

Livingwell

Fall 2015

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Simi Valley Hospital

 **Adventist Health**



New top executive joins Simi Valley Hospital team

Simi Valley Hospital welcomed Jennifer Swenson as the hospital's new president and CEO on August 17. Swenson is very familiar with our hospital and community, having served as Simi Valley Hospital's controller from 2000 to 2004.



Jennifer Swenson
President and CEO

"I love the Ventura County area—especially Simi Valley, Moorpark and the surrounding communities," Swenson said. "It is just a really special place. We have access to so many wonderful things as part of the greater Los Angeles area, yet we enjoy the benefits of a small-town feel. You get a wonderful sense of community when you run into friends, neighbors and co-workers when you're out shopping. It makes me feel like part of this community, and this is the kind of environment I want to live and work in."

Previously, Swenson was corporate vice president for Kettering Health Network, a Seventh-day Adventist-affiliated organization headquartered in Kettering, Ohio. Before that, she was president of Fort Hamilton Hospital in Hamilton, Ohio. She has more than 20 years of finance, operations and business development leadership experience in the health care industry.

"It has been so exciting to return to the hospital and see all of the incredible changes that have occurred here over the past decade since I've been gone," Swenson said. "My number-one priority at Simi Valley Hospital will be to continue to shape the organization to meet the needs of our community. Our patients are at the center of everything we do, and I'm constantly driven by a passion to never stop improving the patient experience and the quality of care we provide. My son was born at Simi Valley Hospital, and I am proud to lead such a stellar organization."

Inspired to seek a career in health care by the life of her brother, who has cerebral palsy, Swenson said working in a mission-driven organization like Simi Valley Hospital is very important to her.

"I look forward to carrying on the great work here with the goal to make Simi Valley Hospital the health care facility of choice for our entire community," she said.



Nutrition tailored to you

Your first visit to Simi Valley Hospital's Outpatient Nutrition Counseling program starts with an interview with one of our registered dietitians. That conversation will include:

- Your medical history
- Personal wellness goals
- Current lifestyle and schedule
- Ability and time for food preparation.

From there, your counselor will help you create a realistic plan to achieve your nutrition goals. You'll learn how to read food labels, modify recipes and make better choices when planning meals, shopping for groceries and eating out.

Recipe for wellness

NEW SIMI VALLEY HOSPITAL PROGRAM HELPS TO MAKE GOOD FOOD CHOICES A WAY OF LIFE

IN THE U.S., it seems, cooking is a national pastime. Grocery stores burst with aisles of foods marketed and packaged in new ways: exotic foods; fish harvested by sustainable practices; organic, cruelty-free, grass-fed beef; hand-crafted, gluten-free and hormone-free food; free-range chicken; and so forth. It is hard to know what these terms mean and how to determine what is best for your family and your budget.

Cooking is distinct from other pastimes in that the food we eat interacts with our bodies in complex, lasting and sometimes unpredictable ways. *You are what you eat*, says an old adage—and it's true in many ways.

For most of us, food is a great joy in life. But it can also be a source of confusion and frustration when health considerations compel us to begin making conscious choices about the food we put into our bodies. There is a lot of healthy-eating information on the Internet, on TV and in advertisements, and bestselling books and popular diets promote particular ways of eating. Often, one book or website contradicts another, and much of the information is incorrect or even dangerous.

Responding to our community's desire for reliable, medically sound education about healthy eating and wellness, Simi Valley Hospital has launched the Outpatient Nutrition Counseling program. Some patients receive a limited amount of nutritional counseling while they are in the hospital; the new program provides ongoing counseling in a more relaxed and focused setting for those patients, as well as educational opportunities for anyone in the community who wants to learn to make better food choices.

A safe place

The focus of the new program, said Simi Valley Hospital outpatient dietitian Lorraine Burke, is to help people achieve their health goals through good nutrition.

"A lot of people don't want to go see a dietitian because they think we're going to take everything

good away from them," she said. "But we're not there to be the food police; we're there to help them meet their food goals, get healthier and reduce their risk of disease."

The emphasis, Burke said, is on a nonjudgmental and compassionate environment. She works with clients to find ways to continue to enjoy the foods they love while moving toward a healthier, more balanced approach to food. She also helps patients with diet restrictions related to health conditions find food options that are both safe and appealing.

"This is not about all or nothing," Burke said, "it's about moving toward a healthier place. For instance, we might find three positive changes a patient can make in their diet, and if those changes work, we'll move forward. If not, we'll work together to find alternatives."

A new view on food

Among their conversations, Burke helps her clients explore why they eat, what they eat and when they eat. She also helps patients come up with alternatives to food in the situations where people tend to overemphasize eating.

