

The AUsome Social Group

Teen/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:** Sunburst Dairy Farm Tour
When: Saturday, May 12, 2018, 1 – 3pm
Where: SunBurst Dairy, 1003 County Rd. PB, Belleville, WI 53508 (about a mile south of Paoli)
Snack afterwards at the Landmark Creamery in Paoli, Wi.
Cost: Free! Bring money for a snack afterwards

Have you ever wanted to see a cow up close? How about stroking the hair of a very young calf? Did you ever wonder how that great Wisconsin milk is produced? What does a dairy farmer do all day? This is your chance to find out and tour a real working dairy farm!

SunBurst Dairy is a family farm located a short distance from Madison. It is South of Verona near Paoli (see Map below). The owners are Brian and Yvonne (also known as Yogi) Brown. Please join us for a walking tour where you will be up close and personal with actual dairy cows. We will see where cows live, what they eat, and how high-quality milk is produced. We will also see the calves and how they are cared for.

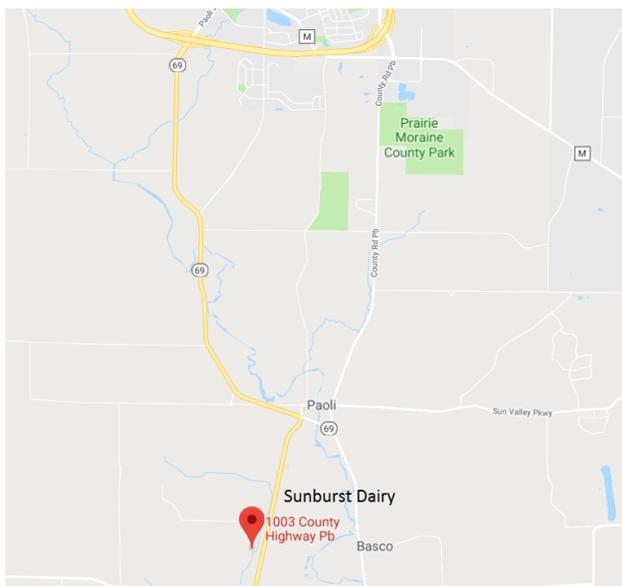
Yogi will lead us on the tour. She will also discuss some of the many jobs and careers that are connected to the dairy industry. We will see cows as they are milked, newborn calves, where cows live, what cows eat, how cow feed is stored and maybe some cropping equipment. They even have a few llamas to pet if you have never been up close to llamas. Please bring your questions and enjoy an afternoon outside.

Wear comfortable walking shoes. You will be walking on gravel, cement and grass. You will be given plastic boots to put over your shoes when you arrive at the farm. It's important to wear these boots because they will protect your shoes from the mud and other farm "byproducts" plus it also protects the farm from any organisms you may have on your shoes.

After we see the cows and learn about how a dairy farm works, we will head over to Paoli to have a snack at the Landmark Creamery. This is a relatively new shop in Paoli that has a very limited menu but specializes in (what else) grilled cheese sandwiches. They also sell different kinds of cheese and cheese related items in their store. Bring money for a snack. There is also an ice cream store across the street in Paoli.

Important Items and Sensory Issues:

- ☺ Wear comfortable walking shoes
- ☺ Dress appropriately for the weather
- ☺ No RSVP is necessary.
- ☺ Bring money for a snack afterwards



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What: Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin Summer Picnic
When: Saturday, June 2, 2018; 4:00 – 7:00 PM
Where: Demetral Park Shelter, 6th Street, Madison, WI, 53704
Cost: Free for ASC members! \$10 per family/\$3 per individuals for non-members. Catered food including sandwiches, salads + Soft drinks will be provided. Bring a dessert to share.

The AUsome Group will join with the rest of the Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin family for a fun afternoon in the park. If you can, bring a dessert to share. The Autism Society will provide sandwiches this year so we don't have to mess with a grill. The menu will probably be the same as last year with pulled pork sandwiches, plus salads. See the ASC Facebook page, ASC website or contact the office as the event gets closer if you want more details about the food. The Autism Society will also provide plates, tableware, cups, lemonade and condiments.

Please RSVP to info@autismsouthcentral.org with "Picnic" in the subject line and the number of people coming so we know how many people to plan for or go to <http://autismsouthcentral.org/events/member-picnic/> and sign up there.

The picnic is free for those who are ASC members. The cost is \$10 per family/\$3 for individuals for those who are non-members (but you can become an ASC member at the picnic which will save you money and get you other "perks" at future events like our summer pool party!) There will also be materials available about local autism resources from ASC partners and info about future ASC activities.

Also bring any "yard games" you might like to play. I have an extensive collection of bubble making materials I will be bringing (I'm just a kid at heart). We had great fun (and great pictures) with the bubbles last time I brought them. The Demetral Park shelter has a nice big parking lot and plenty of room in case it rains. Assuming (and we are hoping) it doesn't rain; there are large grassy areas for games and a playground for the younger set. The shelter also has bathrooms and electrical outlets if you need to plug something in.

This is a chance to meet other families who share your issues and concerns in a casual environment. Come to eat good food, hang out and have a good time.

Important Items and Sensory Issues:

- ☺ Watch the weather and dress appropriately.
- ☺ Bring a dessert to share.
- ☺ Bring "yard games" you enjoy.
- ☺ Bring sunscreen if appropriate.
- ☺ Please RSVP to info@autismsouthcentral.org with "Picnic" in the subject line and the number of people coming so we know how many people to plan for, or go to <http://autismsouthcentral.org/events/member-picnic/> and sign up there.



What Happened at AUsome's Last Outings?

