

- What:** **A-Maze-ing Day at Treinen Farm – night tour of the corn maze with a bonfire and S’mores.**
- When:** **September 24, 2016 (Saturday), 7:00 - 9:00 pm (We’ll be doing the corn maze in the dark – spooky!)**
- Where:** **Treinen Farm 5 miles west of Lodi on State Road 60. See directions below**
- Cost:** **Each AUsome member gets 1 corn maze ticket courtesy of ASC-** Additional Corn maze tickets are \$10 for adults, \$10 for over age 6, \$6 for ages 3-5 and aged 2 and under is free. You don’t have to do the maze. Sitting around the bonfire and making S’mores is covered by ASC funds, but you must arrive after 5pm for it to be covered by ASC. If you come before 5 pm then there is a \$6 admission charge for anyone 3 years or older. **\*\*RSVPs are needed so that the gate has a list of names.** You can RSVP here: <https://goo.gl/forms/NmqPMbEUobwAIB8t2> or by calling Nancy Alar at 608/222-4378.

A big thanks to Alan and Angie, owners of Treinen Farm, for working with us at their location to make this exciting event happen. The picture in the corn maze is different every year. This year the corn maze picture is inspired unicorns and cuteness (see picture below).

The rest of the A-Maze-ing Day activities (face painting, wagon rides, pumpkin patch, pony rides, pond slingshot, etc.) actually end at 5:00 pm, but the corn maze is open until 9:00 pm. For our AUsome Group activity, we’ll have a big bonfire site reserved where we can sit around it and enjoy burning up some wood, making S’mores and hanging out. It’s kind of fun to try to find your way through the corn maze at night. Busloads of people actually come out to the farm after dark just to do this. If you want to just hang out at the bonfire, you can join me there. I’m not planning to go in the maze. If you want to go in the corn maze be sure to mention that you are with the AUsome Group when you pick up your maze tickets and **remember to bring a flash light with fresh batteries!**

We’ll have an AUsome gathering around a bonfire with or without a trip through the corn maze. I’ll provide the fixings for the S’mores and sticks to roast marshmallows. This activity will go on rain or shine. If it looks like rain, bring an umbrella. If it rains too hard, we’ll eat the chocolate bars in the barn!

Corn Maze Details - This is the centerpiece of the farm activity. As you enter the maze you get 2 things, the first is the 1<sup>st</sup> of 8 pieces of the maze map and a stapled shut “cheat” copy of the whole maze map. You have to follow the clues on the 1<sup>st</sup> piece of the map to find the 2<sup>nd</sup> piece. If you make it back with all 8 map pieces without opening your “cheat” map, you win a piece of candy. There are 8 special places in the maze where you can find paper punches to punch holes in your map. If you find and punch these special places, you can win prizes.

You can find directions and more details about the farm at <http://www.treinenfarm.com/>. The basic directions to get there are pretty simple. Take I90/I94 north of Madison to the State Road 60 exit to Lodi. Follow State Road 60 West through Lodi and out the other side. The farm is about 5 miles west of Lodi on State Road 60 on your right. Parking is across the road on the left and you walk through a tunnel under the road to reach the farm.

You can find more details about the A-Maze-ing Day for Autism at the web site <http://autismsouthcentral.org/events-2/upcoming-events/> This is an activity where those on the spectrum and their families can have fun in an outdoor activity and contact others in the autism community in a relaxed and accepting atmosphere.

There will be a lot of things to do at A-Maze-ing Day if you want to come before 5:00 on Saturday:

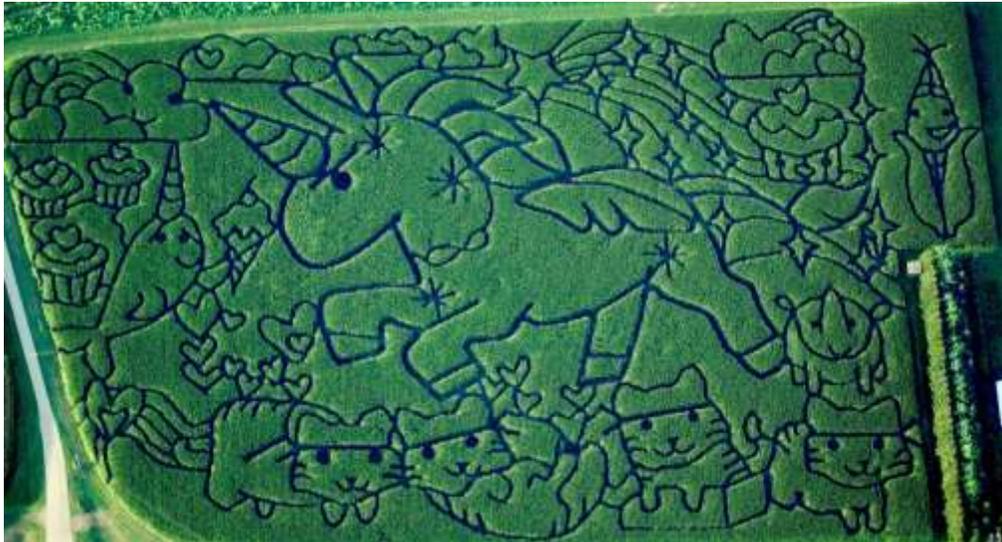
- **Horse Drawn Wagon Rides to the pumpkin patch** – Pick out and buy your own pumpkin for Halloween. Ride to and from the patch in a horse drawn wagon. (This costs extra so you will have to bring money for this. See prices below about important items.)
- **Pond Slingshot** – buy 3 gourds for \$1 and then use the giant slingshot to try to hit the inner-tube target in the middle of the pond.

