposed to leave for the Super Bowl. Megan called Martha Simon, Director of Fund Development for the Tahoe Forest Health System Foundation, to tell her they couldn't make the trip and asked for her help in finding a worthy recipient of the prize. Simon called Debbie Strickland, Executive Director of the Northern Nevada Children's Cancer Foundation, and with the help of Leslie Katich, Director of Programs and Services, identified 16-year-old Kody Beach as the perfect recipient of this special Super Bowl package.

“I'm proud that Gene's legacy is living on and continuing to touch people's lives in meaningful ways.”  
**Terri Upshaw**

Beach, a junior at Spring Creek High School in Spring Creek, Nevada, was diagnosed this past August with melanoma. Since the diagnosis, the cancer has metastasized to stage IV. The prize would allow Kody and his father, Kirt, to attend the Super Bowl. After Simon shared the story with colleagues and key foundation stakeholders, they hoped there might also be a way to send the whole family, including Kody's mom, Carmen, and his older brother, Cory, 18.

“We wanted to see if there was a way for Kody to experience this special day with his entire family,” Simon said. “The tickets arrived in my office and when I happened to open the envelope, to my surprise, there were four tickets enclosed. We were supposed to receive just two. After I called the NFL and told them this story, they agreed that we should extend the invitation to the whole family.”



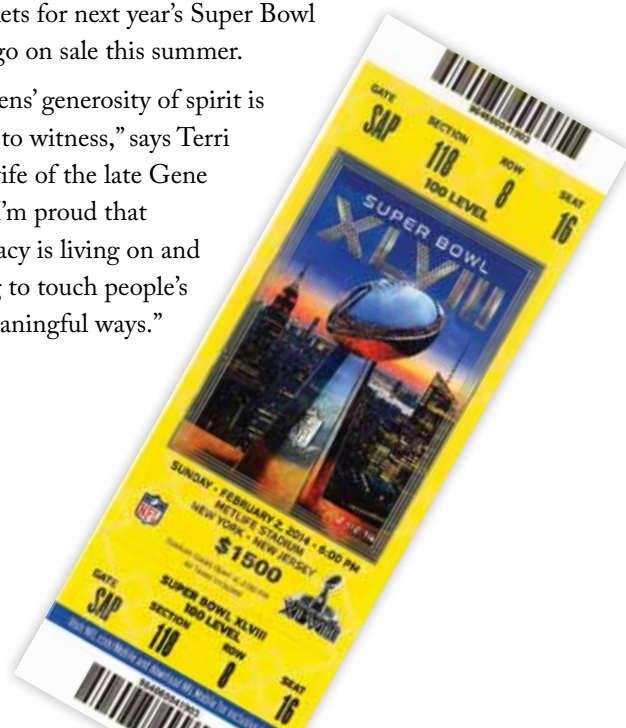
**Left to Right:** Gary and Megan Kasden with Kody Beach and Martha Simon

The Northern Nevada Children's Cancer Center helped coordinate the trip for the family. Kody learned of his upcoming trip the day before they flew to New York City, during a special lunch date at Rapsallion's restaurant in Reno.

“This is amazing,” said Carmen Beach, Kody's mother.

The Gene Upshaw Memorial Fund Super Bowl raffle raised \$30,000 for traumatic brain injury research, as well as programs and services for cancer patients and families at the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center. The prize, generously donated by the National Football League, supports the Gene Upshaw Memorial Fund administered by the Tahoe Forest Health System Foundation. The Gene Upshaw Memorial Fund has raised nearly \$670,000 since 2009. Tickets for next year's Super Bowl raffle will go on sale this summer.

“The Kasdens' generosity of spirit is wonderful to witness,” says Terri Upshaw, wife of the late Gene Upshaw. “I'm proud that Gene's legacy is living on and continuing to touch people's lives in meaningful ways.”



# What Makes a Hospital Baby-Friendly?

Tahoe Forest Hospital's Women and Family Center has been awarded national Baby Friendly certification. This certification awards hospitals that have made a dedicated commitment to help mothers with breastfeeding. We provide the tools and support for moms to be successful with breastfeeding by providing extensive training and educational programs for both staff and parents. We also offer a nurturing environment that supports mother and infant bonding immediately after delivery.

