



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

# The Murray Ridge Courier

May 2013

## Murray Ridge Staff Join Statewide Project

Murray Ridge Center is one of more than 40 counties across the state participating in a project aimed at addressing autism spectrum disorder.

Murray Ridge Center Early Intervention Supervisor Valerie Deptula and Early Intervention staff members Bonnie Minnich and Jill Carissimi joined

the Autism Diagnosis Education Project (ADEP), a statewide project administered by the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI) in collaboration with Akron Children's Hospital/Family Child Learning Center. Deptula says the project aims to increase local capacity to diagnose autism with existing resources in Lorain County.

"In Lorain County we want to be able to provide the best practices, most current approaches, and as many options as possible to the families we serve," Deptula said. "This project was a great opportunity to do that."

Deptula, Minnich, and Carissimi are in the midst of live and online training to evaluate children suspected of having autism. They will then take their findings and partner with a local physician who will be trained on the medical component of an autism evaluation. With the help of Lorain County Help Me Grow Clinical Supervisor Aimee Poe, Service Coordinator Laura Kraps, and Director of Children and Families Council Melissa Stefano, along with two Lorain County physician partners, Dr. Charles Weber,



Murray Ridge staff members Jill Carissimi, Bonnie Minnich, and Valerie Deptula are taking part in the ADEP through the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence.

pediatrician from EMH in North Ridgeville, and Dr. Suresh Thakker, pediatrician in Elyria, the team will make a diagnosis using internationally recognized evidence-based tools.

Autism is a developmental disorder that affects a child's ability to communicate,

interact, and play with others. A recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report stated 1 in 50 school-aged children has autism.

Deptula said autism often isn't diagnosed until kindergarten, when in fact it can be recognized even in the first year of life. By getting involved in ADEP, she and her team hope to diagnose children earlier, getting them quicker access to early intervention that can help the child and family.

"The 'wait and see' approach is no longer acceptable as it can lead to missed opportunities," Deptula said. "Early diagnosis and intervention is the key to achieving the best long term outcomes."

The ADEP training comes at no cost to the county; the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities is supporting ADEP through federal grant funding to OCALI.

For more information on ADEP or OCALI, please visit [www.ocali.org](http://www.ocali.org), or call Murray Ridge Center's Early Intervention Department at 440-284-3655.

# Murray Ridge Center Honors the Murray Ridge Production Center Board with the Volunteer of the Year Award



Jeff Miller (center) presents Production Board Chair Greg Butchko (right) and MRPC Board member Gerry Findlan (left) with the Marilyn Hupfer Volunteer of the Year Award at the banquet on April 24, 2013.

Center Board.

The current board consists of people from local businesses, parents of our consumers, and individuals with a vast array of knowledge and experience. Our current Board members are Greg Butchko, Board Chair, from West Development Group, Denis Wright, Vice-Chair, from EMH regional medical center, Jim Berarducci, secretary and long time Murray Ridge supporter, Bob Gajdos, parent and member of the Lorain County Board of DD, Gerry Findlan, former director of the Murray Ridge Production Center and long time Murray Ridge supporter, Matt Dailey from SPS technologies, Ron Rimbart, President of the Oberlin City Council and owner and operator of A 2 Point B Transportation Services in Oberlin, and Jim Uldrich, parent and long time supporter of LCBDD. These individuals freely donate their time, talents, and expertise to ensure Murray Ridge offers the best vocational training programs possible for people with disabilities.

Murray Ridge Center honored the Murray Ridge Production Center (MRPC) Board as the winner of the 2013 Marilyn Hupfer Volunteer of the Year Award. The award was presented at the agency's annual Volunteer Appreciation Reception where Murray Ridge Center recognizes with gratitude all its volunteers for the time and commitment they've given throughout the past year.

