



MurrayRidgeCenter
HELPING PEOPLE...FOR A LIFETIME

The Murray Ridge Courier

April 2021

Spring has Sprung at Murray Ridge



Above, student Owen Richardson and teacher Amy Muriello



Left, student Brady Johnson with teacher Amy Muriello; Above, Occupational Therapist Nicole Geen, student Brayden Altobelli, teacher Julie Maurer and Physical Therapist Renee Phillips

What an awesome sight! The weather was a sunny, breezy 64 degrees, and Murray Ridge School students in grades 5-8 and their teachers, **Julie Maurer** and **Amy Muriello**, went outside to fly kites.

Each student created a kite craft by making choices and utilizing his/her fine motor skills. The students designed their kites with the assistance of their Occupational Therapists, **Sue Gaskill** and **Nicole Geen**, and Speech Therapist **Patty Clickner**. Physical Therapists, **Renee Phillips** and **Hannah Lilly**, were also available to help students work on their gross motor skills when the students were flying the kites. A fun day was had by all!



Left: Student Kenneth Kingsley

Above: Physical Therapist Renee Phillips and student Raelyn Ensign

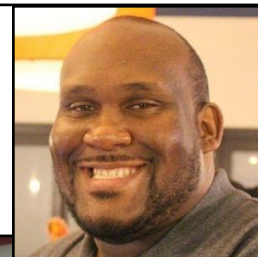


Right: Students Kendric Warner and Brandon Rivera

Remembering Joaquin Page

The Murray Ridge family lost a very special member recently with the sudden passing of Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center (EOVC) Adult Program Instructor **Joaquin Page**. Not only had Joaquin worked for Murray Ridge for some 15 years, but his love for the consumers we serve extended far beyond any typical workday. He was very involved as a Special Olympics coach, attended almost every monthly dance at Murray Ridge School, and worked as an independent provider.

According to Joaquin's friend **Jaclina Rush**, SSA Provider Compliance/Resource Specialist, "His passing has had a huge impact on Murray Ridge as he was close to many staff and consumers over the years." EOVC Production Manager **Mark Kaminski** said, "After noticing Joaquin interact with our consumers, we soon became good friends. He respected a person's individuality and treated them as you or I would like to be treated. His area was rarely quiet. Good old-fashioned belly laughs could always be heard and enjoyed by many. Just thinking of these memories instantly brings a smile to my face." SSA **Sarah Bohannon** added, "Joaquin was a very kind, sweet soul with a huge heart. He had a very mischievous sense of humor that I just loved! And his laugh with the snort always made me laugh harder! He truly cared about everyone. After my father passed away, he would call to check on me and always asked about my mom. His kindness knew no bounds. Joaquin will be dearly missed by all who had the privilege to spend any time with him."



April Autism 'Awareness' Month Transitioning To Autism 'Acceptance' Month

Please join Murray Ridge Center as we observe April as **National Autism Acceptance Month**. The traditional yearly celebration of April as Autism Awareness Month is transitioning to that new name at the request of the Autism Society of America, along with many other leading disability organizations.

According to a press release urging media to recognize the new name, "the shift in use of terminology aims to foster acceptance to ignite change through improved support and opportunities in education, employment, accessible housing, affordable health care and comprehensive long-term services."

About 1 in 54 children has been identified with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) according to estimates from CDC's Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network. Autism is treatable, and early diagnosis and intervention can lead to significantly improved outcomes. Visit nationalautismassociation.org for more information.

To learn about programs and services offered by Murray Ridge School, contact Dann Swift, Director of Educational Services at 329-3760.



Some St. Patty's Day Memories from LOVC

The Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center had a very successful socially distanced St. Patrick's Day.

Each area Zoomed with staff member **Jordan Brown** and played St. Patrick's Day-themed bingo and other fun games. Judges awarded prizes to the most festively dressed program participants, then everyone finished the afternoon with green cupcakes and green ice cream!

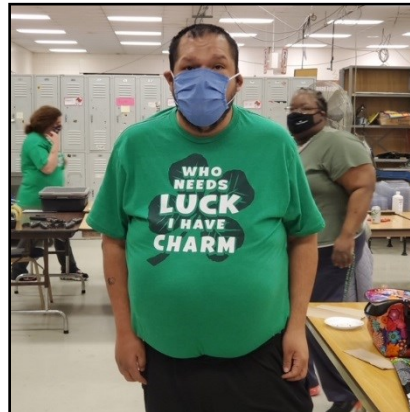
Pictured are:

Top left (l-r): **Kevin Johnson**, staff member **Trevor Doty**, and **Ryan Flanigan**

Top right: **Sarina Fries**

Bottom left: **Nick Perez**

Bottom right: **Jessica Mager**



Going Above and Beyond...