"For instance, we help people avoid using food as a reward," she said. "There is a different way to celebrate that promotion than by eating."

The relatively new concept of mindfulness in eating is also a big part of the counseling approach, Burke said. Mindful eating avoids multitasking and eating while watching TV or using technology, and it helps the eater become more aware of the food by such techniques as putting down the fork between bites and engaging in conversation with others around the dinner table.

To schedule an appointment for nutrition counseling, speak with your physician or call the Outpatient Nutrition Counseling program at **805-955-6590**. If you have questions about insurance coverage for the program, please call your insurance company.

Counseling for every need

Simi Valley Hospital's Outpatient Nutrition Counseling program helps clients who desire to lose weight or maintain a healthy weight, people who have other nutritional goals, and those who need a particular eating plan as a result of a disease or condition, such as:

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Digestive disorders
- Food allergies
- Celiac disease
- Cancer, including symptom management
- Kidney disease
- Liver disease.



Great expectations

SIMI VALLEY HOSPITAL SPREADS THE WORD ABOUT ITS HIGHLY REGARDED MATERNITY SERVICES

WITH SKILLED PHYSICIANS AND NURSES who are passionate about their profession, beautiful and spacious rooms with views of Simi Valley's natural beauty, an in-house Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and a wide range of other amenities, Simi Valley Hospital's Maternity Center is a special place for new moms, their babies and other loved ones.

For the past few months, the hospital has been getting the word out about its top-tier maternity services with a community campaign focused around the tagline "Expecting? We Know What to Expect." The campaign features a stylized illustration of a mom-to-be with her hand on her "baby bump," surrounded by images of baby items, all set in a teal background.



"We constantly get messages of gratitude from new moms and their families who are thrilled with the quality of care they've received at Simi Valley Hospital—in terms of both professional services and compassionate, personalized care," said Steve Sojka, director of marketing at the hospital. "This campaign flows out of that feedback about all of the services our new moms appreciate while they're at Simi Valley Hospital."

New moms, their babies and their loved ones benefit from:


- OB-GYN physicians who make a point to know their patients and provide individualized care.
- Nurses and other staff who combine knowledge and compassion to make mom's time in the hospital a pleasant experience.
- Spacious, private birthing rooms with home-like amenities, large windows, and sleeper chairs for dad or another support person.
- Wireless monitoring for mom and baby, which enables women in labor to get up and move around instead of having to stay in bed.
- The option to experience natural childbirth or receive the latest in pain control.
- Coaching in breastfeeding, newborn care, nutrition and other skills to keep mom and baby safe and healthy after they go home.
- A special celebration meal for mom and dad or another support person.
- Cord-banking services for parents who wish to preserve blood from their newborn's umbilical cord, which is rich in stem cells.
- A locked unit and an infant security system to help ensure the safest possible environment.



Simi Valley Hospital's physicians serve our patients with professionalism and compassion.



Learn more about all of Simi Valley Hospital's maternity services!

 Go to **weknowwhattoexpect.com**. There, you'll also have an opportunity to sign up for free weekly parenting emails relevant to your stage of pregnancy or the age of your baby. You can also register for a tour of Simi Valley Hospital's Maternity Center or any of our many childbirth classes.

Gratitude from the heart



FORMER PATIENT RETURNS TO SAY THANKS
TO EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT TEAM

AS SHAWN WILLSON started preparing for work on the morning of Monday, April 20, he was ready to take on the week—and the world.

“I woke up feeling invincible and taking life for granted, as I always did,” he later wrote.

Then, in just an instant, his life changed dramatically.

“One hour later, I was here [Simi Valley Hospital], getting a rude awakening,” he wrote. “Most of my worst nightmares were coming true. My life was being changed forever.”

Willson had suffered a heart attack and was rushed to Simi Valley Hospital. The team in the hospital’s Emergency Department went to work to save his life. Soon, he was taken to the hospital’s new Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory, where a cardiologist opened up his blocked artery to restore blood flow to his heart.

Emergency Department staff member Sheri Dungan, RN, said that the ability of the Emergency Department team to utilize the services of the Cardiac

Catheterization Lab was the critical factor in saving Willson’s life.

“The Cardiac Cath Lab enables us to literally stop a heart attack in progress,” she said. “It is an important addition to the hospital’s services that will save a lot of lives.”

Willson and his family returned to Simi Valley Hospital’s Emergency Department on June 19 to express their gratitude for the care he

received on the worst day of his life. Because Willson’s throat was still sore from the tubes inserted during his care, his father-in-law, John Childress, read from a message Willson had written.