- **Free ice cream for ASC members** – ASC will have a create-your-own sundae bar for ice cream. If you have a single membership you get 1 free sundae; for a family membership you get 2 sundaes. Additional sundaes are only \$1 for ASC members.
- **Volunteer Opportunity** – Contact ASC at [info@autismsouthcentral.org](mailto:info@autismsouthcentral.org) if you would like to help at this fun event doing things such as stocking our ice cream sundae bar. You can also work with our other wonderful volunteers from the UW – Badgers with a Heart.

### **Important Items and Sensory Issues:**

- ☺ The maze may be crowded, even after dark.
- ☺ Bring a Flashlight with fresh batteries
- ☺ Bring an umbrella if it looks like rain
- ☺ Dress appropriately for the weather and wear sturdy shoes.
- ☺ Bring a coat or heavy sweatshirt just in case. It can get quite chilly after dark.
- ☺ There is an extra charge if you want to do the pumpkin patch. Please see the website <http://treinenfarm.com/hours-admission/#.V9fgfJgrKCg> for more information about those prices which vary by age.

**This Year's maze picture (cuteness - including A Unicorn, cupcakes and ninja kitties). You can find out more at this [2016 maze details web link](#).**



### **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 “News you can Use” messages sent out by the ASC. There are autism related activities happening 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, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, ASC Office conference room - 437 S. Yellowstone Dr. Madison, WI.

The AUsome Social Group  
Teen/Adult Recreation/Social Group  
Sponsored by the Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin (ASC); <http://www.autismsouthcentral.org/>  
Contact: Nancy Alar, 3802 Gala Way, Cottage Grove, WI 53527  
(608) 222-4378 or [Nancy.L.Alar@gmail.com](mailto:Nancy.L.Alar@gmail.com)

**What:** A guided tour by Mark Huntsman of the Maple Hill Cemetery in Evansville, WI, followed by a snack at Romano's Pizzeria.  
**When:** October 9, 2016 (Sunday), 1:00 - 3:00 pm  
**Where:** Maple Hill Cemetery, 200 N. Cemetery Rd, Evansville, WI 53536; Romano's Pizzeria, 50 N. Union Rd, Evansville (this is just off Main St. which is also Hwy 14 and is just a few blocks from Cemetery Street)  
**Cost:** Free! Bring money for pizza.

Evansville is an old town about a 20 minute drive south of Madison on Hwy 14. Note that Hwy 14 is an extension of Park Street going south from Madison. Here's a link to Evansville's location on google maps [Evansville on Google](#). Evansville was founded in the early 1800's so the town and its cemetery are very old. Casualties of the Civil War are buried there.

Mark Huntsman is a member of our AUsome Group who also happens to have a PHD in French. His special interest is old architecture and cemeteries. He has done some extensive studies of a number of local cemeteries and informed me that the Maple Hill cemetery in Evansville is one of the most interesting ones nearby. He has volunteered to conduct a tour for us in the spirit of the season of October.

Here is Mark's summary of some of the things he is going to tell us about concerning the "Secrets and Legends of Maple Hill"

*A graveyard is more than a collection of stones: it is a collection of stories, symbols, and science. Discover how the fusion of more than 150 years of history, technology, and art have created a landscape of beauty and intrigue--a landscape that hides a secret code containing clues about the lives of people buried there. Come hear stories about the extraordinary people buried in Evansville, from the greatest American impressionist painter who ever lived, to the popcorn vendor whose collection of exotic animals constantly caused chaos and mischief in this otherwise peaceful village. I will tell you stories of haunted streets and secret societies, but I will also teach you a few things about how to "read" a cemetery to discover stories of your own; everything from the size, shape, and material of a tombstone, to seemingly innocent pictures of plants, animals, and objects offer clues to the age, profession, religion, social status, and personal values of the entombed. Curious how a tree stump can tell you what kind of life insurance a person owned, how a lamb can tell you how old someone was when he or she died, and how lasers can be used to show the world what hobbies a person was into? Come to Evansville on Sunday, October 9th and find out.*

To get there, follow Hwy 14 (Park Street) south from Madison. After you enter Evansville, Hwy 14 becomes E. Main Street. About 2 blocks down E. Main Street, turn Left on Cemetery Rd (Street). The cemetery is on your right and has 2 entrances. The cemetery is very large and has lots of criss-crossing roads. Drive in about 3 "blocks" and park along the edge of the drive. Be sure to pull off enough for other cars to pass.

