

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:** Rockin' Jump Trampoline Park Jumping Party
When: March 6, 2016 (Sunday) 9:00 – 10:30 A.M.
Where: Rockin' Jump Trampoline Park, 700 Novation Pkwy, Madison, WI 53713 (just off Rimrock Rd.) [Map It!](#)
Cost: ASC Members \$3; Non-Members \$4. Parents, caregivers and observers are free. Payable by cash, check or charge card at the door

Jump yourself wide awake early on this Sunday Morning in this safe and bouncy trampoline park. Work up an appetite and probably go out for a bite to eat afterwards. Because I have a family commitment out of town, I will probably not be able to be at this activity, but other folks from the Autism Society will be there to make sure things go smoothly.

This is a really fun and energetic activity that can be lots of fun and give you some great exercise. The trampolines are all set over pits in the floor and the springs are covered in vinyl so it's a lot safer than your usual back yard trampoline setup. But it is still a place full of bouncy trampolines so Rockin' Jump has a big emphasis on safety.

Everyone who jumps has to sign a liability waiver (parents have to sign for kids) before jumping. There is also a list of safety actions and behaviors they request on their website at <http://msn.rockinjump.com/>. These include things like wearing special slip resistant socks, watching out for small kids and only jumping with one person on each trampoline. They even have a safety video available that you can watch on-line. They want everyone to have a safe and jumpin' good time.

For those who want to have a jumpin' good time, please go to the Autism Society events web page to RSVP at <http://autismsouthcentral.org/events-2/upcoming-events/>. There is also a link to a map on this page.

Important Items and Sensory Issues:

- ☺ Wear comfortable clothing in layers (you will probably get warm from all the jumping and may need to remove some layers).
- ☺ Bring money for your admission fee
- ☺ Feel free to contact Nancy Alar (608-222-4378 / nancy.l.alar@gmail.com) or the ASC office (608-630-9147/ autismsouthcentral@gmail.com) if you have any questions.



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What: Lego Building Party
When: Saturday, April 2, 2016, 10 am– Noon
Where: Alicia Ashman Library, 733 N High Point Rd, Madison, WI 53717
Cost: Free!

Many people (young and old) are fans of Lego toys. This is your chance to hang out with those who enjoy building with these universal bricks and spend a morning with others who share your interests.

We will provide plenty of Legos for you to build creative constructions. You can also bring your own Lego models to put together. But just be aware that there will be lots of Legos in the room and it might be difficult to avoid getting your bricks mixed in with others.

To make things more exciting, there will be a drawing at 11:00 for a few small, donated Lego “door prizes” for attendees.

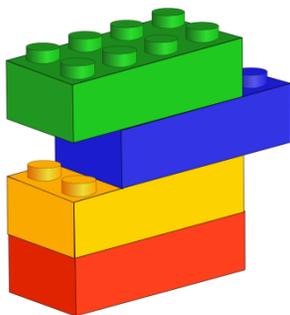
There are plenty of tables and chairs. If you want to just come and hang out with the builders, observers are welcome. Feel free to come and leave at any time during the activity.

The library is in a small shopping center which has ample parking. We are building our Legos in the library activity room which is in the back of the library.

We would appreciate it if a few people could stay at the end to help pick up stray Legos and put the room furniture away.

Important Items and Sensory Issues:

- ☺ There may be some noisy young people in attendance
- ☺ No RSVP is necessary.



What Happened at AUsome's Last Outings?

47th Annual Madfest Juggling Show; January 16, 2016 (Saturday) 7:00-9:00 P.M

This was the usual screwball show and our favorite MC (Mark Hayward) was back. We only had 25 people show up this year, mostly because we were competing with a very important Packer Game. Most people were home glued to the TV set. But it was strangely appropriate that we had 25 people come because it was actually the 25th anniversary of the 47th Annual Madfest Juggling Show. And of course it was as cold as only Wisconsin can be in the middle of January. Thanks to my daughter, Liz, and her "posse" for their help with seating and crowd control.

Mark Hayward started off the show with an incredible demonstration of his skill with spinning tops. (Mark is really good with all kinds of things like tops, YoYos, diablos and the usual juggling). These are special tops where Mark wraps the string around the outside of the top and then throws the top up and away from him to "spin it up". Then he catches the top in his hand or on the string he used to spin it. It's amazing how he makes it look easy to do this. Then he makes the top do "tricks" like whizzing along the string or bouncing from one place to another. Just when you think it couldn't get any more spectacular or difficult, Mark whips out a larger version of the top and does it all over again until on the 3rd time he has a top as big as a basketball that he is spinning up with clothesline. All the while Mark is doing this amazing stuff he is telling funny jokes and making us all laugh like crazy.