The Marilyn Hupfer Volunteer of the Year Award was created eight years ago by the Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities to commemorate the life of a woman who personified the spirit of helping people. Each year, a volunteer is nominated to receive this distinction in honor of the example inspired by Mrs. Hupfer during her time with Murray Ridge Center.

For more than 40 years, the Murray Ridge Production Center, through the leadership of its board of directors, has been providing vocational training and employment opportunities for Murray Ridge Center consumers. From humble beginnings in what we used to call our workshops, the Murray Ridge Production Center now provides paid vocational training to more than 600 Lorain County residents with disabilities in our Opportunity/Vocational Centers, as well as a host of community-based sites throughout Lorain County, all under the guidance of the Murray Ridge Production

One of the more important duties of the Board is fiscal oversight of the Murray Ridge Production Center. But even more important is its advice and assistance with providing meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities. To this end, a few years ago it helped Murray Ridge start our own business, MRE, which takes paper documents and converts them into digital images. It was and continues to be a considerable financial commitment, but it allows us to provide a unique service for consumers who want to hone their clerical skills. Tasks include prepping documents for scanning, running them through a scanner, typing in an index, and checking the images for quality. Today, 30 consumers participate in vocational training at MRE each week, and the Board has been fully committed to continue providing this sort of creative, innovative training that our consumers want and deserve.

All of our efforts can be summed up in these words: Helping people for a lifetime. And the various board members of the Murray Ridge Production Center have been donating their time and expertise to help make this happen for more than thirty years. Please join Murray Ridge Center in honoring The Murray Ridge Production Center Board as the 2013 Marilyn Hupfer volunteer of the year.



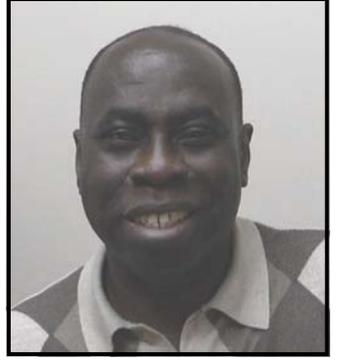
**Catrina Brasee** will be working as a part time Group Home Aide at the South Professor home in Oberlin. Catrina is a graduate of Wellington High School and previously worked for three years at Village Market in Wellington. She currently lives in Wakeman.

**Jordan Brown** will be working as an Adult Program Aide at the Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center. Jordan has his degree from Asbury University. He recently worked at Lucy Idol and as a sub for Murray Ridge Center, and currently resides in Vermillion.



**Willis Henderson** will be working as an Adult Program Aide at the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center. Willis is an LCCC graduate and previously worked for Time Warner Cable and Inva-care. Willis currently lives in Lorain.

**Francis Sanford** will be working as a Program Manager at the Meister group home in Lorain. Francis has his MA from Notre Dame University, and has previously worked for REM and as a QDDP and waiver specialist for the state of Indiana.



**Shawn Silvis** will be working as an Adult Program Aide at the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center. Shawn graduated from Elyria High School and obtained his BS from Ohio University. He currently lives in Elyria and enjoys playing pool, photography, film, and sports.

**Deborah Thompson** will be working as a Speech Pathologist at the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center. Deborah has her MA from Cleveland State University in speech pathology. She previously worked for the Cuyahoga County Board of DD.



## Autism Awareness at Murray Ridge School



Teachers and other staff at Murray Ridge School recognized April as Autism Awareness Month with various activities throughout the month, including a craft and bake sale, classrooms crafts, and a school-wide art project to commemorate the 1.5 million Americans living with some effects of Autism Spectrum Disorders.

# Library Outings Weekly Treat for East 9th Street Residents

Every week for more than a year, residents of the East Ninth Street group home have visited the Washington Avenue branch of the Lorain County library system.

Glenda Kazmierczak and Lisa Bridadier, Group Home Aides/Housekeepers at the East 9<sup>th</sup> home, are responsible for orchestrating these outings. Glenda initiated the idea as a way to integrate residents into the community in which they reside. She worked with the library to obtain cards, and Lisa volunteered to lead the group each week on the expedition.

