



**MurrayRidgeCenter**  
HELPING PEOPLE...FOR A LIFETIME

# The Murray Ridge Courier

September 2011

## Opportunity/Vocational Center New Name for Adult Services Sites

**Pam Sebastian**

Director of Adult Services

Don't be alarmed when you see a new sign gracing our day service buildings. Murray Ridge has officially changed the names of these sites from Work/Activity Centers to Opportunity/Vocational Centers – a change that has been years in the making.

Going back to 1976 at the original Elyria site, consumers and families would often refer to the Murray Ridge Center adult day service buildings as "the workshops." This trend continued through the addition of the Lorain site in 1986 and the opening of the Oberlin site in 1993. The term was used virtually everywhere by communities who provided services to adult individuals with developmental disabilities.

But everyone knows that daily life involves more than labor; it also involves socialization and personal growth. Over time, our three adult service sites located in Elyria, Lorain, and Oberlin were more frequently referred to as "work/activity centers" to more accurately capture the breadth of services being provided.

In recent years, the adult program has undergone even more consumer-driven structural, technological, and programmatic improvements. The expansion of group and individual activities, learning opportunities, and interactive devices, along with the advent of progressive measures for enabling consumers to experience services reflecting their vocational goals and preferred activities, environments, and interactions, suggested a more encompassing description than "work/activity center." The word that summarizes these changes best is "opportunity." Whether in Elyria, Lorain, or Oberlin, consumers attending an adult service site will find more opportunities than ever before.

More opportunity to dream. More opportunity to learn. More opportunity to live as full a life as possible.

With that being said, it's no wonder that our adult program services sites will now be called Opportunity/

Vocational Centers (OVCs); specifically, the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center (Elyria OVC), the Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center (Lorain OVC), and the Oberlin Opportunity/Vocational Center (Oberlin OVC).

All three sites will continue to offer vocational program training in the development of functional work skills; the Murray Ridge Production Center (MRPC), which operates at each OVC, will continue contracting with local companies to provide a variety of jobs for consumers. MRPC consumer vocational training includes packaging methods, assembling processes, heat sealing, blister packing, collating, labeling, and shipment boxing for local companies.

The OVCs will also continue to offer opportunities for leisure activities such as swimming, bowling, karaoke, arts and crafts, music, games, dances, parties, fashion shows, 'armchair travel,' car and motorcycle shows, and after-hours recreation. Additionally, the sites will provide training in functional academics, computers, cooking, nutrition, self care, and physical and emotional well being.

From workshops to work/activity centers to opportunity/vocational centers, Murray Ridge strives to ensure that consumers have the tools to live, learn, and laugh in a safe, constructive, respectful, and enjoyable environment.

And while our Murray Ridge adult program sites' names may have changed, you can be certain that our exceptionally caring Murray Ridge adult services staff has not changed at all. They, like everyone who works at Murray Ridge Center, are fully dedicated on a daily basis, to enriching the lives of people with developmental disabilities.



Pam Sebastian holds an Opportunity/Vocational Center sign.

## A Day on the Bay for Murray Ridge Consumers



Larry Fife, Julie Simons, Shari Reitenbach, Jackie Allen, JoAnn Gall, Jennifer Jones, Tracy McClune, Michael Ward, Jacob Brooks, David Zsigray, and Mike Urban enjoyed a Kids' Dream Day on the Bay on August 6.

Elyria dentist Scott Nagy and his team took the day off to host the Day on the Bay charity event, sponsored by Nagy's newly formed foundation, the Scott Nagy DDS Foundation.

The festival was exclusively for Murray Ridge Center and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Lorain County.

Thank you to Scott Nagy, his team, and all the volunteers who gave Murray Ridge consumers an extra-special Saturday in the park!

## North Ridgeville Corn Festival: Parade in the Rain

Murray Ridge consumers didn't let a little rain spoil their good time! On August 14, volunteers from Recreation were on-hand to show their MRC spirit. Despite thunderstorms and a small crowd, our parade marchers had fun and spread the word on all we have to offer!

Don't miss out on our last two parades of the summer; the Amherst Bicentennial on September 18 and the Woolly Bear Festival Parade on October 9.

Contact Jenn Judkins at 329-3734 for more information!



Shari Reitenbach, James Peters, Jennifer Hunsucker, Kelly Hart, and Pam McClain brave the rain!



