

## The AUsome Social Group

Teen/Young Adult Recreation/Social Group

Sponsored by the Autism Society of Greater Madison (ASGM); <http://www.autismmadison.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:** James Williams (age 22 and a nationally known speaker with autism) will discuss “Strategies for High School Success for individuals with ASD”
- When:** Sunday, May 8, 2011 (Yes, that’s also Mother’s Day) 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM
- Where:** Capitol Centre Apartment Building Community Room, 333 W. Dayton St., Madison, WI 53703; There is a parking ramp next door.
- Cost:** Free! Thanks to the Capital Times Kid’s Fund for paying James travel and speaking fee. Lemonade and light refreshments provided.

James Williams travels all over the country doing presentations on managing life issues when you are on the autism spectrum. You can learn more about James on his website at <http://www.jamesmw.com/>. James’s website also has helpful essays and resources relating to autism. James spoke to the AUsome Group last year about the unwritten rules for using Facebook. This year he will be doing a presentation he also recently did at the ASW Conference at the Kalahari in the Dells last month.

James was 3 years old when he was diagnosed with autism. Because of his autism related issues, he was home-schooled for much of his life. In 2007 when he was 19, James returned to public high school. After successfully self-advocating for his educational goal, he was granted 3 years to complete his high school education. He finally graduated from high school at age 21, having achieved a rich social life as well as a diploma. In this presentation James will share the accommodations he fought for to achieve in the classroom and how he managed to learn the unwritten social rules in high school to succeed socially. He will also offer advice and strategies for those on the autism spectrum to achieve social and academic success in high school.

His presentation is not just for those in high school. It will provide people of all ages with insight into what the high school environment is currently really like. Because of this, note that some of the content will discuss mature subjects.

Logistics: The Capitol Centre Apartments 2<sup>nd</sup> entrance door is security locked. The community room is just inside the main entrance at 333 W. Dayton Street (behind the Overture Center). Someone will be stationed at the main doors until 1:15 to let AUsome attendees in. Please try to arrive on time so you will be able to get in. Other residents of the Capitol Centre have been invited to attend this presentation, so we may have some guest attendees.

Parking on the street is free on Sundays. There is also a parking ramp right next door to the main entrance. I realize many may have a conflict with Mother’s Day celebrations, but we hope some of you will even bring your mother to this interesting presentation.

Thanks to Capitol Centre Staff for providing the lemonade for our refreshments. Snacks including cookies, popcorn, humus and gluten-free crackers will be provided.

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

- ☺ There is a fire station right across the street from the building entrance
- ☺ If there is a program at the Overture Center that afternoon, the parking ramp may be crowded. You will still be able to find a parking place, but may have to walk down several flights of stairs.

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- What:** ASGM family Picnic  
**When:** Saturday, June 18, 2011; 12:30 PM – 3:00 PM  
**Where:** Warner Park, 2930 N. Sherman Ave., Madison, WI, 53704 (watch for ASGM signs in the picnic area).  
**Cost:** Free! Bring your own meat and a dish to pass. Grills, plates, plastic utensils and Lemonade will be provided.

Assuming the weather cooperates (are you listening, David George?), the AUsome Group will join with the rest of the ASGM family for a fun afternoon in the park. All you need to bring is a dish to share and your own meat or whatever for grilling. ASGM will provide the grill, plates, tableware and condiments as well as lemonade.

Also bring any “yard games” you might like to play. I have an extensive collection of bubble making materials and a large ball I will be bringing (I’m just a kid at heart). We are not sure at this writing exactly where in the park the picnic will be, but watch for signs at the park for the location.

For those who want to make a whole day of it, there will also be a special autism event at the Mallard’s baseball game that evening (game starts at 6:05 pm). See the attached flyer for the Mallard’s game on the next page.

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

- ☺ Watch the weather and dress appropriately.
- ☺ Bring a dish to pass and your own meat to grill. Also bring “yard games” you enjoy.
- ☺ Bring sunscreen and insect repellent if appropriate.