Each library trip allows for the residents to browse through books and movies, and pick out old favorites and new finds to share with residents and staff at the home; residents look forward to this weekly group activity.

The group at East 9<sup>th</sup> is more than just housemates; they see each other as family. "The structure of the family-style home, in conjunction with the staff, provides a warm, safe environment for the residents to develop and learn new life skills," Residential Program Manager Hillary Tanner said.

When not visiting the library, you can find East 9<sup>th</sup> residents throughout the community on different outings, including shopping, attending local sporting events, and participating in community festivals and church events.



Glenda Kazmierczak (staff), Robert Conrady, James McElya, Dennis Balvin, Jennifer Storr, Lisa Brigadier (staff), and Kari Dolan pose at the Washington Avenue library with the books and movies they checked out for the week.



## Lake Erie Crushers' Stomper visits Murray Ridge School

Stomper from the Lake Erie Crushers baseball team stopped by Murray Ridge School to visit with students and staff, and try his swing during the school's indoor baseball game. Pictured left, Hayden Whitacre, Obed Robledo, and Athyna Rivera get a hug from Stomper. Right, teacher Nick Kish pitches to batter Andrew Flowers.



## Eye On Health

*Kevin Eye, Director of Nursing Services*

The long, warm summer days are quickly approaching! With that in mind, here are two key tips to make summer fun a little safer:

**Use sunscreen.** Exposure to the sun, even on overcast days, can cause sunburn in as little as 30 minutes for some people. Frequent use of sunscreen minimizes the risk of getting burned on those hot summer days. The American Cancer Society recommends sunscreen as a frontline protection against skin cancer. Look for sunscreen that provides

"broad spectrum" protection against both UVA and UVB radiation.

**Stay hydrated.** Thirst is one of the first signs of heat exhaustion. Drinking plenty of non-caffeinated and non-alcoholic beverages will go a long way in preventing dehydration and heat exhaustion. Along with thirst, signs of heat exhaustion include headache, weakness, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, and profuse sweating. If you or someone you know is having these signs on a hot summer day, drink water or sports beverages and get cool (with a cool shower, in an air conditioned area, in the shade, or in front of a fan). If symptoms persist or worsen, seek medical attention to prevent a serious, life-threatening condition known as heat stroke.

## Open House at the EOVC

On Monday, April 22, the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center held an open house. More than 70 Lorain County residents attended to see how the Center operates, the activities available to consumers, and the incredible art displays created by attendees.



Brian Austin, Torie Amber, Penni Shuster (staff), and Juan Pino handed out homemade bird feeders to visitors on tour.



EOVC attendee Thomas Stumpf showed off the Center to his mother and grandparents. Many family members came out to show support for their loved one by touring and taking pictures throughout the Open House.

## Exceptional Service at Murray Ridge Center

Timi Zuckerman, Residential Recreation Aide at the Meister Group Home, recently received the quarterly Exceptional Service Award from the Board of Developmental Disabilities.

Timi was nominated by Carol Gray, mother and guardian to Meister Group Home resident and Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center attendee Ann Marie Wester. In her nomination letter, Carol wrote of Timi's excellent observation skills and quick thinking when she accompanied Ann and Carol to a recent dental appointment where Ann encountered a dangerous situation.

"Timi was truly a blessing for Ann as this was a very traumatic incident," Carol explained. "Timi's calm observation skills made the difference."

Congratulations, Timi! And thank you for your exceptional service at Murray Ridge Center.

Timi accepts her award from Carol Gray.



# A PRESCHOOL OPTION

The Murray Ridge Preschool Program offers students with a variety of developmental disabilities the advantages of in-room therapies, an array of state-of-the-art equipment, outstanding staff and an opportunity to learn alongside typically-developing peers.

