Sometimes it’s hard to see July as a whole month because of the obsession around one big holiday called Independence Day. If you’re like my family, you plan it weeks in advance, and why not? You have the smell of fresh meat and veggies on the grill and the gathering of friends and family to look forward to, all in celebration of the country we love. The booming of those fireworks is to celebrate America’s birthday first and foremost, but it almost feels like an unofficial countdown to the end of the summer, given that August is just around the corner. What better way to start the clock to Back to School than with a bang?

After coming down from the elation of Independence Day, we encourage you to plan some activities with your family, especially those who may have been too busy this summer to enjoy quality time together. This newsletter edition is dedicated to sharing free activities in the community to get you up and on the EFM Go! There is nothing wrong with squeezing some time in together before responsibilities and school ramp back up, time spent together is time well spent, no matter how long. For those who may have missed out on the Family Swim Camp in June, we are offering a Youth Soccer Camp and a Sport Social Day Camp in July and August at no cost to you. If you haven’t done so already, please sign up ASAP as these spots fill up quickly. If you’d like to get a head start on Back to School, please reach out to EFMP Family Support with questions regarding special education and advocacy support. Continue to live your best Life. Hope to see you at the next EFMP Meet-Up. Looking forward to continuing to Serve, Those Who Serve!

Written by Charletta Cruz, B.S., M.S.
EFMP Family Support Coordinator

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Top 10 Tips for Flying With Special Needs Children

If it is their first flight, take them to the airport in the days before the flight to get them used to seeing the planes take off and land and hearing the noises. It gives you a nice time to talk to them about their upcoming experience.

1. Create a storyboard for them prior to flying. Make it fun with lots of visuals. There are also some great Apps out there which help educate your children about the experience that they will have. "Off We Go -- Flying on a Plane" is a great one and available on iTunes. It allows your child to interact with the story and also has great sound effects for them to hear and get accustomed to.

2. If it is their first flight, take them to the airport in the days before the flight to get them used to seeing the planes take off and land and hearing the noises. It gives you a nice time to talk to them about their upcoming experience.

3. If your child has Autism and you have a chance to experience "Wings for Autism," it is an incredible program to help children learn all about the experience of flying.

4. Have your child pack their own backpack to carry themselves. It gives them something to feel responsible for and allows them to have the same experience as their parents. They can fill it with a few of their favorite things and perhaps bring something new home in it from the travels.

5. Alert TSA to your child's disability. Children with disabilities can be screened without being separated from their parents or guardians. Be sure to communicate to the TSA agent suggestions on the best way to approach and screen their children. Also remember that children under 12 do not need to remove their shoes.

6. Take full advantage of the early board. This gives you and your children the time to get settled on board and get your things organized before the rush of the other passengers boarding happens.

7. In a time when you have to pay a premium price for seats close to the front of the plane, I try to book my seats near the back of the plane. This gets me closer to a bathroom and I take advantage of the early board and then will depart last.

8. Familiarize yourself with the TSA guidelines for travel with children here. Here you can get some great information about transfers and security and general information for those with both physical and cognitive disabilities.

9. Pack snacks! Let them add a nice bag of some of their favorite yummies in their backpack! Also, bring an empty water bottle for them. This way they can take it through security and then fill it up before they get on the plane.

10. Pack them a brand new toy, load a new movie on your iPad or a load a new video game for them and don't show it to them until absolutely necessary. This provides a fantastic distraction and they are also so excited for something new! Maybe think about two new things, so they also have something for the return flight home.

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/top-ten-tips-for-flying-w_b_5569604

By Meg Harris, Contributor
Co-Founder and CEO of SpecialGlobe
07/09/2014 11:47am EDT | Updated December 7, 2017
CONGRATULATIONS!

For media inquiries, contact: LaShawna Sims lashawnsims@ymail.com or 214-536-2114

Nellis Air Force Base Spouse named Armed Forces Insurance Nellis Air Force Base Spouse of the Year®

Spouse recognized for work with Hands & Voices Military Project

Las Vegas, NV — Following more than 1,200 nationwide nominations and a national vote yielding more than 86,000 votes, LaShawna Sims has been named the 2019 Armed Forces Insurance Nellis Air Force Base Spouse of the Year®. Sims is currently stationed with her husband, Technical Sergeant Karl Sims, at Nellis.

