

The AUsome Social Group

Teen/Young Adult Recreation/Social Group

Provided by the Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin (ASC); <http://autismsouthcentral.org/>

Group Coordinator: Nancy Alar, 3802 Gala Way, Cottage Grove, WI 53527

(608) 222-4378 or Nancy.L.Alar@gmail.com

- What:** Trip to Schumacher Farm with focus on Chickens and Prairie
When: Sunday, July 10, 2016, 2-3 pm; Snack afterwards at Waunakee Culver's
Where: Schumacher Farm Park, 5682 Hwy 19, Waunakee, WI 53597. The Waunakee Culver's is across the road from the farm entrance
Cost: Free for the farm! Bring money for snack at Culver's

Schumacher Farm Park is part of the Dane County Park System. This 40-acre farmstead with trails leading through a 10-acre prairie restoration project sits on a hilltop, with a view of the state capital, just east of Waunakee. The original farmhouse and barn built by Henry Schumacher in 1908 is accompanied by outbuildings of the same era. Here is a link to their web site - <http://www.schumacherfarmpark.org/> . The mission of Schumacher Farm is to preserve life ways of rural Dane County through education and restoration and maintain a conservancy for nature study and recreational activities.

There are lots of different activities here throughout the year, but the staff is putting on a private tour of the facility just for us.

We will be focusing on their free range chicken operation followed by a wagon ride trip through their prairie restoration. Some of their "chicken volunteers" will explain the different types of chickens they have, various facts about chickens and how their chickens are cared for. We will have a chance to mingle with the chickens up close and maybe even gather some eggs.

Nowadays many people have their own small flocks of chickens, even in the city. It is one way to get some very fresh eggs. This activity is a good introduction to the care and requirements for keeping chickens.

After we've learned about chicken agriculture, we will take a wagon ride (pulled by a tractor) through their prairie restoration. We will hear some basic information about the plants and other biology of the prairie ecosystem that covered most of the Midwest before the Europeans arrived.

Directions: Schumacher Farm Park is located on the top of a hill on County Hwy 19 just east of Waunakee, Wisconsin.

From the East: Take Hwy 113 out of Madison which merges into Hwy 19. The farm is across the highway from the Industrial park water tower, which you will see as you are coming into Waunakee on Hwy 19.

From the West: The farm is located just past the intersection of Hwy 19 and Q/Schumacher Road. It's the next left.

Even if the weather is bad, we will still meet at the farm and decide what to do from there.

Important Items and Sensory Issues:

- ☺ Dress appropriately for the weather
- ☺ Bring money for a snack at Culver's
- ☺ Farm Smells and Possible loud noises like tractors



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- What:** Private Swimming Party at Monona Pool -- **pre-registration required – see below**
- When:** August 8, 2016 (Saturday evening), 7:00 – 9:00 P.M.
- Where:** Monona Pool at 1011 Nichols Road in Monona. Because the time is so late, we will not be going out for pizza afterwards. See map below.
- Cost:** There is no cost for families/individuals that are members of the Autism Society. Cost is \$10 per family (\$3 per individual) if not members – pay at the pool (you can also join the Autism Society at the pool).

Swimming in the Monona Pool in August has become an Autism Society/AUsome tradition. The Monona Pool changed their rental policy 2 years ago to private evening swims rather than morning. They also moved the time this year to a half hour later so we are starting at 7:00pm instead of 6:30. Because we won't be out of the pool until after 9:00 we decided not to go out for pizza because it is so late. We just have to hope we don't have thunderstorms.

The cost of swimming is free for members of the Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin (the ASC). So this might be a good time to join the ASC if you aren't a member already. See the ASC web site at <http://www.autismsouthcentral.org/> for more details on membership cost (\$30 for a family; \$15 for an individual), how to join and details about the August swim. You will also be able to join (and save \$10 on swimming) at the pool as you check in.

Pre-registration is required because we need a count for the number of lifeguards. The Autism Society office is coordinating the Swimming activity registration this year. You can register on-line at this link <http://autismsouthcentral.org/events/member-pool-party/>