We're pretty proud of that.



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**QUESTIONS:** Call the Tahoe Forest Health System Foundation (530) 582-6271

*All proceeds benefit the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center Patient and Family Programs*

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## **DAPHNE PALMER, MD, FACRO** RADIATION ONCOLOGY MEDICAL DIRECTOR

Dr. Daphne Palmer’s pursuit of excellence is apparent in everything she’s done—her pursuit of a demanding career as a radiation oncologist, her precise handling of cancer cases at the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center in Truckee, and her demands on her fellow staff to meet her exacting standards.

As the daughter of a physician—her father is a pathologist—and product of the women’s empowerment era in the Bay Area, where she grew up, Palmer wanted to pursue a “major career,” she says.

“I wanted my own career, and it had to be important; it had to be on the level with any of my male colleagues,” Palmer says.

To that end, she pursued a bachelor’s of science degree at Georgetown University, where she excelled in math and science, and went on to UCLA for medical school, her internship and residency. A mentor at UCLA made radiation oncology appear an attractive profession and taught her a valuable lesson as a physician.

“He introduced me to the idea that you should always look at what you can do for a patient instead of what you can’t do,” Palmer says. “In oncology, there are times when there are things you can’t do... when a tumor becomes metastatic, when someone is stage IV. But, there’s always something you can do with respect to helping the patient and family be as comfortable as possible.”

Dr. Palmer took her skills to Los Angeles’ Cedars Sinai Medical Center, where she met her husband and future cancer center Medical Director, Dr. Laurence Heifetz. There, the two discovered a commonality—they both grew up vacationing in the Tahoe area, skiing and enjoying the lake during the summer.

When it came time to leave L.A. about eight years ago, they jumped at the chance to move to Truckee.

“Where you vacation as a child always holds a special place in your heart,” Palmer says.

After a stint in Reno as Renown’s Medical Director of Radiation Oncology, Palmer began full-time at the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center as the Medical Director of Radiation Oncology.



Daphne Palmer, MD, FACRO and therapy dog, Theo

The work is demanding—and much changed since her early days in the profession, Palmer says. At UCLA, radiologists used a process that seems relatively rudimentary compared to today—physicians simply exposed a patient lying on a table to the radioactive mineral cobalt for a set period of time, with the cobalt rotating around the patient’s body in the area of a tumor.

Today, the technology is far more advanced—the cancer center’s state-of-the-art Varian TrueBeam linear accelerator focuses beams of radiation through a patient’s body to target a tumor. The beams are modulated—meaning Palmer can specify that a prostate tumor is supposed to receive a certain

## **CONTACT**

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Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe  
Forest Cancer Center  
10121 Pine Avenue, Truckee, CA 96161  
**(530) 582-6450**

amount of radiation, but the patient’s surrounding organs should receive lesser doses.

The process begins with a doctor-patient consultation with Palmer. Early on, a scan is taken to get an image of the tumor. From there, she works with a physicist to create a program for the TrueBeam—targeting the tumor and delivering a precise amount of radiation. Palmer lays out a series of constraints—while the tumor can receive a certain amount of radiation, surrounding organs can only receive X amount. This process takes about five working days and is precise down to the millimeter. Once the parameters are programmed, the quality assurance is tested on a phantom patient. Finally, a radiation therapist administers the dosage on the live patient, making tiny adjustments under Dr. Palmer’s direction as organs can shift daily depending on a variety of factors.

While a patient is undergoing radiation therapy, he or she meets with Palmer once weekly to discuss side effects, and, if necessary, she recommends drugs or dietary changes to help the patient through the process. Radiation therapy is, of course, done in concert with her fellow physicians in medical oncology and the patients’ primary care providers. She regularly refers patients to the Patient, Family and Caregiver Programs that are offered free of charge to every patient at the cancer center, thanks to fundraising from the Best of Tahoe Chefs event held each spring. “These psychosocial programs are very valuable for treating the whole patient,” Palmer says.