Now in its twelfth year honoring the dedication and sacrifices of our nation’s more than 1.1 million military spouses, Armed Forces Insurance is proud to recognize military spouses from all six branches of the Armed Forces who are making a difference in their communities.

As a mother of two deaf children, Sims knows first hand the complexities of establishing new medical and educational care networks at a new duty station. When her husband received orders to move to Nellis Air Force Base, she spent hours making calls and doing research to ensure that their children would be getting appropriate services in a timely manner. Sims was nominated for her work with the Hands & Voices Military Project, a project that specifically supports the needs of families with Deaf and Hard of Hearing children. She actively connects families to their local Hands & Voices chapters or to other families who have lived or are currently living at their next duty station in order to help lessen the burden of re-establishment of medical and educational services. While the Hands & Voices Military Project is still in its infancy, day by day, Sims and the leadership team are finding new ways to support military families. Whether it be navigating the complex medical insurance system, connecting a family with local support or advocating for their child’s educational rights, the Hands & Voices Military Project continues “serving the families that serve our country”.

“Winning the base level spouse of the year opens up different opportunities to share our work and goals on a much larger scale. Military families with special needs children have a unique parenting journey,” said Sims. “The Hands & Voices Military Project exists to support them on the journey of hearing loss”.

“Over the nine years Armed Forces Insurance has been involved with the Military Spouse of the Year® awards program, we have seen it grow and amplify the voice of the military spouse on a national stage,” says Lori Simmons, chief marketing office at Armed Forces Insurance. “These spouses have pioneered initiatives, founded organizations and advocated for issues impacting the military community in the best ways imaginable. We are thrilled to welcome the 2019 base winners to the AFI-MSOY family and work alongside them to make an even bigger impact.”

To learn more about LaShawna and the other base winners, please visit www.msoy.afi.org.

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About Armed Forces Insurance:

Armed Forces Insurance was founded in 1987 by military leaders with a single mission: to protect the property of those who protect our nation. The company provides premium quality, competitively priced property and casualty insurance to military professionals throughout the United States and overseas. Armed Forces Insurance understands that its members have unique circumstances and insurance needs, enabling the company to offer a level of personalized service that’s unequalled in the industry. For more information, visit the website at www.afi.org or call 1-800-495-8234, and follow us on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
The Air Force Airman & Family Readiness Center EFMP continues to partner with LRP Publications to provide EFMP staff, the parents/families they serve, and school district staff who work with military children, to provide access to LRP’s new DirectSTEP® eLearning courses at no charge!
For Nellis and Creech Families Enrolled in EFMP, youth ages 3-13 years for *No Cost*. Everyone Deserves to be Included! Registrations forms must be completed in advance and emailed directly to Ms. Jennifer Brumbaugh, Centennial Hills YMCA at jbrumbaugh@lasvegasymca.org or EFMP Nellis AFB at 702-652-3399/3327 to enroll. If you anticipate needing any type of special needs, accommodation or have questions about accessibility please call Airman and Family Readiness Center, EFMP Family Support Coordinators at 702-652-3399/9260/3327 or
Sport Social Day Camp

GET READY FOR SUMMER CAMP

9AM - 12PM

HALF DAY
26 Jul 2019
One Day Camp per Child

HALF DAY
2 Aug 2019

We believe that having fun and making friends is an important part of life. Our camps are an awesome chance for kids and teenagers to achieve that! Our experienced instructors guide groups in a day of fun activities that include sports, arts, and games. Plus, they’ll learn how to be a Cool Friend!

ENROLL TODAY PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED! Space is Limited!

MAKING NEW FRIENDS   EXPERIENCING NEW THINGS   HAVING FUN

Offered by The Exceptional Family Member Program in Partnership with Sport Social

This program is designed for children with special needs who are able to follow instructions and participate in a small group setting (5:1 ratio, child/teacher) 1:1 Private Aides are welcome.