## BOARD ROOM BRIEFING

**The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 12:30 p.m. on August 26, 2011:**

The Board welcomed new Board Member Keith Boey, who has replaced retired Board Member Jane Spiegelberg. An Exceptional Service Award was presented by Board President Michelle Hunt to Transportation Coordinator Jerry York. Director of Vocational Services Jeff Miller recommended that the Board approve identified bus stop locations for the 2011/2012 school year. The Board unanimously agreed. Superintendent Amber Fisher provided an update on the accreditation review by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities; Murray Ridge received a four year certification, the highest for compliance. Superintendent Fisher reported on several developments impacting Board revenues. Per the current state biennium budget, the Tangible Personal Property Tax hold harmless allocation will be cut from 2011-2013 by \$400,000 per year. The Targeted Case Management rate will increase by nearly 66%, generating an estimated \$250,000 a year in additional revenue for the Board. In other business, Superintendent Fisher recommended and the Board approved a revision to the policy on Bonus Time and Sick Leave Conversion Options. Finally, the Board agreed to move the remaining calendar year meetings to the following locations: September meeting at the Meister Road group home, November meeting at Murray Ridge School, and the December meeting at Service and Support Administration building.



Jeremy Minnich helps current EI child, Michael Bristor, get a temporary tattoo.

## Early Intervention Picnic

There's no summer vacation for Early Intervention! On August 2, current and former EI children met for the annual EI Picnic. Games, food, and arts and crafts kept the little ones busy. Parents and kids alike had the opportunity to revisit old friends and make new ones! Thank you to all for another fun-filled picnic!



EI Specialist Kathy Bevaque helps EI children at the arts and crafts table.

## Awarding Exceptional Service

The word Service is familiar at Murray Ridge. Staff display exceptional service every day by going above and beyond the parameters of their jobs. Our employees are dedicated to the people we serve.

Oftentimes an employee goes even further – they show remarkable dedication and make significant contributions in meeting the needs of Murray Ridge consumers. On August 26, Jerry York received the Murray Ridge Exceptional Service Award for his work efforts and commitment to our agency's mission: helping people...for a lifetime.

For 13 years, Jerry York has worked as the Transportation Coordinator with Murray Ridge. Although he does not work directly with our consumers, he impacts their lives every day through his role in maintaining safety and availability of the vehicles we use to transport consumers to work and other

locations in the community.

Jerry is actively involved in the Agency; he participates in the annual Special Olympics golf tournament, donates time and funds to levy functions, works with his AMVETS Post 55 on the yearly Murray Ridge Support Group spaghetti dinner details and donations, and gives generously of his time to better Murray Ridge's appraisal in the community.

His excellent work ethic and willingness to go the extra mile makes Jerry not only an exceptional nominee for this award, but a valued member of the Murray Ridge family. We would like to thank Jerry for going above and beyond the confines of his position to make every consumer, staff, and guest, feel welcome and safe every day. Congratulations to Jerry York, our Exceptional Service Award winner.

### Nominations for the Exceptional Service Award

If you are a consumer, community member, or parent, guardian, sibling, or other relative of an eligible individual and would like to nominate a staff member for the Exceptional Service Award, please submit your nomination to Jenn Judkins, Community Education and Volunteer Manager. Include a brief paragraph outlining your reasons for nominating the employee.

All nominations will be forwarded to the Board for selection at its discretion.

The Board will present this quarterly award to its recipient(s) at one of its regularly scheduled meetings, usually held on the last Friday of each month at 12:30 p.m. in the Board Room.

If you have any questions, contact Jenn Judkins at 440-329-3734 or [jjudkins@murrayridgecenter.org](mailto:jjudkins@murrayridgecenter.org).



Board President Michelle Hunt presents Jerry York with the Exceptional Service Award at the August Board Meeting.

# New to the LCBDD Crew

Please Welcome the Newest Members of the Murray Ridge Team!



Cathy Wolfe is MRC's new Program Manager - Business Support Services. She has two Associate's Degrees from LCCC, and a Human Resource Management degree from the University of Toledo. Cathy lives with her husband, Sam, and enjoys gardening, sewing, and travel.

Samantha Adams is preparing to attend Lorain County Community College to pursue a degree in Forensic Science. She will be working as a part time Group Home Aide at East 9th Street. Samantha likes to read and volunteers as a Big Sister.