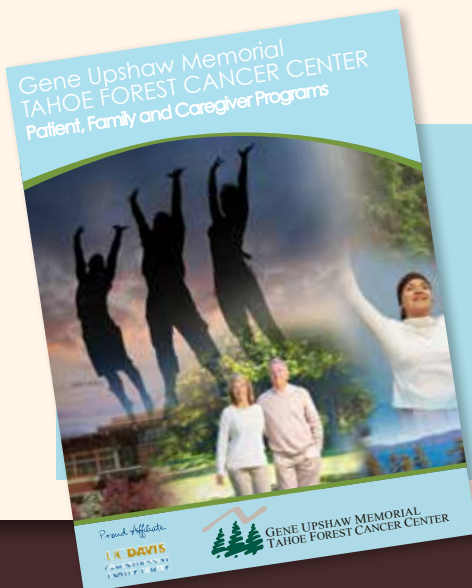
The high quality of services at the center are the result of support and input from the community, including the community-based volunteer group the Cancer Advisory



The Varian TrueBeam at the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center

Council which worked directly with the physicians and architects to design the facility.

“We set out to create a world-class facility with the best resources and best technology to serve this community,” Palmer says. “It also helps that we have such great professional staff throughout the center. Our standards are high, and we are focused on providing our patients with a holistic approach. And in the end, it’s worth it.”




GENE UPSHAW MEMORIAL  
TAHOE FOREST CANCER CENTER

[www.tahoecancercenter.com](http://www.tahoecancercenter.com)

## CANCER CENTER PROGRAMS

For complete information about Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center Patient, Family and Caregiver Programs, go to [www.tahoecancercenter.com/calendar](http://www.tahoecancercenter.com/calendar), or call **(530) 582-6450**.



**Seated (L to R):** Kris Gregor, RN, Emergency Department; Payton Davis, Patient Registration

**Standing (L to R):** Ginger Coltrin, RN, Emergency Department; Dennis Horner, Radiology Technician; Dr. Julie Helms, Emergency Department; Jan Iida, RN, Director of Patient Care; Bethany Snook, Patient Registration

## Incline Village Community Hospital Wins Top Award for Patient Satisfaction

Incline Village Community Hospital has been named a 2013 Guardian of Excellence Award winner by Press Ganey Associates, Inc. The award recognizes top-performing facilities that consistently achieved the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile of performance in Patient Satisfaction.

The Press Ganey Guardian of Excellence Award is a healthcare industry symbol of achievement. Fewer than 5% of all Press Ganey clients reach this threshold and consistently maintain it for the one-year reporting period. Press Ganey partners with more than 10,000 healthcare facilities, including more than half of all U.S. hospitals, to measure and improve the patient experience.

“We are proud to partner with Incline Village Community Hospital,” says Patrick T. Ryan, CEO of Press Ganey.

“Achieving this level of excellence reflects the organization’s commitment to delivering outstanding service and quality. Incline Village Community Hospital’s efforts benefit patients in Incline Village and nearby communities and will lead to improved patient experiences.”

According to Judy Newland, Chief Administrative Officer, Tahoe Forest Health System, the award represents an important recognition from the industry’s leader in measuring, understanding and improving the patient experience. “Our staff strives daily to provide excellent care,” says Newland. “Having our efforts recognized in a formal way lets us know we are achieving our goal to meet the needs and expectations of the Incline Village community.”

## Incline Village Community Hospital Physical Therapy & Medical Fitness

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Incline Village Community Hospital Physical Therapy and Medical Fitness

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(corner of Village & Alder)  
Incline Village, NV 89451

**Ph: (775) 831-1964**

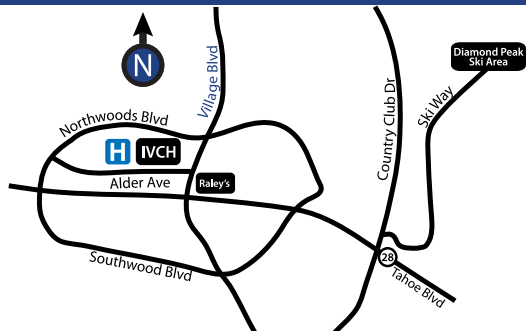
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**Above:** Seasonal flowers brighten the landscape at the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center