“After I was discharged from the hospital,” he said, “my family and I knew we wanted to do something to show our appreciation to the entire staff at Simi Valley Hospital that had anything whatsoever to do with my care, because the level of professionalism, treatment and compassion that we received was more than we could have ever hoped for.”

Tears of joy and gratitude from both the Willson family and the Simi Valley Hospital team fell as Childress finished Willson’s remarks.

“It is impossible for me to put into words the level of gratitude I feel for each and every one of you, for not giving up, no matter how many times I coded,” he said. “My family and I are now Simi Valley Hospital’s biggest advocates, and I mean that from the bottom of my heart—which is still beating, thanks to all of you!”

◀ **Shawn Willson (far right) returned to Simi Valley Hospital’s Emergency Department on June 19 to thank the people who played a part in saving his life following his heart attack on April 20. Pictured with him are Emergency Department team members Sheri Dungan, RN, and emergency medical technician Anthony Miller, and Willson’s son, Brandon.**

See page 7 for information about Simi Valley Hospital’s new Heart Attack Survivors’ Support Group.



Helping a heart in crisis

When a heart attack strikes, every minute matters. Simi Valley Hospital’s Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory works seamlessly with the hospital’s Emergency Department to restore blood flow to the hearts of heart attack patients through emergency angioplasty—a process that opens up blocked arteries.

The Cardiac Cath Lab is Ventura County’s first-ever hybrid lab, which means it can be converted into a fully functional open-heart surgery suite at a moment’s notice whenever a cardiologist determines that surgery is a better choice than angioplasty. This capability saves precious moments, when patients would otherwise have to be transported to a surgical suite.



New health care collaboration improves patient care

As an extension of our mission to provide exceptional service and quality care, Simi Valley Hospital has partnered with local physicians to create Focus Healthcare, a clinically integrated network (CIN). A CIN is a collection of health care providers—such as physicians, hospitals and post-acute care treatment providers—that work together to improve the overall health and well-being of the community.

The names of individual physician practices that participate in Focus Healthcare will not change, and there will be virtually no other changes that are visible to patients. However, patients will still benefit from the partnership in many ways. For instance, a high level of coordination among primary care physicians, specialty physicians and Simi Valley Hospital will result in a smoother and more effective health care experience for patients.

Focus Healthcare encompasses physician practices throughout Simi Valley, Moorpark and other communities in eastern Ventura County.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

2014 recycling milestones for Simi Valley Hospital

In September 2010, Simi Valley Hospital launched an organization-wide recycling program. Since that time, the hospital has continually added new conservation and recycling initiatives, including a recent move toward water-saving irrigation practices. In 2014, the hospital recycled 251 tons of aluminum, cardboard/paper, scrap metal, plastic, wood pallets and glass. The statistics highlighted here represent some of the impact these recycling efforts have made.



SAVED

More than **1.2 million gallons of water**, enough to meet the daily fresh water needs of more than 16,510 people.

3,902 mature trees, enough to produce more than 48 million sheets of newspaper.

Almost **922,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity**, enough to power more than 76 homes for a year.

425 barrels of oil, enough to heat and cool more than 88 homes for a year.

Simi Valley Hospital's Nicole Vorzimer (far left) works to decontaminate a volunteer "victim" of a chemical weapon attack during a simulation drill at the Center for Domestic Preparedness in Alabama.



Emergency professionals attend federal training

A team of Simi Valley Hospital Emergency Department employees are better equipped to handle an influx of contaminated patients and to instruct co-workers on how to do so after participating in a weeklong training led by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The four Simi Valley Hospital employees—emergency nurses Nicole Vorzimer, Chantel Allen and Diane Koeritz and emergency medical technician (EMT) John Zimbaro—were among 150 health care professionals in California who attended training at the Center for Domestic Preparedness at the former Fort McClellan Army base in Alabama in mid-June. An employee of ReddiNet—an emergency medical communications network in Southern California—coordinated the California contingent.

The nurses participated in hospital emergency response training while Zimbaro attended a program at the only facility in the U.S. that trains with live hazardous agents such as anthrax and ricin. All programs are free of charge for the participants.

"The training was absolutely invaluable," Vorzimer said. "We learned how to set up an emergency treatment area outside of the hospital that included tents and water supplies for decontamination, how to don and work with personal protective equipment that completely covers the caregiver's body, how to receive a surge of contaminated patients, and how to protect the hospital from contamination in the process." The group practiced multiple simulation drills with volunteers acting as victims, culminating in a final drill that involved almost 200 "patients." Despite having to wear bulky Tyvek suits, respirators and hoods in the 90-degree heat and humidity of the Deep South, Vorzimer said, the experience was thrilling and rewarding.

