What we can learn from ice cores, is there a climate migration already underway, a healthy behavior that costs little and is oh so restful, and a bit of relevant science history about vaccinations and epidemics.

It is time to learn a bit about ice cores, those samples of deep ice from our poles.

“Ice cores are columns of ice drilled through glaciers that are highly versatile and detailed recorders of Earth’s climate and environment that cover hundreds to many thousands of years.

They store anything that is found in the atmosphere, such as atmospheric gases, pollen, microbes, emissions from volcanic eruptions, dust and salts carried by dust storms from deserts and salt flats, agricultural and grazing lands. They even can record ocean spray along with pollutants from human activities such as lead, mercury and radioactive nuclides from thermonuclear bomb tests.

Ice also preserves records of past temperature in the changing isotopic composition of water, and provides histories of snowfall by the thicknesses of ice that has formed each year.”
From The Conversation, How ancient ice cores show ‘black swan’ events in history – even pandemics [2]

The Great Migration of six million African-Americans out of the South, as retold by Isabel Wilkerson, remade American. This internal migration was seeking a better life. All of the current migrations of populations away from poverty and war also seek a better life. As I wrote earlier this week, despite the floods and despite the fires, Americans are rebuilding what the fire and water have swept away. But at some point when we realize that the effort is futile or too expensive to continue, we might consider another internal migration, dwarfing the Great Migration, but still seeking a better life.

“Policymakers, having left America unprepared for what’s next, now face brutal choices about which communities to save — often at exorbitant costs — and which to sacrifice. Their decisions will almost inevitably make the nation more divided, with those worst off relegated to a nightmare future in which they are left to fend for themselves. Nor will these disruptions wait for the worst environmental changes to occur. The wave begins when individual perception of risk starts to shift, when the environmental threat reaches past the least fortunate and rattles the physical and financial security of broader, wealthier parts of the population. It begins when even places like California’s suburbs are no longer safe.

It has already begun.”

Perhaps the prose is a bit hyperbolic, but the message should be clear. From the NY Times, How Climate Migration will reshape America [3]

“Sleep lowers blood pressure, enhances creativity, boosts the immune system, regulates blood sugar, stabilises mood, prevents cancer and increases fertility. It is one of the most-effective medications for all the leading causes of mortality — and it’s entirely natural, side-effect free and costs absolutely nothing. So why are we boasting about not getting enough?”

From the RSA (Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce), a 2 minute video, Sleep or Die [4]

”Congressional Democrats advocated for a plan that would make the polio vaccine free to everyone, which Hobby rejected as a “back door to socialized medicine.”

Hobby also insisted that private companies should take care of producing Salk’s vaccine, licensing six of them to do so. However, she acknowledged that the government lacked a plan to meet the vast vaccination demand.

A black market arose. Price gouging jacked up the cost of a dose of the vaccine, which was supposed to be US$2, to $20. As a result, the well-to-do got special access to a vaccine the public had funded.
The hands-off approach changed once reports surfaced that children who had received Salk’s vaccine were in the hospital, with polio symptoms. At first, Scheele, the surgeon general, reacted with skepticism. He suggested that those kids might have been infected before vaccination."

We have dealt with a vaccine and an epidemic before, that of Polio and the Salk and Sabin vaccines. It may be a good moment to review some history. From the Conversation, Lessons from how the polio vaccine went from the lab to the public that Americans can learn from today [5]