## Cancer Center Recognized with CATT Public Works Award

The Contractors Association of Truckee Tahoe recently announced the winners of the 2013 CATT Annual Awards Competition. The winners were nominated by fellow CATT members for superior craftsmanship, excellent customer service, innovative design, devotion to CATT and community, or other outstanding characteristics. L+P DesignWorks' Robie Wilson Litchfield, RLA, ASLA, Principal Landscape Architect/CFO, was awarded the Public Works Project of the Year for their landscape design at the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center. The judges remarked, "The bursts of color are very nice for a hospital setting. We like the variety of foliage and flowers, and choice of shrubbery was good. The pavers in the courtyard are a great choice and location—a perfect gathering place. We like the use of native plants and materials."

Forty nominations were made in 6 individual achievement categories and those winners were chosen by CATT members. Sixteen nominations were made in 5 project categories, and a three-person panel of independent judges from Reno and the Sacramento area selected the project winners. CATT is a non-profit trade association representing the broad spectrum of design and building professionals and related suppliers in the greater Truckee/North Tahoe region. CATT was established in 1998 and has 337 member companies.

For more information about the Gene Upshaw Memorial Tahoe Forest Cancer Center please visit [www.tahoecancercenter.com](http://www.tahoecancercenter.com)



# Food & Nutrition and Environmental Services Achieve 99<sup>th</sup> Percentile Ranking

For the month of December, both the Environmental Services Department and the Food & Nutrition Department at Tahoe Forest Health System scored in the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile overall in the Press Ganey database when ranked against small hospitals, all California hospitals and Malcolm Baldrige Hospitals. “These are absolutely outstanding numbers and rare to achieve them across the board,” says Neil Nadeau, TFHS Director of Food & Nutrition and Environmental Services.

The Environmental Services Department ranked in the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile for room cleanliness and courtesy of the person cleaning room. The Food & Nutrition received 99<sup>th</sup> percentile scores for courtesy of the person who served the food, as well as the temperature and quality of the food.

“These great scores are the result of many years of hard work by a team committed to excellence supported by Martha Carrillo, Heather Lutz and Margaret Holmes,” says Nadeau. “They have been working tirelessly for years to make continuous improvements to these departments.”



**TFHS Dietary Staff - Back Row, Left to Right:**

Neil Nadeau, Jan Hartley, Kevin Larsen, Martha Molinari, Enrique Magana

**Middle Row, Left to Right:** Lourdes Sandoval, Soccoro Solorio, Lindsay Nagle, Lorabelle Soberano, Nanci Fidler, Gregario Aguilar, Charlotte Guebles

**Front Row, Left to Right:** Margaret Holmes, Heather Lutz, Debbie Higginbotham, Coni Schaffarzick



**TFHS EVS Staff, Left to Right:** Fatima Maldonado, Martha Carrillo,

Emilia Ruiz Feliz, Maria Apolinar, Peggy Barraza, Neil Nadeau, Margaret Holmes, Humberta Crespo, Eva Lopez

# Active Kids are Happy Kids!

Kids like to run around and have fun. The trouble is, modern life can be pretty comfy—sofas, TVs, computer games and, even at school, kids are sitting for much of the day. Our bodies weren't designed to sit down all the time. Kids need to walk, jump, run and move to be healthy, grow properly, think more clearly and burn calories. We need to get our kids off the sofa and get them moving! In fact, kids need to do at least 60 minutes of physical activity that gets their heart beating faster and gets them breathing harder every day. Not only does it make them feel good, but it can actually make them smarter.

Regular physical activity has many benefits. It can help improve your child's self esteem, feel more self-confident, sleep better, and stay alert during the day, plus it reduces stress and anxiety. Exercise builds a stronger immune system, reduces the risk of some cancers, builds stronger, denser bones and exercises the heart and lungs—preventing cardiovascular disease. The more your child moves, the more the physical activity strengthens their muscles and improves their flexibility and coordination, all of which leads to improved physical skills like jumping, throwing, kicking and catching.