Holly Ralich joins us as a part time Accounting Clerk. She has previously worked with MRC as a volunteer at the Oberlin Opportunity/Vocational Center. Holly serves on the Board of Directors for the YWCA of Elyria. In her spare time, Holly enjoys gardening.

John Gede joins MRC as a Maintenance Technician. John worked as a farmer in Amherst after graduating from Firelands High School. Prior to being hired on full time, John worked as a substitute custodian. John enjoys gardening, farming, and caring for animals.



Dawn Pope is our newest part time Account Clerk. She has spent the last 25 years working for the City of Elyria. Dawn has her degree in Elementary Education from OU. She enjoys golf, auto racing, and knitting, and she is a member of 100+ Women of Lorain County.

Dena Bogard is a part time Speech-Language Pathologist with an M.A. in Hearing, Speech, and Language Sciences from Ohio State University. Dena's undergraduate degree is in Communication Disorders from Bowling Green. She currently lives in Monroeville with her husband, Josh, and stepdaughter, Hailey.



Karen Plechaty will be working as a part time Group Home Aide at the South Professor home. She has been a private tutor for the last four years, catering to students with learning differences. Karen loves to garden, sew, and read about all things organic and natural.

Laura Baus joins Murray Ridge School as a teacher for the 2011-2012 school year. Laura is a Wilmington College graduate working towards her Master's degree in special education from Ashland College. She is a Special Olympics volunteer and enjoys running and going on adventures with her kids, Lucy and Cooper.



Betty Hall lives in Sheffield Village with her husband, Kevin. She will be joining MRC as a part time Secretary. Betty previously employed at Lorain County Job and Family Services, working with Medicaid and nursing home units. Betty enjoys gardening and bowling.

Erin Mason started the 2011-2012 school year off as a teacher with Murray Ridge School. After graduating from Oberlin High School, Erin earned her BA in psychology from Cleveland State University and teaching certificate from Ashland University. She lives with her husband Jamie and two sons, Justin and Daylon.



Kayla Myer joins Murray Ridge School as a Teacher's Aide. Kayla previously worked as a workshop sub after graduating from Keystone High School and attending Lorain County Community College. Outside of work, Kayla enjoys spending time at church and with family/friends.



## Softball Stats

The Murray Ridge Raiders Team I lost to the Stark Public Royal Knights 19-9 in the North Division I finals. They finished their regular season with a 5-1 record.

Murray Ridge Raiders Team II defeated the Medina Lightning 11-0 and the Stark DD Team 2 18- 4 to win the North Division 4 championship. Team II advances to the state semi-finals against the west section runner-up on September 10<sup>th</sup> in Oregon, OH. Team II finished their regular season with a 5-3 record.

### North Section softball skills competition

First place winners: Britiny Bennett, Stephanie Budweg, Patrick Curry, Doug McCartney, Zuleyka Perez, Maria Poling, Linda Brewer, and Andrew Pihoda. Second Place winners: Doreen Alaksa, Kelly Fath, Dennis Johnson, Jessica Johnson, Katie Kellogg, Chris McMichael, James Peters, Bill Slater, Mike Ward, and Cassey West. Third Place winners: Alex Averett, Kari Dolan, Sally Gordon, Lori Rhodehamel. Others finishers included Lillian Bennett 4th place.

Advancing to state competition in Oregon, OH on Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> will be Doreen Alaksa, Alex Averett, Britiny Bennett, Linda Brewer, Sally Gordon, Katie Kellogg, Chris McMichaels, James Peters, Maria Poling, Andrew Pihoda, Lori Rhodehamel, and Mike Ward.



Murray Ridge Softball players competed at the Softball Skills 2011 Regional Qualifier in Canton on August 27.

## Back to School!

### Welcome back Murray Ridge School



Kyre Beathea gives a "high five" to staff as they leave the first day of classes.



Another school year is in full swing! On August 25, students returned for the 43rd year of Murray Ridge School classes.

Director of Education Dann Swift remarked, "We are off to a great start this school year; our staff continue to adapt to the various changes and adjustments, and focus on providing exceptional education to our students." Welcome back and get ready for a great year!

A few new faces paused for a picture after the first day of school, from left to right, Kayla Meyer, Laura Baus, Erin Mason, and Peggy Smith.