To Register or Accessibility questions, call EFMP Family Support: 702-652-3399/3327/9260
charletta.zamora-cruz@us.af.mil
www.lvgearsportsocial.com
Site Location: 7055 Windy Street,
Las Vegas, NV 89119

Exceptional Families & Exceptional Family Members

EFMP FS Nellis & Creech AFBs
Family Swim Camp
SPLISH! SPLASH!
24-28 Jun 2019

TSgt Jared Alder’s spouse, Jasmine and daughter, Alyssa with Water Wings instructor

TSgt Latanya S. Tidwell’s daughter, Aaliyah J. Scarbrough

Maj Debra Koenigsberger’s Family & TSgt Jared Alder’s Family participating in group activity with Water Wings Instructor
ZAP!

SUPERHERO SENSORY PLAY
Hosted by RAD
Saturday July 13th
12 pm - 4 pm
Drop off your children for an afternoon full of fun activities, games, crafts, and superheros! Children with Autism and their siblings are welcome.
Ages 4 - 12
Milestone Family Solutions
3145 E. Warm Springs Road #200
Las Vegas, Nevada 89120

For more information, please call RAD directly at 702.263.6723 or visit www.radlv.org
Join us to connect with resources, knowledge, and one another. People with disabilities can benefit from connecting socially with one another, especially when they can find a common ground with someone else who lives with their specific disability.
The City of Las Vegas Department of Parks and Recreation Inclusion Team, our Community Connection Partner invites military and civilian EFM Families to attend these “FREE” or minimum donations educational, social and recreational events. For more information contact the POC directly or EFMP-FS at (702) 652-3327.
MISSOULA CHILDREN’S THEATRE
A PRODUCTION OF MCT, INC.

THE
TORTOISE
VERSUS THE
HARE
THE GREATEST RACE

Conceived and Written by
Jim Caron

Music by
Greg Boris

Lyrics by
Jim Caron

Audition Date and Time: July 29 2019 at 1130am
Audition Location: Community Commons
Youth must be entering 1st grade to audition.
Please register at the Youth Center, Nellis AFB
Call in registrations will not be accepted.

702.652-9307
MOMS’ NIGHT INN 2019
Find Your Tribe: NV Hands & Voices Moms Edition

A weekend retreat for Moms or female caregivers of children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing!

Saturday, July 13th - Sunday, July 14th, 2019

Event begins at 11 am on Saturday and ends at 12 noon on Sunday
**One day registration available upon request**

****NO CHILDCARE AVAILABLE****

La Quinta Inn & Suites - Las Vegas Summerlin Tech
7101 Cascade Valley Ct, Las Vegas, NV 89128

Registration Fees:
$20 - current members $35 - non-members
$40 - Event & 1 year membership

Includes:
Saturday: Snacks, Dinner, Activities and Overnight Stay
Sunday: Breakfast and Activities

*Full and Partial Scholarships Will Be Considered.*

Register at www.nvhandsandvoices.org
Deadline: Saturday, July 6th.
Space is limited! First Come, First Served!

Questions? Need More Information?
Please e-mail lashawna@nvhandsandvoices.org
FREE DANCE CLASS

on

National Dance Day

Inclusion Fusion is inviting your child to celebrate National Dance Day with us by participating in a creative movement dance class! There is a $10 suggested (not required) donation per kid to help us create more events in the future. All ages welcome, including adults.

Sat, 27 Jul 2019

10:00 AM-11:00 AM: Ages 2-5
11:30 AM-12:30 PM: Ages 6-9
13:00 PM-14:00 PM: Ages 10-13
14:30 PM-15:30 PM: Ages 14-18
16:00 PM-17:00 PM: Ages 18 and up

INCLUSION FUSION is an organization that provides adaptive, cognitive, and social skills for individuals with special needs in Southern Nevada. We offer a variety of services such as, dance classes, in-home independent living skills, and community independent living skills.