The best way to get kids off the couch and get them moving is to lead by example. Show them how much fun it is to be active. Try to introduce a variety of activities to your children so they can discover what activities they like best, whether it is baseball, soccer, hip hop dance, ballet, skiing or swimming. Developing skills in these activities will stay with them for a lifetime.

You can also use fun family activities as rewards for kids. As an alternative to rewards such as food, toys or money, try using fun family outings that promote activity, such as playing miniature golf, bowling, roller skating, swimming, or going for a family bike ride along the Truckee River. Invite the neighbors over for a game of soccer, basketball, tag, or go fly a kite! Fill a whole day with family Olympics—3-legged races, egg and spoon, a sack race, or a wheelbarrow race. Go on a treasure hunt. Plan a route and take clues with you for the kids to guess and get them to lead you to the next stop. You could even do this at a playground. The important thing is to get moving!



## If you just have a few minutes and want to add some activity, here are a few “15-Minute Filler” ideas:

- Have a race to see which kid can change their outfit the quickest
- Play hide and seek
- Make up a dance routine to a song
- Have a go at skipping rope
- Grab a broom or stick and play limbo - how low can you go?
- Play catch
- Ask them to help you with preparing dinner

The B-FIT program of Tahoe Forest Health System and Tahoe Truckee Unified School District is teaming up to get our kids moving! Let's all make an effort to get 60 minutes a day of some type of activity because, let's face it, active kids are happy kids! And happy kids make happy parents!

For more information about the B-FIT program and to get involved, contact the Community Health staff at Tahoe Forest Health System: Wendy Buchanan, Maria Martin and Jill Whisler at **(530) 587-3769** or [mmartin@tfhd.com](mailto:mmartin@tfhd.com).



Tahoe Forest Health System offers a variety of **affordable lab tests** and **screenings** available monthly at convenient locations in Truckee and Incline Village.

No appointment is necessary. Regular physical exams by your healthcare provider and screening tests are an important part of preventive health care.

If fasting is required, patients should fast for 10-12 hours prior to the lab test. This service is a low-cost laboratory screening that is not necessarily reimbursable by your insurance company. Cash, checks and credit cards are accepted. Tests are available to individuals 18 years and older.

**TAHOE FOREST LABORATORY DRAW STATION**

10956 Donner Pass Road, Suite 230, Truckee, CA (inside the Medical Office Building)

Services are available the second Wednesday of every month, 7 AM to 9 AM. For more information, call **(530) 582-3277**.

**INCLINE VILLAGE COMMUNITY HOSPITAL**

880 Alder Avenue, Incline Village, NV

Services are available the second Friday of every month, 8 AM to 9 AM. For more information, call (775) 833-4100.

# WELLNESS NEIGHBORHOOD

## Local Partnerships Address Safe Drug Disposal



Recognizing the importance of collaboration in fighting prescription drug abuse, Tahoe Forest Health District (TFHD) and Tahoe-Truckee Future Without Drug Dependence (TT-FWDD) Coalition are training locals via the National Rx Drug Abuse Summit, held in April 2014 in Atlanta, Georgia.

According to TT-FWDD, local high school students recently ranked prescription drugs as their number three choice for intoxication, trailing only alcohol and marijuana. “Local teen misuse of prescription pills is fast approaching marijuana use,” said Dick Hilly, a TT-FWDD Rx committee volunteer who attended last year’s summit in Florida. “It’s shocking to know that 88% of our surveyed teens ages 14-21 know people their age who are using these drugs, not prescribed to them, to get high. It’s imperative that we take action locally.”

The TT-FWDD teen survey revealed that the main pills of choice are opioid painkillers, followed closely by depressants such as benzodiazepines, and then stimulants like Adderall and Ritalin. According to Dr. Mark Brown, DC, TT-FWDD Rx committee chair, 75% reported their peers were getting these drugs from a friend with a prescription, while 40% got them at parties or from the medicine cabinets of parents, friends and family.

