

HEALTH



DAWN MEGLI-THUNA/Acorn Newspapers

TOWERING TREE—A view from Hawk Canyon Trail in Newbury Park. The path is part of the 2018 Conejo Open Space Challenge that invites residents to complete 10 lesser-known local trails by May 31.

Hawk Canyon Trail: A shady grove

■ Conejo Open Space Foundation issues challenge

By Dawn Megli-Thuna
dawn@theacorn.com

Looking for one new hike? How about 10?

The 2018 Conejo Open Space Challenge invites local hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riders to complete 10 lesser-known local trails between March 1 and May 31. Go at your own pace and share pictures from your adventures on Twitter or Instagram and tag @coschallenge. You can also email GPS tracks to coschallenge@gmail.com to verify completion.

Everyone who completes all 10 hikes by May 31 will be invited to a party with a chance to win door prizes from sponsors including Roadrunner Sports, Newbury Park Bike Shop, Joi Cafe and Billy D'z Backyard BBQ.

The event is a fundraiser for the Conejo Open Space Foundation, and participants are encouraged to make a donation or

volunteer.

This year's hikes include trails in the Los Robles, Hillcrest, Lang Ranch and Dos Vientos open-space areas.

Hawk Canyon Trail and Elliot Peak—both in the Western Plateau area in the northwest portion of Newbury Park—are two of the featured hikes.

Shaded trails are rare in the Conejo Valley, but Hawk Canyon Trail travels under a canopy of oak and sycamore trees as it follows along a (mostly) dry creek bed.

If you want to pack more than a Power Bar, there's a picnic table in the shade where the trail meets the Western Plateau Trail. (Don't worry. There's a sign.) Just remember to carry your trash out with you.

Once you hit the Western Plateau Trail, turn right to return by the Hill Canyon fire road or turn left to reach Elliot Peak, a 975-foot summit with rocky outcroppings and a bench at the top that offers views of the deeply eroded canyon below as well as the Conejo and Santa Rosa valleys. Cactus is abundant in the area, and colorful lichens can be seen along the trail. Return by

the Hill Canyon fire road.

Park at the trailhead on Conejo Center Drive.

For more information about the 2018 Conejo Open Space Challenge, visit cosf.org.

HAWK CANYON TO HILL CANYON

Distance: 2.5 miles
Difficulty: 2 out of 5
Total time: 1 hour

HAWK CANYON TO ELLIOT PEAK

Distance: a little over 6 miles
Difficulty: 3 out of 5
Total time: 2.5 hours

COMMENTARY // Eye health

Connecting grades and vision

■ Students should have eyes checked

By Rajesh Khanna
Special to the Acorn

Jill's parents were concerned about her poor grades. Her pediatrician referred her for an eye examination and they brought her to us.

After examining her we found her vision was indeed poor. Further tests revealed she had keratoconus, an eye disease that causes the cornea to become misshapen, affecting vision.

Symptoms generally appear around the time a child hits puberty or a little later. While the disease progresses over time, it eventually stabilizes. It does not typically cause blindness.

The cornea is the transparent dome-shaped tissue that covers the front of the eye. In keratoconus, the cornea thins and bulges into a conelike shape, causing blurred, distorted vision.

The condition occurs across the population and usually affects both eyes. Studies indicate it occurs in 1 out of 2,000 people, although some sources say it could be as common as 1 out of 500, meaning each school in the area could have a student with undiagnosed keratoconus.

One of the most common symptoms is rubbing the eyes, leading some eye professionals to think the condition is brought on by allergies. People who have been diagnosed with

keratoconus should not rub their eyes because it could aggravate the condition.

Keratoconus can result in the frequent need for new prescription lenses because the vision is constantly changing. Vision is poor despite using eyeglasses or contact lenses, so the condition can affect a child's grades. Also, due to the misshapen cornea, it may become impossible to wear regular contact lenses, although specialized lenses may be used to treat keratoconus.

The disease can cause those with the condition to be sensitive to glare and bright lights. They may see a flare around headlights and other lights. This can affect a person's ability to drive at night.

The cause of keratoconus is not known. There may be a genetic link or allergies could play a role.

If a child or young adult is experiencing symptoms, consider consulting an eye surgeon specializing in the cornea. If the condition is identified early, the progression of the disease could be slowed. Vision can be preserved and school performance may improve.

