

FAMILY SKATE AND DANCE NIGHT ROLLS INTO ITS ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Once a month the Franconia Rec Center transforms their gym into a festively decorated roller-skating rink complete with a DJ. People of all ages gather to enjoy an all-around good time for anyone who wants to skate and dance. Skaters bring their own quad or inline skates and join others using scooters, strollers and wheelchairs to take a spin around the floor.

The monthly events were created by Terrence Shepherd, opening manager at Franconia Rec Center, in response to the needs of the public that has brought the community together... on wheels! Shepherd wanted to bring roller skating to the Rec Center because it has been missing from the Franconia community for years. Skate and Dance Night was created to provide safe, family fun for all people inside and outside of the community. He hopes to bring people of all cultures together at these events and use them to introduce families to Franconia Rec Center's memberships, preschool, programs, pool and other amenities.

The ongoing monthly Family Skate and Dance Night series continues to grow and expand. These events have boasted exciting and unique themes such as an ugly holiday sweater party, Valentine's Disco and Star Wars themes. Events have even incorporated partners such as a Glow Party event held in collaboration with Fairfax Neighborhood and Community Services' Therapeutic Recreation Services. Food offerings have expanded from chips and drinks to now include pizza, popcorn, cookies and ice cream for purchase. They also feature donation collections as well as prizes and giveaways for attendees.

Upcoming events are 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and include a Glow Party on Saturday, April 20 held in partnership with Fairfax County Therapeutic Recreation Services. Come decked out in the galaxy's finest Star Wars outfit for Star Wars Night on Saturday, May 4. Mark one year of skating and dancing fun at the Skate and Dance Night One Year Anniversary Party on Saturday, May 18. In June, come out to the Juneteenth Celebration on Saturday, June 15. Wear red, black, green and yellow to celebrate freedom, resilience and the perseverance and spirit of Black people in this nation.

Book the gym and host your own private skate night party. Call 703-922-9841 to inquire. To purchase tickets and get more information, please visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/reccenter/franconia/.