We will do this tour rain or shine so dress appropriately for the weather. Bring an umbrella in case of rain. RSVP's are appreciated, but not necessary. Try to come on time so can keep up with the group and the information.

If you came from Madison on Hwy 14, you would have passed Romano's Pizzeria just before it turned onto E. Main Street. We will go back there after Mark has shared his interesting cemetery lore with us.

After we are done at Romano's you may want to take a drive in the other direction down W. Main Street to see the lovely old mansions. It is one of the main attractions in this lovely town.

#### **Important Items and Sensory Issues:**

- ☺ Dress appropriately for the weather. Bring an umbrella if it looks like rain.
- ☺ Wear sturdy walking shoes. The cemetery is large.
- ☺ Bring money for pizza at Romano's if you plan to go there with the group

## **What Happened at AUsome's Last Outings?**

### **Trip to Schumacher Farm with focus on Chickens and Wagon Ride thru the restored Prairie; Sunday, July 10, 2016, 2-3 pm; Snack afterwards at Waunakee Culver's**

If you had any interest in chickens (I do) or antique farming practices, this was a really interesting activity. We had 12 people show up which turned out to be just the right number to fit in the wagon for our prairie ride.

We started out with a tour of the free-range chicken operation. The farm has 9 hens and one rooster – all very colorful. The striped black and white ones were the original strain that were kept on the farm because they are really good egg producers. The grey ones were the friendliest. The rooster was very colorful and beautiful; plus he crowed a lot. They were very anxious to get out of their pen, scratch in the grass and look for bugs. We got to feed the birds current berries and chicken feed which they ate out of our hands. We also got to look for eggs in the chicken house while the birds were outside. We found 6 eggs, all in the same nesting box. Apparently chickens like to lay their eggs where they see other eggs. The eggs were all slightly different colors – pale green, beige and white. We got to take home some of the eggs we found if we wanted to (I took a green one – it was delicious!).

We got handouts about the care of small flocks of chickens and how to safely gather and handle eggs. Thanks so much to the Schumacher Farm “chicken expert” Steve Robertson who shared all his information with us. And also a huge THANKS to Jennifer Harper who works at Schumacher Farm and helped me so much to set up our tour.

After the chicken tour we went through the inside of the farm house which is set up like it was in the 1930's. Jen shared with us all kinds of information on the old kitchen appliances like the wood stove and the refrigerator plus the old crank phone on the wall. We learned all about Marcella Schumacher Pendall, the last person who owned the farm and donated it to the county to create a conservation and learning experience. Jim Mooney played the piano in the parlor for us.

After the farm house tour, we got a wagon ride (pulled by a tractor) through the large prairie that is part of the farm grounds. The wagon was comfortably outfitted with straw bales. The weather was just right for the wagon ride even though we had a few sprinkles while we were hanging out with the chickens. The prairie is set up with hiking trails and has lots of wild flowers. The farm is known as a monarch butterfly sanctuary. Lots of milkweed plants were blooming all around us. We saw several monarchs flutter by as we rode through the prairie.

After we learned about the farm, we went over to Culver's just across the road and enjoyed some cool treats.

### **Private Swimming Party at Monona Pool – August 6, 2016**

Just like last year, the weather was perfect at swimming time. We started swimming at 7:00 in the evening. It was sunny and in the high '70's when we started. We had over 100 people sign up to come, but because the weather looked “iffy” early in the day, not everyone came. We had our usual great turnout with about 75 people showing up. Most of them even went swimming. Those who didn't swim had a good time relaxing in the deck chairs around the pool.

A number of attendees took advantage of the convenient opportunity to join or renew their membership in the Autism Society of SCW. As usual, the water slide was a big hit. I tried to get pictures of those coming out of the water slide, but with mixed results. It's hard to catch the shot at just the right moment as the slider goes “whooshing” by. The diving boards and the deck lounge chairs got a lot of use. Some people bought pool “noodles” and other water toys. Jack brought his cool submarine toy again that could “fly” underwater. It didn't even have a motor. All you had to do was throw it in the water at an angle.

Thanks to the lifeguards at the Monona Pool for all their help getting us set up and assisting our folks getting ready for swimming. As the evening wore on and the sun started to go down, the air started to get a bit chilly. By 9:00 the swimmers didn't need much encouragement to get out of the pool and dry off.

Also like last year we had popcorn and lemonade for refreshments. We ate an entire large bag of popcorn.

## 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](mailto: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).

Membership to the Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin *does not include* membership in the Autism Society of Wisconsin or membership in the Autism Society of America. Membership to 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/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 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 47<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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.