"This is state-of-the-art training—probably the best available because it is supported by FEMA," she said. "We all came back excited to share what we learned with the people we work with. This is an opportunity that everyone who works in emergency care should take advantage of as often as possible."



SIMI VALLEY HOSPITAL
50th Anniversary Gala
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26
Ronald Reagan Presidential Library

6:30 p.m. Reception
7:30 p.m. The blessing of Simi Valley Hospital, dinner and entertainment

For more information or to purchase tickets, go to SimiValleyHospital.com, hover over "About Us," and then click on "50th Anniversary."

WHY I'M A SIMI VALLEY HOSPITAL FOUNDATION DONOR

They were there when our lives were turned upside down

By Joni Bushman

When our daughter Kiki was diagnosed with cerebral palsy at 13 months old, my husband, Rob, and I were thrust into a world we weren't prepared for. Our daughter Sara was not even two years old at the time, so we had two babies, one of whom now needed special care.

We will forever be grateful that we were referred to the Child Development Center (CDC) at Simi Valley Hospital. We went in afraid of the unknown, and they welcomed us into their family. We shared our hearts with the staff and with other families.

The therapists at the CDC were loving, kind and compassionate. Kiki's cerebral palsy kept her from crawling, so her caregivers crawled for her, moving her arms and legs to imprint the movement onto her brain. In that way, they taught her to crawl then to walk. They changed Kiki's life—and, in turn, changed ours.

When Kiki "graduated" from the program two years later, she walked across the stage independently—something no one had seen her do before. There were gasps, joyful laughter and cheers. Today, Kiki is a vibrant, independent 23-year-old.

The CDC was the first place we thought of when we talked about donating to a local organization. Our time there was an amazing, life-changing experience, and we wanted to do our part to help other families receive services from this special place.

To learn about donation options at Simi Valley Hospital, call **805-955-6673**.



Employee donors give from the heart

No one knows the value of gifts to Simi Valley Hospital like our employees, who see firsthand how these generous donations make a difference in the lives of our patients.

More than 300 employees—about 1/3 of all employees—have become hospital donors. Between 2008 and 2014, employee gifts totaled \$447,188.

Here is what three of our employee donors had to say about why they give:

"My nursing career spans over four decades, and I can truthfully say this facility, the dedicated medical staff, employees and volunteers are the best I have experienced."

—Mary Jane Curry

"The reason I give to the organization is simple: This is my hospital. I see my donation making a difference, and it is rewarding."

—Loryn Bisner

"I have received so many praises for our diligence and compassion. It has made me realize that what we are doing as a hospital means a lot more to our patients than even to us."

—Keriyana Carter

Foundation



Calendar

CPR

Simi Valley Hospital offers CPR for community residents, including infant CPR, adult/child CPR and health care provider basic life support. For more information, visit SimiValleyHospital.com and click on "Classes and Events" near the top of the page, call **805-955-6890** or email SV_Education@ah.org.

SUPPORT GROUPS

FREE

GRIEF SUPPORT

A safe place for people who are suffering the pain of losing a loved one, no matter how long ago the loss occurred. Groups are facilitated by Simi Valley Hospital's director of Spiritual Care Services. Call **805-955-6225** for meeting times and location.

CANCER SUPPORT

The American Cancer Society offers a variety of support groups free of charge. For more information, call **800-227-2345** or visit cancer.org.

LOOK GOOD...FEEL BETTER

A free program for people with cancer. Learn more at cancer.org; search "look good." Reservations required: **800-227-2345**.

• Tuesdays, Oct. 6, Dec. 1
4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Nancy Reagan Breast Center
Simi Valley Hospital

STROKE SUPPORT

Offered in conjunction with the National Stroke Association, this free support group at Simi Valley Hospital is for caregivers, families and survivors. Call Richard at **805-498-2632** for more information.

CHILDBIRTH AND PARENTING

Registration is required for all classes. Unless otherwise indicated, call **805-955-6304** to register, or register online at SimiValleyHospital.com. Click on "Classes and Events" near the top of the page.