1211 S. Eastern Avenue
Henderson, NV 89052

Pre-Registration is required @ www.inclusionfusion.org
For more information, call Inclusion Fusion at 702.503.3755 or
Email: luaren@inclusionfusion.org
Caregiving Classes
Presented by East Valley Family Services
Sunrise Library Meeting Room
Thursday, May 23 and May 30 @ 2-4pm
-or-
Thursday, June 20 and June 27 @ 2-4pm

Learn skills and strategies to be a kind and effective caregiver. Sign up to attend a session of two Thursday afternoon classes.

There are only 10 places available in each session. Register at the reference desk or call 702.507.3907.

Free and open to the public.
Each attendee will receive a certificate of completion and a caregiver guide to keep.

SUNRISE LIBRARY
5400 Harris Ave.
Las Vegas, NV

Drop in to help solve a jigsaw puzzle at the Sunrise Library. Whether you place one piece or one hundred pieces, everyone’s help is welcome.

The next gathering is Sunday, 21 July, Sunrise Library
Adults and teens are welcome.

Can we finish the puzzle before the end of the day?

Join us on the second Sunday of each month for a Sunrise Library Painting Party!

The Next Class is Sunday, 14 July, Sunrise Library
Create your very own work of art to take home. Each class will have a guided project and be very relaxing.

Adults and teens 16 and older are welcome.

Registration is required. To register, call 702.507.3907
Las Vegas Vet Center
Caregiver Support Group

Every other Friday 9-11am,
For more information, call Martin Alvarez
702 791-9170

7455 W Washington Ave
Suite 240
Las Vegas, NV 89128
What: 5th Annual Community Bar-B-Que  
When: Saturday, 13 Jul, 2pm-6pm  
Where: Craig Ranch Regional Park  
Information: There will be food, games for the kids, entertainment, and community groups providing information. Please join us, meet your neighbors, and your elected officials. Admission free and open to the community.

What: June 80s Movie Nights at The District at Green Valley Ranch  
When: Saturdays beginning June 1st – 7:30pm  
Where: Green Valley Ranch – 2240 Village Walk Drive  
Information: Admission is free and open to the public – patrons are encouraged to bring blankets and lawn chairs.  
Link: https://www.ktnv.com/positivelylv/dining-and-entertainment/district-at-green-valley-ranch-hosting-80s-summer-movie-nights?fbclid=IwAR3_klSQhM5SH7F73115YcIVlZyT82h0Nk9VnEUTREvCa1MC37XnXdTC3kRs

What: Summer Concert Series  
When: Friday and Saturday evenings beginning June 1st – 7pm-9pm  
Where: The District at Green Valley Ranch – 2240 Village Walk Drive  
Information: Enjoy free live music in the courtyard  
Link: https://www.shopthedistrictgvr.com/events/greenvalley-summer-concert-series-june--2

What: Movies on the Green at Town Square  
When: Thursday, June 6th – Thursday, July 18th  
Where: Town Square – 6605 S Las Vegas Blvd  
Information: Takes place every Thursday (except July 4th) and features family friendly G & PG-13 rated movies. Admission is free and seating is first come first serve and movies begin at sundown.  
Link: https://mytownsquarelasvegas.com/events/329-movies-on-the-green

The Bellagio Hotel and Casino’s Conservatory season starts off with the Chinese New Year. In the Spring you will be treated to Cherry Blossoms and a whole host of other Spring blooms. Summer offers equally delightful fragrances and beauty. In the fall, the conservatory turns a vibrant red, orange, yellow, gold and brown. After Thanksgiving, the talented horticulturists transform the Conservatory for the Christmas season. This ever-changing display is not to be missed.  
Just outside the Bellagio Hotel, you will find these magnificent fountains. Here, Water, Music, and Light combine to tantalize viewers. As you approach, find a place to sit or stand to watch the dynamic display that is sure to entertain both kids and adults alike.
Just behind the front desk of the Mirage Hotel is a giant 20,000-gallon saltwater aquarium. But, walk just beyond to see a 100-foot dome under which is housed a 60’ waterfall, peaceful lagoons, and an enormous variety of plants. In addition, discover uber tall palm trees, Bird of Paradise Trees, over 300 Orchids and 1,000 bromeliads, along with other colorful flora and fauna. All that you and your family can explore and learn. Also, check out the volcano in front of the Mirage, rounding out the tropical theme of this hotel.

