

## Las Vegas Family Church April Neighborhood Birthday BBQ

Lydia Compton  
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By the grace of our loving Heavenly Parent and our precious True Parents, Andy & Lydia Compton held another exciting neighborhood Birthday Party at their home in Henderson, NV! 29 adults and 12 children attended -- including 19 new guests, 5 returning guests from the neighborhood and 5 LVFC members who also live in the area. This was the third of the Compton's monthly programs which began on Andy's 65th Birthday in February. This time, since the weather was considerably warmer than for their previous parties, the Potluck BBQ dinner was held in the Compton's back yard.

The 19 new guests and their families joined returning guests and members for a joyful and uplifting evening. On arrival, the guests and members informally met one another before the party actually began. Although everyone lives in the same neighborhood, most didn't know the others---for example, two ladies who, even though they had lived across the street from each other for many years, had never met! Everyone was enthusiastic about this opportunity and talked excitedly until the prayer before dinner was offered by Rev. Andy Compton.



Central to the Compton's Tribal Messiah activity in Henderson, each of the Birthday parties has included dinner, cake & ice cream and a toast to those in their neighborhood who had birthdays or wedding anniversaries during that month. After dinner the adults met inside the house for a group conversation. Each participant introduced himself or herself to the group and offered a short testimony about his/her life -- how long he lived here, where he was born and where he had lived before coming to the neighborhood.

Then Rev Compton offered a short explanation about why the Comptons' are holding the parties, what they want to accomplish through them. Pointing to the photo of Rev & Mrs. Sun Myung Moon on their bookcase, he told the group "this is a photo of the founders of Family Federation for World Peace, whose peace building activities gave us the inspiration for our event." He went on to say " in my experience meeting many people from various religious backgrounds, there is a realm beyond religion where people of good faith and conscience can meet and work together for a common good. This is what we hope will happen here."

Meanwhile, in the back yard, the elementary and pre-school aged children played together under the watchful eyes of Josh and Onka Herstein, LVFC members who live in the nearby area. The children played games together -- small ones played in the sandbox, while elementary school children played games. At the end of the evening prizes were awarded to the winners of dart throwing, ping pong and beanbag toss contests.

The adults also watched a short video that Andy had made entitled " Your Heart Knows the Truth" which opened the way for a toast to this month's " birthday girl" Mrs. Marissa Thompson, followed by sharing cake and ice cream.

Rev. Compton invited people for a fishing trip on Lake Mead, suggested the idea of working to strengthen the neighborhood through an online crime watch program—[www.nextdoor.com/join](http://www.nextdoor.com/join)---which one of the neighbors had initiated and introduced an ongoing weekly conversation being conducted by Lydia Compton, which focuses on values and means to strengthen the bonds of heart in the neighborhood. Clipboards were passed around and people signed up for which program they were interested to participate in.



At the end of the formal program, Mrs. Compton handed out invitations for the May Birthday BBQ to be held again at the Compton's home on May 12 at 6pm.

A group of seven or eight people stayed after the party ended and continued their conversation. One neighbor who had brought his family from Iraq a couple of years ago, told about his experiences in Iraq and expressed gratitude for being able to live here in America. Another neighbor, who had come to America from Cuba when Castro took power, echoed this sentiment.

Although Rev. Compton devoted many hours going door-to-door and meeting neighbors, giving them invitations for the party and Mrs. Compton "shopped until she dropped" for the food and prizes, made the invitations, and re-contacted neighbors who had attended previous parties, both of the Comptons' were deeply grateful for the many new and old guests who attended, the heartfelt assistance of the LVFC members and sincerely expressed that they could feel God's and True Parents hand in this special evening.