MATERNITY TOUR

FREE

• Tuesdays, Sept. 29; Oct. 6; Nov. 3, 17;
Dec. 1, 22

• Thursdays, Sept. 17; Oct. 1, 15; Nov. 5; Dec. 10
7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Garden level of main building

PREPARED CHILDBIRTH

• Mondays, Sept. 14, 21, 28, Oct. 5 |
Oct. 26, Nov. 2, 9, 16 | Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14, 21
• Wednesdays, Sept. 23, 30, Oct. 7, 14 |
Oct. 28, Nov. 4, 11, 18
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Garden level of main building | \$50 per couple;
\$25 per couple for refresher course (weeks two and three); \$12 per couple for C-section class only (week three)

PREPARING FOR YOUR FIRST BABY

• Tuesday, Nov. 10
6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Cafe Conference Room | \$10 per couple

BREASTFEEDING CLASS

• Thursdays, Sept. 24, Oct. 29, Nov. 19, Dec. 17
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Garden level of main building | \$35

BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT GROUP

FREE

• Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Women's Unit in Patient Care Tower

BABY CARE BASICS

Prepared Childbirth participants:
This class is included in your series.

• Mondays, Oct. 5, Nov. 16, Dec. 21
• Wednesdays, Oct. 14, Nov. 18
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Garden level of main building | \$10 per couple

SIBLING RELATIONS

FREE

• Tuesdays, Oct. 13, Dec. 8
6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Cafe Conference Room

TWILIGHT INFANT/PARENT CLASS

• Mondays, Sept. 14 to Nov. 2
5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

FREE

Child Development Center

In this eight-week class, parents learn about child development and parenting while their children play alongside them under the supervision of child development specialists. Dinner is provided. Call **805-955-8120**.



Find class descriptions online at SimiValleyHospital.com. Click on "Classes and Events" near the top of the page.

NEW at
Simi Valley Hospital

Heart Attack Survivors' Support Group

For more information, call **805-955-6225**.

Survivors of a heart attack are, of course, extremely grateful.

It is an **extraordinary experience**, though, and there are **emotions, questions** and uncertainty to deal with. In this structured and informative support group, participants can have their **feelings validated** and their **questions answered**, and they can interact with others who've had a similar experience. This group is **open to anyone** in the community who has ever experienced a heart attack and is facilitated by heart attack survivor Shawn Willson. (**See Shawn's story on page 5.**)



Spine surgery close to home

Comprehensive spine services are now available right in your community with the launch of Simi Valley Hospital's new spine surgery program. With options for minimally invasive and conventional procedures, the program focuses on issues related to the cervical spine, thoracic spine and lumbar spine, as well as scoliosis and deformity surgery.

Simi Valley Hospital



2975 N. Sycamore Drive
Simi Valley, CA 93065

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For more information, go to SimiValleyHospital.com, hover over "Services," and then click on "Spine Surgery."

Making your hospital stay a real page-turner

TABLET COMPUTERS and e-readers are the modern-day solution to help pass the time when life slows down—and there's no better place to have an endlessly entertaining device in your hands than while you're hospitalized.

That's the idea behind Healthy Pages, a new program at Simi Valley Hospital. With funds from a grant provided by parent corporation Adventist Health, the hospital purchased 32 new iPads that inpatients may use in the hospital.

Healing helper

Thanks to a partnership between the hospital and the Simi Valley Public Library, patients have access to the

library's entire online book collection and can check out up to 10 titles to read during their stay. The iPad also offers some game apps and Internet access.

"Healthy Pages fits well into Simi Valley Hospital's approach to whole-person care—body, mind and spirit," said Crystal Ruditsky, interim chief operating officer at Simi Valley Hospital, who spearheaded the application for the innovation grant. "Having access to books and other diversions on the iPads really helps to stimulate the mind while the body heals."

Visitors to patient rooms are also allowed to use the iPads. Security software controls Internet use and disables the ability to download any other apps. In addition, the iPads are protected by an "electronic

fence": If an iPad is taken outside of the hospital perimeter, it immediately becomes inoperable, and the device displays a message asking the person to return it to the hospital.

Volunteer management

Simi Valley Hospital's Volunteer Services manages the Healthy Pages program.

Valerie Barrett, the hospital's Volunteer Services liaison, said the program has been extremely well-received among patients.

"We're finding that the patients are really enjoying having someone just come into their room to say hello," she said. "And even those who don't take an iPad tell us they think it's really great to have this program here at the hospital."

Interested in volunteering at Simi Valley Hospital?

Learn more and fill out an application at SimiValleyHospital.com. Hover over "About Us," and then click on "Volunteer." Or call Volunteer Services at **805-955-6950**.



LIVING WELL is published as a community service for the friends and patrons of SIMI VALLEY HOSPITAL, 2975 N. Sycamore Drive, Simi Valley, CA 93065, telephone: **805-955-6000**, website: SimiValleyHospital.com.

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Social media



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facebook.com/SimiValleyHospital



Follow us on Twitter.
[@simihospital](https://twitter.com/simihospital)