Some great teamwork between Murray Ridge Service and Support Administrator (SSA) **Emily Ambrosio** and staff from provider agencies **Rising Sun Center** and **Lomeda** recently resulted in a special surprise for program participant **Corde Barnwell**.

When Emily learned that Corde was occasionally reluctant to go to his day program, she began thinking of ways to motivate him to attend. She remembered that he has a history of wanting to wear a uniform - watching COPS on TV and wanting to visit a military base or museum. So she suggested that Rising Sun Center get him a t-shirt that says "Rising Sun" on it - but Rising Sun went one better, getting him a shirt that said



"Security" on the back and his name and 'title' on the front. Corde's residential service provider, Lomeda, added to the concept by giving him a badge. In his new role, Corde helps make sure doors are locked and lights are off at the end of the day, and performs other 'security' duties. By all accounts, Corde is really embracing his new responsibilities. Congratulations to everyone involved!

It's Back. . .

Exceptional Service Award Nominations Sought

After a lengthy pandemic pause, we're pleased to once again resume our **Exceptional Service Award** program. Do you know a Murray Ridge staff member whose work efforts reflect remarkable dedication and have significantly contributed to the well being of people with developmental disabilities? Nominate that staff member 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 **Chris Vasco**, Community Education/Volunteer Director.

Include a brief paragraph outlining your reasons for nominating the staff member. All nominations will be forwarded to the Board for consideration. The Board presents Exceptional Service Awards on a quarterly basis. If you have any questions, contact Chris at (440) 329-3734 or cvasco@murrayridgecenter.org

'Feeling the Burn' - Even During the Pandemic

If you walk into what is known as the Senior Room at the **Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center (LOVC)** around 11 a.m. on a Thursday morning, you might just hear the following phrases being yelled out:

"Punch it, punch the air, punch it"

"Is that Scotty I see over there working hard?"

"Way to go Area 1...Keep up the good work"

"Swing those arms, and march and march"

With some activities sidelined due to COVID-19, **Karen Pavelschak**, Fitness & Leisure Specialist at LOVC, has come up with some energizing and fun physical fitness classes. Karen puts a lot of time and thought into her classes – researching dance moves and exercises which are perfectly suited for the participants and which they really enjoy. She solicits their input and ideas on musical choices and dances they'd like to learn.

Participants include individuals in the Virtual Adult Day Support (VADS) program as well as individuals from other OVCs. During one recent class, Karen's high energy moves really had participants' blood pumping! You could also say that a portion of her classes involve armchair travel, as stretching and cool downs take place amid backdrops of lush, tropical locations.



Karen Pavelschak is pictured above leading her Thursday morning physical fitness class.



The Magic of Reading

Thanks to our **Early Intervention (EI)** team for sharing this adorable photo which **Milliana Stack's** grandmother sent them of Milliana enjoying her first book from the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. The family had been told about the program by Developmental Specialist **Kathy Bevaque**.

Through this program, families can get free books simply by signing up at imaginationlibrary.com.



Triumph through the Challenges Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Who should attend?

This course series is for nurses, social workers, counselors, physicians, educators, parents, and caregivers who work with individuals that may have had prenatal exposure to alcohol/drugs.

Learn about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and how to best work with those affected in order to reach his/her fullest potential.

Gather useful tips and local resources!

Discover ways to succeed!

Virtual ZOOM Meeting!

2021 Virtual Spring Series

Evening Sessions:

April 19, 2021: Section 1, 5-7:30 p.m.

April 21, 2021 Section 2, 5-7:30 p.m.

April 26, 2021: Section 3, 5-7:30 p.m.

April 28, 2021: Section 4, 5-7:30 p.m.

Registration Information:

Contact : Kathy Bevaque, M.Ed., D.S. w/LCBDD

Agency mobile # (440) 731-0358

e-mail: kbevaque@murrayridgecenter.org

No fee to attend.

Facilitators:

Kathleen Bevaque, M.Ed., D.S. w/LCBDD

Angelique Yost , parent/foster parent

Series Details

- **Section 1:** FASD Basic Facts; Characteristics; Chronological vs. Developmental Age
- **Section 2:** Neurological Issues & Behaviors of FASD: Coping Skills
- **Section 3:** Developing Effective Strategies for FASD: Advocacy & Finding Resources
- **Section 4:** Advocacy in Schools; Behavioral Strategy; Daily Living & Future Planning for Individuals with FASD

Contact Hours Available

- Social workers, counselors, and chemical dependency RCH: provided by the MHARS Board of Lorain County
- Developmental Disability hours provided by Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities, now including EI .
- Certificate of Attendance for contact hours



PLEASE NOTE:

Any missed sessions may be made up at a later date.