## Murray Ridge Preschool Offers:

- Individualized Speech, Occupational and Physical Therapy in the classroom
- An extensive collection of early childhood educational equipment
- Full-time nurse on site
- Behavior Support Services
- Music classes



- A well-rounded curriculum based on the Ohio Early Learning Content Standards
- Dynamic, ODE-certified staff
- Physical development through indoor/ outdoor physical education classes
- Door-to-door transportation services

## Did You Know...

The Murray Ridge preschool serves children with a wide range of developmental disabilities, from those with mild delays to those profoundly impacted, and Murray Ridge is a recognized leader in its comprehensive approach to teaching children with autism. The Preschool Program runs Tuesday through Friday. Children with disabilities must be referred to the Murray Ridge Preschool Program by their local school district. Applications for typically-developing children are available through Murray Ridge School (see below).

**For More Information Contact:**  
Dann Swift  
Director of Educational Services  
Murray Ridge School  
9750 Murray Ridge Road  
Elyria, Oh 44035  
440.329-3760  
dswift@murrayridgecenter.org  
www.murrayridgecenter.org



## Activities & Events

- 5/2 - Murray Ridge Support Group meeting, 4:15 p.m., Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center, 1095 Infirmary Road in Elyria
- 5/10 - Murray Ridge School Senior Prom; 6:30—9:00 p.m., Murray Ridge School, 9750 Murray Ridge Road in Elyria
- 5/22 - Family Support Parent Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road in Elyria
- 5/23 - LCBDD Finance Committee meeting, 12:00 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria
- 5/24 - Murray Ridge Support Group Dance, 7:00 p.m., Murray Ridge School, 9750 Murray Ridge Road in Elyria
- 5/27 - **Agency Closed in Observance of Memorial Day**
- 5/31 - Regular Meeting of the Board and Ethics Council, 12:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria



# May 2013

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	31 	



## 2013-2014 Agency Calendars

The 2013-2014 agency calendars are now available at [www.murrayridgecenter.org](http://www.murrayridgecenter.org) under Agency Calendar. Visit the website to see the schedules of our programs for the coming year!

## BOARD ROOM BRIEFING

The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 12:30 p.m. on April 26, 2013:

Timi Zuckerman was awarded the Exceptional Service Award for her work as a Residential Residential Recreation Aide at the Murray Ridge Center Meister Road Group Home. Director of HR Tom Forhan presented and the Board approved a new *Family and Medical Leave* policy. Superintendent Amber Fisher reviewed the 2013 Governing Rules and Regulations and the Board unanimously approved modifications related to changes in Statutory Standards for Board Membership. The Board approved the 2013-2014 agency calendars. In other news, the Murray Ridge Support Group announced a donation of \$300 to the Murray Ridge Levy Committee and a \$100 food voucher to a consumer at the Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center.

Lorain County Board of  
Developmental Disabilities

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Elyria, OH 44035

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### Further News You Might Use...

We are often in receipt of information from external sources on offerings designed for people with DD. Some examples include summer camps and special interest classes. Many such offerings have an associated cost to the participant. Although we are not in a position to "vouch for" or promote such offerings, we recognize that these opportunities may be of interest to our consumers, their families and/or guardians. If you are interested in learning more about such consumer-oriented events and opportunities, please contact Jeff Neal, Director of Service & Support Administration at 440-324-2366.

—The Editor

### Exceptional Service Award

Do you know a Murray Ridge employee whose work efforts reflect remarkable dedication and have significantly contributed to the well being of people with developmental disabilities? Nominate that employee for an Exceptional Service Award! If you are a community member; consumer; or parent, guardian, sibling or other relative of a Murray Ridge program participant, submit your nomination to Jennifer Judkins, Public Relations/Volunteer Director. Include a brief paragraph outlining your reasons for nominating the employee. All nominations will be forwarded to the Board for consideration. The Board presents Exceptional Service Awards on a quarterly basis at regular 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).