Truckee Police Chief, Adam McGill, says local law enforcement officials have committed to get unwanted and leftover prescription drugs out of homes. The Truckee Police Department and Placer County Sheriff’s Office both provide a permanent Rx drug bin at their stations to receive these medications from residents. The bins are accessible Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., for free drop-offs. Additionally, officers staff the twice-yearly Rx Take Back Day in both Tahoe City and Truckee to remind people to clean out their medicine cabinets. The next event will be held Saturday, April 26, 2014, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. It is free and open to all residents and second homeowners. (Businesses and DEA registrants are directed to use their existing disposal services, not the events or bins.)

According to the most recent reports, says McGill, “North Tahoe and Truckee have taken approximately 800 pounds of pharmaceuticals out of local homes.” McGill estimates that “ninety-six pounds of that total is comprised of controlled

substances that are the common drugs of abuse and misuse.” With the amount of drugs prescribed and widely available, everyone’s help is needed to reduce easy access to these drugs. “We are calling on everyone to monitor and secure prescription medications in the home, and then dispose of these unwanted drugs for free at our bins or events,” the Police Chief says.

Beyond reducing availability, there are additional ways to address the problem. According to Caroline Ford, TFHS Wellness Neighborhood Executive Director, TFHS nursing staff have reported incidences of drug-seeking and addiction-related behavior in the emergency room, and have asked for help in dealing with these difficult situations. To remedy this, a TFHS emergency room nurse will be attending this year’s Rx Summit, learning from experts across a wide range of disciplines. “Our staff will bring back best practices and strategies to assist local providers and clinicians to intervene and prevent prescription drug abuse,” said Ford, “exploring the ways we can make a difference across the entire spectrum of care.”

While the national prescription drug epidemic escalates to crisis levels, our community is working proactively to identify strategies that will prevent Rx misuse and abuse. Through increased capacity, new policies and outreach, local partners are ensuring that our community is part of the solution.

For more information on prescription drug abuse, Rx Bins, or Rx Take Back Days, please visit <http://www.ttfwdd.com/rx-drug-abuse-prevention.php> or call (530) 546-1924.



wellnessneighborhood

The Wellness Neighborhood was created to provide a framework to engage the community to identify, develop and prioritize health programs that would have the most impact on community health.



## Tahoe Truckee Rx Drug Safe Disposal Project

### Keeping our Kids and Water Drug-Free



The misuse of Rx drugs is a growing, under-recognized problem that puts young lives at risk. Reducing easy access to medication helps reduce misuse. Please monitor, secure and dispose. For more information, please call (530) 546-1924, or go to [ttfwd.com](http://ttfwd.com).

#### Safe Disposal Bins

*(prescription and over-the-counter drugs only, no illegal drugs, sharps, or aerosols)*

#### Placer County Sheriff's Office

(Tahoe City Station)  
2501 North Lake Boulevard  
Tahoe City  
9 AM-5 PM, Monday-Friday  
Info: (530) 581-6369

#### Truckee Police Department

10183 Truckee Airport Road Truckee  
8 AM-5 PM, Monday-Friday  
Info: (530) 550-2323

#### Directions for Drop-Offs at Safe Disposal Bins

Prescription drug containers should not be larger than 5 inches in height and not more than 3 inches in diameter. Remove confidential information. No DEA registrants.

#### Sharps Drop-Off at Cabin Creek Land Fill Only

(530) 583-7800. All sharps must be enclosed in bio-hazard containers. Containers can be purchased at most pharmacies. Info: [www.waste101.com](http://www.waste101.com).

#### Tips for Preventing Medicine Misuse, Abuse and Environmental Pollution

**It is illegal** for someone to share, give, or sell their controlled prescription drugs to another person.

**Consider** rejecting a large narcotic prescription for acute pain. Ask for the smallest amount needed, then get a refill if necessary. Consult your physician for options.

**Do not flush** medications down the toilet, sink or drain. Wastewater treatment facilities cannot completely remove pharmaceutical drugs. Even small concentrations may harm fish and wildlife. Please dispose of medications at safe disposal sites or Rx Take Back events.