2011



**MALLARDS**

Madison Mallards

Autism Society of  
Greater Madison  
Night at the  
"Duck Pond"

Saturday, June 18th  
at 6:05

MADISON MALLARDS  
2920 NORTH SHERMAN AVE.  
MADISON, WI 53704

## **AUTISM SOCIETY OF GREATER MADISON NIGHT AT THE "NEW DUCK POND"!**

Show your support Saturday, June 18th at 6:05 as the  
Mallards take on the Wisconsin Rapids Rafters

**The Autism Society of Greater Madison is the  
Spectrum Brands Community Spotlight**

### **Features Include:**

- **INFORMATIONAL BOOTH AT THE FRONT ENTRANCE**
- **CEREMONIAL FIRST PITCH BY A SUPPORTER OF THE  
AUTISM SOCIETY OF GREATER MADISON**
- **30 SECOND VIDEO BOARD COMMERCIAL**
- **PUBLIC ADDRESS AND ESPN RADIO AD'S**
- **PLUS TWO DOLLARS OF YOUR TICKET GETS DONATED  
BACK TO THE AUTISM SOCIETY OF GREATER MADISON!**



Tickets are for Reserved Field Box Seats. They are  
\$10 with \$2 from every ticket purchased through the online  
portal donated to the Autism Society of Greater Madison!

\*Tickets must be purchased through the online portal below to  
receive the \$2 donation and will be available until June 4th

### **TO PURCHASE TICKETS:**

Go to [www.mallardsgroups.com](http://www.mallardsgroups.com)

Enter: **Autism**

At the bottom of the page click **BUY**

Choose your seats (Green are available)



\*If you have questions on purchasing tickets please contact  
Brian Sather (608)246-4277 or [brian@mallardsbaseball.com](mailto:brian@mallardsbaseball.com)

## **Important Information:**

1. Nancy Alar and Ausome Group email address is changing! Effective the end of April 2011 my new email address is [nancy.l.alar@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.l.alar@gmail.com) . The generic Ausome group email address will be [AUsomeSocialGroupMadison@gmail.com](mailto:AUsomeSocialGroupMadison@gmail.com) .
2. Visit <http://www.autismmadison.org/> for other services and activities sponsored by the Autism Society of Great Madison (ASGM). The 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday evening of the month is either a parent support group meeting at the Midvale Community Lutheran Church or a special presentation. There is also sensory friendly Saturday movies on the last Saturday of the month and quarterly birthday parties at “Pump-it-up”. There are also many other special events (such as A-Maze-ing Days at the Treinen Farm Corn Maze) through out the year.

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

### **Bowling with friends “That’s How We Roll”ASGM Bowling Day; March 5, 2011; at Ten Pin Alley in Fitchburg**

This was a really fun time! Ten Pin Alley is a really nice, new bowling facility in a really convenient location. Their food is good, too. It was especially fun for me since I discovered I can still bowl in spite of my aching knees. I was also able to find (and still use) my old bowling ball which I hadn’t touched for years. I will not discuss my score (ahem!), but I wasn’t the only one getting gutter balls.

We had a great turnout with 17 AUsome members plus other ASGM attendees. It was amazing to watch all the different “bowling styles”. Some of you guys can really throw that ball hard! If gesturing, hopping and dancing would have only affected a thrown ball, we’d have had a lot more strikes! I still marvel at the electronic score keeping since I spent most of my bowling years keeping score by hand with pencil and paper (yeah, I know I’m really old). Most everyone also enjoyed the great refreshments from the Ten Pin Alley grill. It was an added bonus that a portion of food and drink sales benefitted upcoming ASGM social and educational opportunities.

Our high bowling score for the AUsome attendees went to Chris Morris with 129. His fast ball and bowling skill won him a \$25 target gift card.

Thanks to the ASGM staff for arranging this outing including the free bowling shoes! And a special thanks to the Capital Time’s Kid’s Fund for paying for 2 free bowling games for AUsome attendees.