"Good News" Tips from Murray Ridge Staff



FROM DIANE LAWSON Family Support Coordinator

"**Jack Krebs** is a retired consumer from the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center who has been helping other senior citizens in his apartment building. One day when I was leaving the apartment building, the woman who lives below him stopped me and was asking about getting Jack a gift card to thank him for going to get the mail for her each day for quite some time. She is now having to use a rollator to get around and going down the steps of the apartment building has become too difficult for her, so she has asked Jack for months to go and get her mail from the apartment complex mailbox and bring it back to her. He has done this, as well as taking the newspaper each day for more than a year to a frail woman on the 3rd floor (who has since passed away) so she could avoid the stairs. Knowing Jack and seeing what he has been doing for these women in his apartment complex makes me so proud of him. He does it every day and never says a word for recognition – but I feel he deserves recognition."

Jack Krebs (top left) and his neighbor, Barbara H.

FROM JACLINA RUSH Provider Compliance/Resource Specialist, Service and Support Administration (SSA) Department

Randy Klingenmeier started his own business during the pandemic! Here's what his SSA, **Cheryl Glatz** reported. . . "Randy has been doing well during the pandemic . . . He started his own business detailing cars since he was unable to go to CDI (his Supported Employment Placement - Cutting Dynamics Inc., in Avon). He loves it and is doing well. His sister reported he is also redoing the cabinets in their home as well as doing other projects."

FROM LARRY SCHUMAN, Adult Program Instructor, Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center (LOVC)

A Lorain family deeply involved for years with Murray Ridge recently celebrated some proud news out of New York. **Isabel Rivera Smith** became a brigadier general in the New York Army National Guard. Her late mother Isabel was very active with the agency, and she has two siblings currently attending LOVC.

Brigadier General **Isabel Rivera Smith**, the director of joint staff for the New York National Guard, has her one-star rank pinned on by family members during promotion ceremonies at New York National Guard headquarters in Latham, New York on Thursday, Feb. 18, 2021. Pictured are, from left her husband **Peter Smith**, her grandson **Antonio**, and her daughter **Antoinette**.



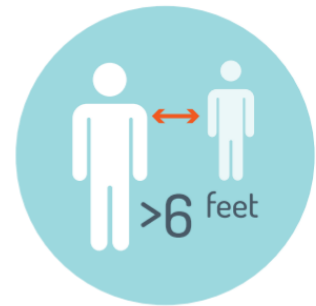
Vaccine Information from Lorain County Public Health

If you haven't received your COVID vaccine yet, go to the Lorain County Public Health web-site at loraincountyhealth.com/signup

At that site you'll find the latest information on how to sign up for appointments at area vaccine clinics and how to use the ArmVax app to help you with scheduling your appointments.

Even after you get your vaccine, you will need to:

- keep wearing a mask that covers your nose and mouth.
- wash your hands often.
- stay at least 6 feet away from people you do not live with.



We know not everyone will be able to get vaccinated right away, so it's still important to protect yourself and others.



**Lorain County
Public Health**
For the Health of Us All

BOARD ROOM BRIEFING

The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 6:30 p.m. on March 29, 2021

Board member Dan White announced that the Exceptional Service Award Committee had selected two nominated Murray Ridge employees to receive the next quarterly Exceptional Service Award. In consideration of factors including a directive from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities to this year significantly reduce the number of Medicaid waiver recipients served in the county board-operated Adult Day Program, the Board prioritized groups with regard to who would be able to continue in/return to Murray Ridge Adult Services; there will be SSA contacts with impacted individuals/families, and anyone not able to return to/continue with Murray Ridge Adult Services will be assisted to explore options and secure an alternative provider of day services. The Board unanimously approved a policy revision enabling certain individuals who receive Supported Employment, but not OVC-based services from Murray Ridge to also receive Adult Services from other providers. The Board approved a revision to its policy on Behavior Support. Superintendent Fisher provided a historical overview of subsidies and charges for Murray Ridge Preschool Program participants with special needs, and the Board established rate structures for parents of typically developing children and school districts that place students in the Murray Ridge Preschool Program for the 2021/2022 school year. Dr. Fisher also provided updates on the plans for the Murray Ridge School modified prom, commencement exercises and summer program.

Lorain County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

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News You Can Use

Connecting For Kids Lorain County Resource Fair Set for Saturday, April 24

Just a reminder that Murray Ridge Center's Service and Support Administration (SSA) Department and Early Intervention (EI) Program will take part in Connecting for Kids' **2021 Lorain County Resource Fair**, offering resources for families in Lorain and Western Cuyahoga counties on **Saturday, April 24** (Rain Date: May 8) from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

This is a socially distanced, outdoor event at Lorain County Community College's Courtyard (with a 'Grab and Go' drive-thru option following from 1-3 p.m.) Connecting for Kids wants everyone to know that it has been working closely with Lorain County Public Health and LCCC to significantly reduce chances of exposure to COVID - go to **connectingforkids.org/** **COVIDPrecautions** for more information.



Connecting for Kids

You're not alone