Tour of the Fantasmical Epic Systems Company Campus; Snack afterwards at Culver's in Verona, March 11, 2018 (Sunday) 11:00 am -1:00

This was a truly incredible outing! Due to my bad knees, I could only handle about the first 15 minutes of the 2 hour walk, but that was enough to make me very sorry I couldn't see the rest of it.

Our guide was Mark Huntsman whose brother works at Epic. Even though Epic does provide self-guided tour materials, having Mark show us around was SO MUCH better. Mark knew all the little "tidbit facts" about the things we were seeing. Like the large plaster plaques with names and handprints on the walls near the entrance represent people who have worked for the company for at least 20 years. Our tour went through the Central Park Campus and the Wizarding School.

The part of the tour I saw included 2 very impressive conference rooms and a bunch of random artwork just sitting around. And remember this was just the first 15 minutes that I will describe. Some of the stuff in the hallways: the life-size sculpture of Yoda's head in the middle of an end table; the large "bird cage" containing a dragon with a pile of chicken bones in the bottom; the working fireplace with s'mores supplies and a sign that invited you to make yourself a treat; the very large "steam punk" themed telescope that was pointed out one window looking to the sky.

The conference rooms: All conference rooms were "themed" and they all had equipment (coffee pot, cups, coasters, table, chairs, clock, etc.) that matched this theme. The equipment also included some kind of working fireplace. The North Woods conference room had a large glass top table in the middle with a full size canoe (complete with life vests, paddles, fishing poles, etc.) under the glass. The chairs were made out of bent willow sticks. There was a large mural on one end of the room that made it look like you were looking off the end of a boat dock. There was a working potbellied stove in the corner. The coasters were round pieces of wood sawn from a tree branch. The coffee pot and cups were the kind you would find in a hunting cabin.

The Outer Space conference room had a large oval Plexiglas (?) table top that (I think) was lit from underneath. The chairs were very modernistic. There were stained glass windows in the walls with outer space themes. There were coasters that each had a picture of one of the planets of the solar system. The clock was an elaborate floor model with lots of visible gearing. The light fixtures looked like they were from a space ship. The coffee service was also very modern looking.

Mark told us that the decorating consultants for the Epic campus included people who also consulted on Disneyland and the Google headquarters. I also drove through the whole campus and found the outside of the buildings quite fascinating. When we got together at Culver's afterwards, everyone who had gone on this tour insisted that we just had to do this again because it was SO interesting. I know I'm not going to miss it next time even if I have to get a wheel chair!

One Walk/Big Strides for Autism; April 22, 2018, Walk 11:30 to 12:30. Pizza after at Demetral Park shelter, 601 N. 6th Street, Madison Wis.

This was really a great day, but it was hard to find the AUsome Social Group members mixed in with the almost 1000 (!) other people who showed up to take big strides with us in the cause of autism awareness and acceptance. With those numbers we had about twice as many people turn out for the walk this year than last year.

We had great weather after the snowstorm the weekend before. We had wonderful help from our UW volunteers from Badgers With a Heart (BWAH). The BWAH checked people in, passed out T-shirts and lead the walkers along the route. Other volunteers helped pass out food to returning walkers, put up signage and worked on cleanup. It was a great day for a great cause! Everyone had a good time with lots of family fun. The participation of so many teams was truly amazing and wonderful.

I worked closely with ASC's executive assistant (Harriet Tatoes) to order almost 1000 lovely blue T-shirts, 150 boxes of pizza, 800 bottles of water and 800 bananas. I ended up storing the 800 bananas in my living room for 2 days. One result of that is my house smelled of bananas for that entire 48 hours. It was a lot of work, but the results were very rewarding. A very big THANK YOU to everyone who helped make this event such a big success.

Important Information:

1. Visit <http://www.autismsouthcentral.org/> for other services and activities sponsored by the **Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin**. Be sure to sign up for their email group to get the monthly news messages sent out by the ASC. There are autism related activities happening almost every month now.
2. **Monthly Game Night Activity**. This is a new activity for teens and young adults separate from the AUsome Social Group. The focus is on board and card games. This happens every month on the 4th Monday of the month; 6:30 – 8:30 pm. The location is the Madison College Health Education Information Technology Building, 1705 Hoffman St (across the street from the main Truax campus), Room 101 (room is subject to change – look for signs).
3. **AUsome Adult Support Group**. This support group is for adults (18 and over) with Autism Spectrum Disorders and those who suspect they may have an ASD. The group meets the third Wednesday of every other month (Jan, Mar, May, July, Sept, Nov) to discuss life issues and support one another. Time 6:30 – 8:00 PM. Location Vantage Place II Building, 2nd Floor, ASC Office conference room - 437 S. Yellowstone Dr. Madison, WI.
4. **Building Relationships and Managing Online Communication**. This is a special one hour group conversation follow up to an earlier workshop on relationships that was held on January 27 by Madeline Barger. This is also being led by Madeline Barger of the Waisman Center and will be held at the Alicia Ashman Library at 733 High Point Road in Madison on Saturday, May 26, 2018 from 10:00 – 11:00 am. Hope you can join us.

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 ASC 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).

The Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin is an affiliate of the Autism Society of America, a nationwide organization. However, membership in ASC does not include membership in the Autism Society of America. The ASC serves South Central Wisconsin with reach into Southwest Wisconsin – Dane, Columbia, Sauk, Iowa, Rock, Green, Lafayette, Grant, Richland and Crawford counties are in our service area. 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 our local 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/find-support/social-and-support-programs/ausome-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 Americka (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 annual Madfest Juggling show. In August we have a private pool party at the Monona Pool. Every November we have "video/board game/socialization 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.