Made possible by Tahoe City Public Utility District, North Tahoe Public Utility District, Placer County Sheriffs Department, Truckee Police Department, Tahoe Truckee Future Without Drug Dependence, and Tahoe Forest Health System

Can't afford a mammogram?  
**Not anymore.**

Screening mammograms,  
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If you're a woman over 40, you know an annual screening mammogram is the best way to detect breast cancer in its early stages as recommended by the American Cancer Society and American College of Radiology.

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That's why we are offering special cash-only screening mammograms. **No referral is needed from your physician.**

To make an appointment, or for more information, just call **(530) 582-6510**. Visit us online at **tfhd.com**.

*Screening offer is available for individuals without insurance or with health plans that do not provide a mammogram screening benefit. No other discounts apply. Screening mammograms are recommended for women over age 40, or under age 40 with a strong family history of breast cancer. Price is inclusive of radiologist supervision, interpretation and mammogram fee.*



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**This just proves what we already knew**

**Our Nurses are amazing.**

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We must be doing something right.

For the second time, The American Nurses Credentialing Center recently gave Tahoe Forest Health System the prestigious "Pathway to Excellence" award.

Though the main focus of the designation is to award overall excellence in the workplace, the award also recognizes the importance of nurses achieving a balanced lifestyle, working in a collaborative atmosphere, and having a high level of job satisfaction.

It's a culture of excellence we work hard at. And, like our nurses, we're more than happy with the results.



TAHOE  
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[www.tfhd.com](http://www.tfhd.com)

**Here are some of the great classes offered at TCHSP:**

**Fitness Forever** – This is a senior program that has been inspiring men and women to become fit for over 13 years featuring low and non-impact aerobic dance, weightlifting with small hand weights and resistance bands to sculpt and tone muscles while building endurance. Combined with balance, flexibility and functional fitness, this is a great class for seniors of all fitness levels! \$5 per class drop-in fee for seniors 65+.

**Foam Roller, Core & Restore** - Release tight muscles while toning your core! Learn how to effectively self-massage your trigger points on the foam roller to prevent and recover from injury, enhance your athletic performance, and prepare your muscles for deeper stretching. All levels welcome!

**Pilates Mat** - This introduction to the principles and techniques of Pilates allows students to work at varying levels. Each class focuses on proper body alignment, breathing, coordination and relaxation. This class will help strengthen your core, improve your flexibility, and tone your muscles. All levels welcome!

**Pilates Reformer Training** - Although the Pilates Reformer may look intimidating, it is a very safe and effective piece of exercise equipment. Beginning Reformer exercises are great for those recovering from injury or who need to develop core strength, as most of the exercises are performed with the spine in a supported position. Once a foundation is established, the Pilates Reformer can be a great tool for functional and athletic training.


**Sport Circuit** – An interval circuit workout focusing on functional movement while incorporating cardio and strength training. All levels welcome!

**Sunrise Yoga** - Start your day with this practice of flowing yoga postures that will awaken and energize your body from the inside out. This mixed level class allows you to work at your own ability so that you can stretch, strengthen and restore your body and mind. All levels welcome!

**Total Body Conditioning** – This full-body workout is a little bit of everything. We work the entire body using different equipment including, but not limited to, bands, medicine balls, fitness balls and steps. Get ready to blast your body into better shape! All levels welcome!


For more information and schedule of classes, please call the Tahoe Center for Health and Sports Performance at **(530) 587-3769** or go to **www.tfhd.com**.

*Life is good when you find your Center.*



More than just a fitness center, this is a community resource. A place where you can learn about health topics, become involved in community health initiatives, or just get the best workout of your life.

*Concussion Management Program  
Intense Cross Training • Yoga  
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Personal Training • Registered  
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Fitness Testing • B-FIT  
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TAHOE CENTER FOR HEALTH AND SPORTS PERFORMANCE  
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We know you have a heart.

*We checked.*

The caregivers at Tahoe Forest Health System put their hearts into making a difference.

If a nurse, physician or other caregiver made a difference to you, let them know. They'll receive special Guardian Angel recognition from us, and your tax-deductible gift will help ensure the future of outstanding health care in our community.

To honor a special caregiver, please visit:

[tfhd.com/guardianangel.asp](http://tfhd.com/guardianangel.asp)