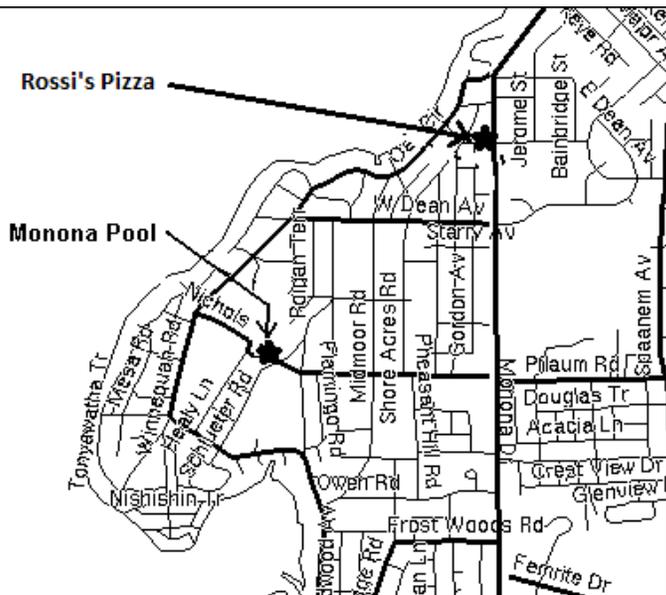
You will be asked to let us know how many people are coming and how many plan to swim. If you don't have email access, you can call the office at 608-630-9147 and leave a message with your name (with spelling), number attending (both swimming and not swimming) and your phone number so we can check back if we need to. Please speak slowly and clearly so we can get accurate information.

As before, we have been able to reserve the entire Monona pool. They have a large shallow end, diving boards and a great water slide. The pool is very large and you can bring your pool toys. There are changing rooms with showers to get dressed and into your suits.

The Monona Pool is located Behind the Monona Community Center at 1011 Nichols Road (which becomes Pflaum Road at Monona Drive - see map below). Go West on Nichols road about 8 blocks from Monona Drive, past the Monona Library/City Hall sign, and down the hill. The pool is on the right. There is a big parking lot next to the pool entrance. **Don't forget your suit and towel!** Bring shampoo, a comb and an extra towel if you want to wash the chlorine out of your hair. Bring pool toys if you have them.

If you forget to pre-register and we don't have enough lifeguards, it will be first come, first admitted. However, parents or others who come but don't swim can be in the pool area and don't count toward the lifeguard requirement. There's a large selection of lounge chairs if you just want to come and "hang out" (you don't even have to change into a swimsuit). We will also have lemonade and snacks available near the pool. We can get in the changing room at 6:45. We have to be out of the pool at 9:00.

If the swimming gets rained out (horrors!!): Watch your email for info on this since the pool folks make cancellation decisions at the last minute. But the lifeguards don't let a little thing like cool and cloudy weather stop them. If you don't have email or the weather is "iffy", meet me in the pool parking lot at 7:00 and we'll make a final decision with those who show up. If the lifeguards cancel, I will probably suggest going to Rossi's Pizza Vintage Video game place to hang out since the Monona Library (our previous fall back place for bad weather) isn't open in the evening.



Important Information:

1. Visit <http://www.autismsouthcentral.org/> for other services and activities sponsored by the Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin (ASC). Be sure to sign up for their email group to get the “News you can Use” messages on current happenings. Email info@autismsouthcentral.org to communicate with the Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin and request addition to the email contact list. There are autism related activities happening almost every month now.
2. **The AUsome Adult Group** is a support Group for those 18 and older on the autism spectrum that meets at the ASC office conference room every other month on Wednesday evening. You can get more details on this group at <http://autismsouthcentral.org/find-support/ausome-adult-support-group/>
3. **We are also always in need of volunteers** for our many activities sponsored by the ASC. Please contact info@autismsouthcentral.org to get on our volunteer list if you are available to help out with any of our activities.

What Happened at AUsome's Last Outings?

Play Disc Golf with Friends; Saturday, May 14, 2016, 1:00 – 2:30 P.M.

We had 8 people show up for this event. This was in spite of the fact that it was windy... and cold... and rainy...and even snowing!! All of this weather nonsense made it really hard to throw a disc with any distance or accuracy. Plus it was totally uncomfortable. I totally gave up and sat in the car. My son Matt went and hung out at the dog park.

But the other 6 actually went around the course. It took them a little over an hour to do 18 holes. This was in spite of the fact that the first hole was actually the worst because the weather was creating a headwind blowing straight down the fairway and the first hole was all uphill. So things got a little easier after they got past the first hole.

Also, I quickly found out that for disc golf, Frisbees just don't cut it, especially on windy days. You really need to have the correct disc equipment. We will have to try this activity again after we have a chance to find a place where we can get our hands on enough of the actual disc golf discs. That way even rookies like me have a chance to actually play the game with some hope of successfully hitting the holes.

But it certainly is true that disc golf is a great way to get some exercise and the Capital Springs Disc Golf Course is really beautiful.

When the intrepid golfers got done, we adjourned to McDonald's to warm up and discuss the finer points of Disc Golf.



What Happened at AUsome's Last Outings?

Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin Summer Picnic at Demetral Park; Saturday, June 4, 2016; 4:00 – 7:00 PM

We had between 50 and 60 people at the picnic this year. And just like last year, the weather was PERFECT... 70's, no rain, nice breeze. We went through almost 7 gallons of lemonade.

The food was good and plentiful. The pulled pork sandwiches plus hot dogs and salads got rave reviews. We got the message that we should include potato chips next year. Thanks to everyone who brought a dessert to share. We had a great variety. No one went home hungry. Many (I was one) kind of wished they hadn't eaten that last piece of cake.

It was nice to sit down and share some personal stories and talk about our common concerns over some good food. It was a relaxing and accepting environment.

There was a nice playground there. A number of people brought some yard games to play. The bubble blowing equipment was a hit. We had to take a bubble break while we ate to keep the bubbles out of the food. The automatic bubble blowing machine ran so long the batteries went dead. We made bubbles until the soap ran out.

A big thanks to everyone who worked hard to make the picnic a success. Thanks to Harriet and Mary who did the majority of the work. A good time was had by all.



AUSome Social Group Philosophy and Ground Rules

Group Sponsor:

The AUSome Social Group is a service provided by the Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin (ASC). **It is highly recommended that you join the ASC.** Chapter membership will save you money at future AUSome Group activities and other ASC events. Individual ASC membership is only \$15 annually. To get more information about the ASC, call 608-630-9147, email info@autismsouthcentral.org or send a note to Autism Society, 437 S Yellowstone Dr, Suite 217A, Madison, WI 53719. See the Autism Society website at <http://www.autismsouthcentral.org/> for membership information. The website also has a link to the AUSome Social Group web pages on the left side (there is also an AUSome adult support group for those on the spectrum).

Starting in 2016 Membership in the Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin will include membership in the Autism Society of Wisconsin. However it does not include membership in the Autism Society of America. Membership in the Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin assures local programs, services and supports are able to continue, and includes several free or discounted events right here in the Madison area.

Group Purpose:

The AUSome group was organized to provide stimulating, fun, and educational social opportunities for people ages 12 and over who are challenged by sensory/communication issues related to Autism/Asperger's/PDD/Tourette's. However, anyone is welcome to join the activities. We try to set up activities that allow for social interaction between group members and between parents and siblings of the group. We also strive to provide new and interesting experiences that will broaden the world view of participants and expose them to educational and potential job environments.

The AUSome Social Group Newsletter:

The AUSome Group has a separate newsletter that is sent out every other month, containing details for the next 2 outings and a summary of what happened the past 2 months. The AUSome newsletter will be sent out at least a week in advance of the next outing (I hope). Some things may be planned with short notice if something interesting comes up. The ASC will maintain a mailing list of participants. The newsletter will be sent out via email. If you need to have a paper copy mailed to you, that can be done by special request. But remember that it saves time and postage if notification can be sent electronically. Reminders and special messages will only be sent electronically. Our AUSome newsletter is also available on the ASC website at <http://autismsouthcentral.org/category/ausome-social-group-newsletters/>

General Activity Plans:

The general plan is to have an activity about once a month that will last from 2 to 4 hours. The target day will be the first Saturday of the month. However, this is subject to schedule conflicts and availability of interesting activities. Activities that we have done include bowling, miniature golf, gymnastics, movies, a talent show, art gallery visit, fossil hunt, Little Amerricka (a local amusement park), swimming, horseback riding, Go Cart driving, farm market, airplane rides, pottery making and a limousine ride. Each January we attend the 47th annual Madfest Juggling show. In August we have a private pool party at the Monona Pool. Every November we have "video game night". If you are especially interested in a particular activity or have other suggestions, please let me know. Some activities will coincide with general activities planned by the Autism Society such as the annual August swimming party.

Sensory Issues:

Every effort will be made to accommodate sensory issues by limiting cigarette smoke, strong odors, unusual lighting, large crowds and high noise levels where possible. If an activity might involve some of the sensory problems mentioned above, they will be described in the AUSome newsletter. It will not be possible to accommodate everyone's needs all the time so individuals must decide their tolerance levels for each activity. Please let me know if you have any special requests in this area. Also, please be sensitive to requests from group members who have special sensory needs (such as problems with others chewing gum.).

Logistics:

Some individuals may need to arrange for a support person to accompany them. Please use your best judgment in this area. Transportation will be the responsibility of each individual. However, effort will be made to provide help with transportation by designating central meeting points, etc. Please call me, Nancy Alar, (608) 222-4378 or e-mail me at Nancy.L.Alar@gmail.com if you have transportation problems, and I'll try to help work out a way for you to get there.

Since these activities are loosely organized social outings, each person participates at their own risk.