## **Nancy Alar's Retirement Party ; Thursday evening, March 31, 2011, 5:30 – 8:30pm. At The West Side Club, 437 Junction Rd, Madison**

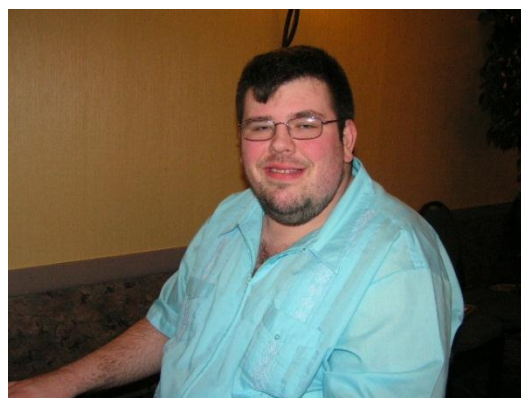
I was SO happy that so many AUsome members were able to join me at the party to celebrate this change in my life. I had such a good time! It was a great way to end a long career. I was very happy that one of our AUsome members (Jim Mooney) was able to come all the way from Milwaukee to play the piano for the celebration. I heard a lot of compliments about the music (some of which Jim composed himself).

I also enjoyed the fact that there were individuals there from almost all aspects of my life, including members of my Toastmaster's club, co-workers from my current job and when I worked for the Dept. Of Transportation, old friends, new friends, neighbors and the autism community. It was fun sharing some of the pictures and "artifacts" from my past. Being something of a packrat, I had an old COBOL manual from 1968, punch cards, a reel of tape, "green brain" reference cards from IBM mainframe days and other items too numerous to mention. I even had a newspaper clipping from 25 years ago when I was raising 100 parakeets every year in my basement.

I should have included the pictures from the root beer stand where I had my first job as a car hop and the Y2K artifacts from the time I led the year 2000 project for my agency, but I forgot those items at home.

I have been working full time since 1968. I have always had some type of computer job starting as a COBOL programmer for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Punch cards were the state of the art when I earned a 2 year degree in data processing in Wausau in 1968. I've been working in this field so long that my mind is clogged with more obsolete information than current technology. In 1983 I took my first job with the Wisconsin Technical College System where I retired from my position as a data manager and webmaster.

I am happy to report that it took me about 15 minutes to get used to the idea of being retired. I'm enjoying my new leisure time – maybe a little too much. I haven't made much progress on all my grand plans for getting things done. But it's really great to get enough sleep for the first time in decades.



## **AUSome Social Group Philosophy and Ground Rules**

### Group Sponsor:

The AUSome Social Group is sponsored by the Autism Society of Greater Madison (ASGM). **It is highly recommended that you join the Autism Society of Greater Madison.** It is possible that Madison chapter membership may be required in the future as the AUSome group becomes larger and requires more resources. You can get more information about the Madison Chapter (including an extensive autism resource list), by calling (608) 213-8519 or sending a note to ASGM, 2935 Fish Hatchery Rd #101, Madison, WI 53711

See the ASGM website at <http://www.autismmadison.org/> for membership information and a link to the AUSome Group web pages <http://autismmadison.org/ausome-social-group/>. If you join the Autism Society of Greater Madison, this automatically gives you the chapter newsletter plus membership in both the state (ASW) and national Autistic Societies so you will get all those mailings as well. (Changes are underway with national vs local membership, so check with the website to confirm membership details.)

### Group Purpose:

The AUSome group was organized to provide recreation and 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. I try to set up activities that allow for social interaction between group members and between parents and siblings of the group. Friends of group members are welcome to come along.

### The AUSome 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. If you have an e-mail address and are OK with receiving the newsletter that way, let me (Nancy Alar) know. It saves time and postage if notification can just be sent electronically. I will maintain a mailing list of participants, and will verify this list annually – usually in January in conjunction with a call about tickets to the juggling show. Our AUSome newsletter is also available on the web at <http://www.autismmadison.org/newsletter/index.htm>

### 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, horse back 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 join other ASGM members for 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.

### 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.