Watch for a follow-up story to see how Jill fares.

Dr. Rajesh Khanna is a cornea-experienced keratoconus authority who has been detecting and surgically treating the condition for more than 20 years. He has managed patients as young as 11 years old. For more information, call (805) 230-2126 or visit khannainstitute.com.

Recognizing caregivers

■ Free event includes lunch, panel of experts

Senior Concerns will host a Caregivers Matter—Conejo Cares program from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Fri., March 2 at Los Robles Greens, 299 S. Moorpark Road in Thousand Oaks.

The free program and luncheon will honor family members who are caring for aging loved ones. Attendees can share stories and find some relief from the stress of caregiving.

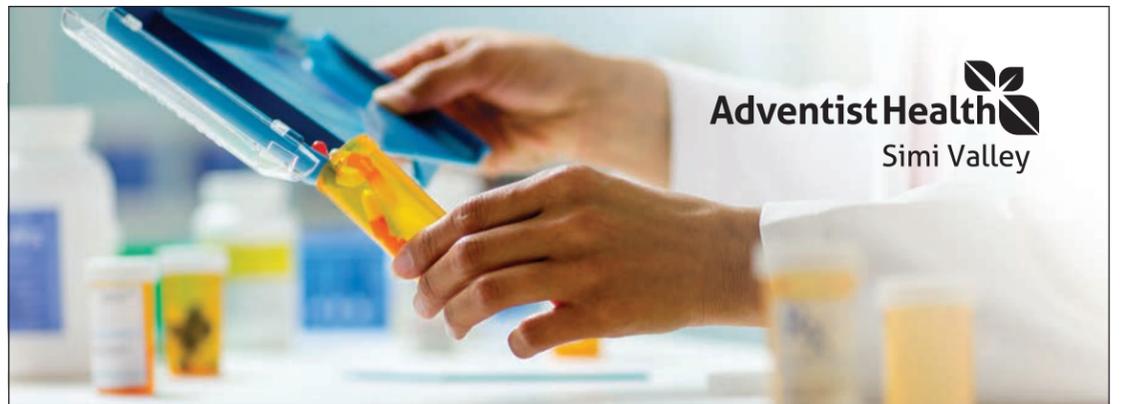
Some of the presenters are Surreina Gallegos Gerbman, a YogaWorks-certified teacher, with a segment on the power of breathing; Dr. Roy Steinberg, a geriatric psychologist, will pres-

ent "Embracing a Caregiver's Greatest Fear"; and comedian and family caregiver Monica Piper will look at the lighter side of caregiving.

A panel moderated by Viki Kind, a clinical bioethicist, professional speaker and hospice volunteer, will discuss "How Am I Supposed to Feel." The panel will include Laura Zempel, a social worker and palliative care nurse at Los Robles Hospital and Medical Center, and UCLA staff chaplain/oncology spiritual care specialist Michael Eselun.

Reservations are required; no walk-ins will be allowed. Limited free in-home respite is available by request upon reservation.

For information or to reserve a spot, visit seniorconcerns.org or call (805) 497-0189.



Adventist Health
Simi Valley

Live Longer without Medications

Is it possible to be healthy and live a long life without the aid of prescription drugs?

When it comes to our diet, most of us know what to do, but we find doing it easier said than done. If you want to stay healthy without medications, eating well is one of the best, most important ways to do that. So is a comprehensive exercise program. Ideally, you should get some form of exercise every day. Find stress reduction techniques that work for you. Social support, yoga, meditation, prayer and spirituality, and getting outside can go a long way toward combating stress. Get high-quality omega-3 fatty acids. Experts say they're beneficial to longevity. Learn more at this informative discussion.

Dr. Abdul Nawabi has been caring for patients and living in Simi Valley since 1993. He is board-certified by the American Board of Family Practice. He completed his residency training at University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio after earning his M.B.B.S. and M.D. degrees from Indira Gandhi Medical College in India in 1986.

Date: Tuesday, March 13, 2018
Time: 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Where: Simi Valley Senior Center
3900 Avenida Simi, Room 106
Simi Valley, CA 93063
Speaker: Dr. Abdul Nawabi
Family Practice Physician
RSVP: 805-583-6363
Space is limited.

Dr. Abdul Nawabi
Family Practice Physician