## Lorain County Fair

This year marked the 166<sup>th</sup> summer of the Lorain County Fair. Consumer and staff volunteers were on-hand and eager to talk to Lorain County residents about the educational, vocational, and residential services and supports we provide. Thank you to all those who worked and visited the booth!

Consumer Juanita Young and OOVCSeniors instructor Leroy Keen volunteer at the booth.



Consumers created this scarecrow for the first ever Hay Bale Decorating Contest.



# Annual Transportation Safety Instruction

Murray Ridge Center wants your ride into our program sites to be a safe one. These are guidelines that both adults and children, and their caregivers should be aware of when utilizing transportation services provided by Murray Ridge Center.

## WAITING FOR THE BUS

- Be 5 minutes early. Wait for the bus at least 10 feet from the road.
- Dress properly - winter clothing, hats, mittens, and boots will help keep you warm in the winter.
- Watch for the bus' red lights.
- Wait until the bus has stopped and door opens before stepping into the roadway.
- Wait for the driver to signal to cross. Cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus.
- Use the handrail when stepping onto the bus.
- If you use a wheelchair, it must be equipped with a functioning seat belt. The wheels should lock as well.
- Store all belongings in a backpack so nothing gets dropped.

## BUS SEAT SAFETY RULES

- Follow all of the driver's instructions.
- Speak softly so the driver will not be distracted. At railroad crossings, be quiet.
- Stay seated until your stop and keep the aisle clear.
- Never put head, arms, or hands out of the window.
- Never do anything to distract the driver.
- Keep aisles clear and free of tripping hazards.
- Never throw things on the bus or out the windows.
- Tell the driver or monitor if you are being bullied.
- If there is an emergency, listen to the driver and follow instructions.
- Do not eat on the bus as this could present a choking hazard.

## GETTING OFF THE BUS AT HOME

- If you have to cross the street in front of the bus, walk at least ten feet ahead of the bus along the side of the road, until you can turn around and see the driver.
- Make sure that the driver can see you.
- Wait for the signal from the driver before beginning to cross.
- When the driver signals, walk across the road, keeping an eye out for sudden traffic changes.
- Do not cross the center line of the road until the driver has signaled that it is safe for you to begin walking.
- Stay away from the bus' rear wheels at all times. If you drop something near the bus, leave it. If you leave something on the bus, never return to get it. The driver may not see you come back and start to move the bus. If you drop something near the bus, tell the bus driver before you pick it up so he/she knows where you are.

Many of our consumers are also able to travel about the community through the use of public transportation. We want your trips to be safe ones!

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

- When you enter or leave a vehicle, watch for slippery or uneven pavement and other hazards that could cause you to fall.
- Have your LCT ID, bus fare, ticket, or pass ready to avoid losing your balance while looking for it.
- Do not carry too many packages – always leave a free hand to grab a railing.
- Allow extra time to cross streets, especially in bad weather.
- If it's dark outside, wear light-colored or reflective clothing.
- Do not talk to strangers. If you are being bothered by someone, tell the driver immediately.
- If you use a stop assistance card, remember to show it to the driver as you board the bus.
- Most LCT stops are not sheltered. Dress appropriately for the winter weather, and utilize sunscreen in the summer.
- Whether you are in a bus, car, or van – **ALWAYS WEAR YOUR SEATBELT IF THE VEHICLE IS EQUIPPED WITH ONE**



# September 2011

## Activities & Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5 	6 	7	8 	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22 	23	24
25	26	27	28 	29	30 	

- 9/5 - Labor Day, Murray Ridge Center closed
- 9/6 - First day of Preschool Classes
- 9/8 - Open House, Murray Ridge School, 9750 Murray Ridge Road in Elyria
- 9/8 - Early Intervention Playgroup, 5:30—6:30 p.m., Murray Ridge School, 9750 Murray Ridge Road in Elyria
- 9/22 - Early Intervention Playgroup, 5:30—6:30 p.m., Murray Ridge School, 9750 Murray Ridge Road in Elyria
- 9/22 - LCBDD Finance Committee meeting, 12:00 p.m., SSA Bldg., 9740 S. Murray Ridge Rd., Elyria
- 9/28 - Family Support Parent Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road in Elyria
- 9/30 - Regular Meeting of the Board and Ethics