The second act (in honor of the 25th anniversary of the show) was the traditional performance by this year's version of the Mad Five. Mark announced that this team were (mostly) the same guys who did this act (and won awards) back 25 years ago when the show first started. In keeping with their usual goofy logic, I think there were 8 people in the Mad Five act. This team club juggling act always features my favorite juggler, Melon Head. It was clear that the Mad Five were fabulous jugglers as they stood in a circle and passed a hail of clubs across the center and did other complex patterns. They only dropped stuff once in a while, but they were having a great time.

Then we saw the Simple Family Spinners. Their specialty was balancing multiple spinning big balls on the tips of their fingers. The most interesting part was that their act included a couple little kids, one of which was only about 3 years old. Even these little kids could balance the spinning balls without dropping them.

Next came Bennett Santora. This young man was only 11 years old, but he was an expert juggler with rings and had a very mature stage presence.

The next act was Laura Ernst. She had a giant metal ring that was big enough to stand inside (and looked as dangerous as could be). She was a woman's champion at using this circus act item. She stood inside the metal ring with her hands and feet holding her inside of it as the ring rolled around the stage. Sometimes she would jump out of it or jump through it. Then she would grab it or spin it around or balance inside it on one foot as it spun around. This ring was very big and heavy. She made it look graceful and beautiful, but if you thought about it too much, it looked like a good way to hurt yourself if you didn't know what you were doing.

The Institute of Jugglology was a man and a woman who used between them only 2 juggling clubs, 6 rings and 1 blue ball. They called their act "Some Assembly Required". It's really hard to describe what they did in this act, but it was very beautiful. They hung a set of 3 rings on each club and then gracefully disassembled and reassembled the rings and clubs and juggled them back and forth, inserting the blue ball into the sequence here and there. It was quite amazing.

Daniel Van Hoomissen was next. He was a very skilled club juggler who had won a bronze medal in competition.

Sophie Spacegypsy did an act that involved taking apart her costume, which was a dress whose skirt was made of different size hula hoops. As she disconnected each hoop from her costume, she spun it around and exhibited her skill in spinning and using it.

Bobby Hunt is also known as Circus Boy. He has so many talents it is hard to list them all. He can juggle while balancing on top of a single straight ladder. He can "juggle" ping pong balls out of his mouth. He can do these things while riding a unicycle. He also demonstrated riding the world's smallest bicycle.

Viktor Gyllenberg was the final act. I remember him for his fancy red shoes. He was a really spectacular juggler. He used multiple objects like rings, balls and clubs and could juggle lots of them at once.

Nancy Alar's 70th Birthday Party; Friday, February 5, 2016, 6:00 – 9:00 pm.

This was The – Best – Party – Ever! I want to thank everyone who came and/or sent greetings to help me celebrate my birthday. Over 80 people showed up! There were folks from every different part of my life – friends, neighbors, Toastmasters, former co-workers, relatives, the autism community, card players, etc. I had a wonderful time greeting and talking to everyone! And we raised over \$800 for the Autism Society! The food was great - chicken wings, shrimp, hummus, veggies, etc and of course cake – 2 different flavors. The only thing that would have made it better would have been if my husband, Tom, could have attended. But he was caring for his elderly father in Indianapolis. But Tom was there in spirit.

Jim Mooney provided the music and went to the extra effort of learning some of my favorite songs to play for me. I really enjoyed it. My daughter, Liz, brought a lot of her friends (who are also my friends) and added balloons to the party. Liz and her friends were a big help with gathering up leftover cake, etc. and helping me when everything was over.

Rob Streiffer took some excellent pictures. I really appreciated all the help provided by Fil Clissa, my event planner. The staff at The Great Dane East Side did an excellent job with the refreshments.

There were a couple of lively card games and all attendees got a commemorative deck of cards. (I have a few decks left if anyone wants one. Thanks again to everyone who helped to make my party so special.



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 autismsouthcentral@gmail.com 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 annual conference of the Autism Society of Wisconsin (ASW) will be April 7 – 9, 2016 at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells.** The keynote speaker this year will be Barry Prizant, discussing his book, “Uniquely Human- A Different Way of Seeing Autism”. There will again be a special track of activities designed for those on the spectrum to learn information and meet others like themselves. ASW conferences have had as many as 900 attendees in the past. About 10% of them are people on the spectrum. You can find out more details at <http://www.asw4autism.org/>. Early bird registration this year is open until January 13. At this conference they try to make those on the spectrum as comfortable as they can. The fee for those on the spectrum is only \$90! This conference is a place where those on the spectrum are valued for their differences. You are the reason that this conference exists.

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 autismsouthcentral@gmail.com 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.