

FRUIT FLIES FOUND

Quarantine area to be established in Fallbrook | PAGE B3

COMMUNITY NEWS | B2
LOCAL UPDATE | B3
OBITUARIES | E7



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nctimes.com

Page B1

VISTA

Pediatrician going the extra 100 miles for clinic

Doctor creates his own race to raise funds after L.A. race is canceled

By CIGI ROSS
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Brian Luschwitz's annual fundraising efforts for the Vista Community Clinic took a little detour this year.

The pediatrician, who lives in Escorido, has been competing for the last five years in the annual Angeles Crest 100-mile Endurance Run to raise money for the clinic. During that time, he has raised about \$15,000 for the nonprofit health

center, which serves mostly low-income residents in several locations in North County.

Luschwitz's plan to run this year nearly got sidelined when the Angeles Crest race was canceled because of the massive Station fire that swept through the mountains above Los Angeles in August and September. Instead of giving up, Luschwitz decided to stay the course and create a race of his own.

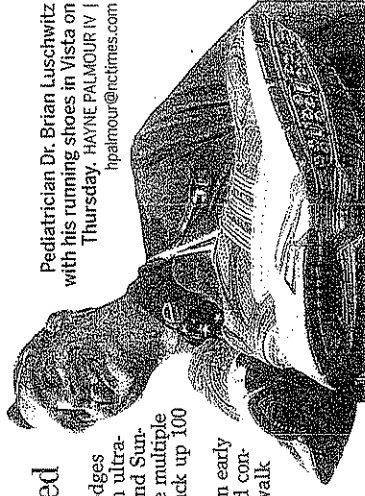
The 42-year-old scoped out a 32-mile

trail around Lake Hodges and will hold his own ultramarathon Saturday and Sunday. He plans to make multiple trips on the trail to rack up 100 miles.

Luschwitz will begin early Saturday morning and continue to run or walk

See Race, Page B5

Pediatrician Dr. Brian Luschwitz with his running shoes in Vista on Thursday. HAYNE PALMOUR IV / hpalmour@nctimes.com



Race

Continued from Page B1

throughout the night and into Sunday morning. He said the fastest he's ever completed a 100-mile run is 27 hours.

Luschwitz said he is used to participating in large, organized races like the Angeles Crest run, so doing it alone presents a bigger challenge. To help with that, Luschwitz has enlisted friends and family members to set up rest stops or meet him along the way with food and water.

He said several people have volunteered to run parts of the race with him to keep him motivated during difficult stretches.

"It's certainly challenging just to keep going," he said. "You don't run the whole way, you've got to stop."

Luschwitz said it's also difficult to stay on the right trail after the sun goes down.

"You get so tired just before dawn and could almost fall asleep while I'm still walking," he said. "Once the sun comes up, you get re-energized for the finish."

Luschwitz said remembering who he's running for is also a great motivation for

the long race.

He has worked for the Vista Community Clinic for more than seven years and sees patients at its Grapevine location. His run will benefit the Kare for Kids Fund at Vista Community Clinic, a program that pays for doctor's visits and medicine for uninsured and underinsured children.

"The Kare for Kids Fund was set up by the clinic because we accept all people, regardless of their ability to pay," Luschwitz said. "We never turn away a sick child."

Jenny Jones, a communications specialist with Vista Community Clinic, said the Kare for Kids Fund helps pay for medical expenses for about 11,000 children each year. That's about half of the total number of children seen at the clinic, she said.

A typical doctor's visit for a child costs about \$120, Jones said. Most families pay between \$30 and \$50 based on a sliding scale.

Supporters can pledge money to his run in lump sums or per mile. To contribute, call Betsy Heightman at 760-631-5000, ext. 1139.

Contact staff writer Cigi Ross at 760-901-4067.