## Lunch Menu

Youth = 3.05    Adults = \$2.90



Sept. 19 - 23

Oct. 10 - 14

Oct. 31 - Nov. 4

**Monday-** Salisbury Steak w/Gravy, Scalloped Potatoes, Corn, Peaches, Cookie

**Tuesday-** Turkey or Bologna with Cheese on Wheat Bread, Peas & Carrots, Pears, Nutri-Grain Bar

**Wednesday-** Meat Lasagna, Green Beans, Tossed Salad w/Low fat Dressing, Wheat Bread, Cookie

**Thursday-** Pepperoni & Cheese Pizza, Tossed Salad w/Low fat Dressing, Banana, Nutri-Grain Bar

**Friday-** Fish Patty, French Fries, Cole Slaw, Apple Slices, Wheat Bread, Cookie

Sept. 5 - 9

Sept. 26 - 30

Oct. 17 - 21

**Monday-** Ham, Wheat Bread, Rice Pilaf, Diced Carrots w/Herbs, Applesauce

**Tuesday-** Hamburger on a Bun, Potato Wedges, Corn, Crushed Pineapple, Cookie

**Wednesday-** Chicken Patty w/Gravy, Au Gratin Potatoes, Green Beans, Fruit, Wheat Bread, Cookie

**Thursday-** Pepperoni & Cheese Pizza, Tossed Salad w/Low fat Dressing, Banana, Nutri-Grain Bar

**Friday-** Macaroni & Cheese, Cooked Carrots, Diced Pears, Cookie

Sept. 12 -16

Oct. 3 - 7

Oct. 24 - 28

**Monday-** Chicken Patty on a Bun, Potato Rounds, Corn, Crushed Pineapple, Cookie

**Tuesday-** Meat Lasagna, Tossed Salad w/Low fat Dressing, Diced Peaches, Nutri-Grain Bar

**Wednesday-** Rigatoni w/Meatballs, Green Beans, Tossed Salad w/Low fat Dressing, Wheat Bread, Cookie

**Thursday-** Pepperoni & Cheese Pizza, Tossed Salad w/Low fat Dressing, Fresh Fruit, Nutri-Grain Bar

**Friday-** Meat/Cheese Burrito, Spanish Rice, Cole Slaw, Applesauce

## Special Olympics Area 12 Unified Golf and Singles Tournament

On August 7, consumers and staff participated in the Special Olympics Area 12 Unified Gold and Singles Tournament. Congratulations to our winners: **Division 10** Shari Reitenbach/Gail Coleman (2nd Place); **Division 12** Annie Cirilo/Hector Cirilo (2nd), Chad Kothe/Gary Lyons (3rd), Bill Lacko/Don Hartman (4th); **Division 13** John Ahart/George Gedid (2nd), Phil Sumutku/Charlene Hartman (6th); **Division 14** Dana Phillips/Judy Hartung (4th); **Division 17** Benji Lewis/Tracey Casada (4th); **Division 19** Ryan Eliason (1st), Kris Sommers (2nd).



Lorain County Board of  
Developmental Disabilities

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## Ohio SIBS Conference

Ohio SIBS, a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting siblings of adults with developmental disabilities, will hold its annual conference on Friday and Saturday, November 11-12, 2011, at the Columbus Marriott Airport Hotel.



To learn more, visit the Ohio SIBS website at [www.ohiosibs.com](http://www.ohiosibs.com), or contact Michelle Truby at [truby.5@osu.edu](mailto:truby.5@osu.edu) or 614-571-4542.

## School Lunches

Please note that there has been a slight increase in meal prices for the 2011-2012 school year.

Breakfast; now \$1.70  
Lunch; now \$3.05



If you wish to receive future newsletters by email, please contact Jennifer Judkins at 440-329-3734 or [jjudkins@murrayridgecenter.org](mailto:jjudkins@murrayridgecenter.org).

## FASD Series

### Register Now for October Class!

Since 2003, the FASD Information Series has been offered 38 times in Lorain County, and more than 610 participants have attended the program. This October, Murray Ridge is once again co-sponsoring this series with the Lorain County General Health District. The course will take place on October 18 and 25 from 8:30 – 4:00 each day. The classes will take place at the Murray Ridge Service and Support Administration Building and are free for any interested participants. Space is filling up fast! For further information or to register for this series, please contact the Lorain County General Health District at 440-322-6367, or visit them online at [www.loraincountyhealth.com](http://www.loraincountyhealth.com). Learn about fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and how to help those living with FASD reach their full potential.