Kids absolutely love the Wild Life Habitat at the Flamingo Hotel. It is touted as one of the most unique and family friendly attractions in Las Vegas. This 15 acre wild habitat is full of lush foliage, flamingos penguins, cranes, turtles, fish and lots of other birds. Try to schedule your visit during feeding time and you can opt to take a picture with the parrots, or use the excellent backdrop for exotic family photos.

At the Ethel M. Chocolate Factory, take a self guided tour, eat free samples and watch the chocolate being made from behind large glass windows.

Outside the Ethel M. Chocolate Factory, you can also walk through the four-acre Botanical Cactus Garden, the largest in Nevada. There are 300 species of plants: half are native cacti and succulents and the rest are desert trees and shrubs, both local and from Australia and South America.

Dubbed the Miracle in the Mojave, Springs Preserve is an oasis in the desert. Here you can hike around the Springs Preserve without having to pay to get into the main part. There are 1.8 miles of trails split between four themes, with wildlife, native habitats and archaeological sites. The trails are open from 10 am until dusk. Be prepared with plenty of water, sunscreen and hats for all. A quick search for Las Vegas Pass, may be in order, as it allows free entry into Springs Preserve, among other benefits.

Named the “Best Free Attraction in Las Vegas,” the Mermaid show at the Silverton Hotel is a must see. The 117,000-gallon aquarium is home to thousands of tropical fish and LIVE Mermaids. Subject to Change, a free mermaid show occurs in the aquarium Thursday, Friday & Saturday hourly from 12-3:15 and again from 5-8:15. Sundays from 10:30 am - 3:15 and again from 5-6:45. Note, that there is a 15 minute intermission between individual swims. The plethora of fish is fed daily at 1:30 pm, 4:30 pm. There are thousands of tropical fish and one or two mermaids swimming every day all day.

A nature infused break from Las Vegas, you will find Calico Basin a gem. If you are in search of a little adventure in Las Vegas look no further than Calico Basin. Only a few minutes away from downtown Las Vegas, the Calico Basin is legit worlds away. This portion of the Red Rock Canyon National Park you don’t have to pay to get into. The area features spectacular red and white sandstone cliffs and, as the name implies, there are many natural springs that feed the abundant vegetation and attract a variety of interesting wildlife. Take a walk around the boardwalk or go for a hike.

Circus Circus puts on a free circus show each and every day. No, it’s not Cirque de Soleil, but still, your kids will be enthralled. The Circus Hotel show features jugglers, unicyclists, trapeze artists, acrobats and more. Each show is 10 minutes long, and shows run every half hour, daily, from 11 am - 11 pm; until midnight on Fridays and Saturdays. Billed as the “World’s Largest Permanent Circus,” the popular show has only 60 seats, so get there early.
Free RESPITE CARE

When enrolled in the EFMP, Air Force Respite Child Care provides all eligible Air Force Families up to 40 hours of free care per month per child. Respite Child Care is specially designed for Air Force families who have children diagnosed with moderate or severe special needs. Sibling care is also available at no cost. Your choice of an approved* provider in your home, licensed Family Child Care home or child care center/special needs Center. *Approved providers have comprehensive background checks and pre-service training: CPR, First Aid, Medication Dispensation, and Child Abuse Recognition & Prevention as well as subject matter training in the care of children with special needs.

Interested families should contact Child Care Aware at 1-800-424-2246 or view their website at http://usa.childcareaware.org. The agency will work individually with each family to complete the necessary application and assist with connecting the family to a local respite care provider who can meet their needs.

For more information on USAF Respite Care, families can call EFMP Family Support at the AFRC, 702-652-3327.