



MurrayRidgeCenter  
HELPING PEOPLE...FOR A LIFETIME

# The Murray Ridge Courier

August 2020

## 'Virtual' Adult Day Services Connects and Showcases Consumers

Murray Ridge's Adult Services Department has received positive feedback about a newer service model called **Virtual Adult Day Support (VADS)** which enables staff to connect with participants who are staying at home during the COVID-19 Pandemic and to teach important skills to and explore interests with these individuals through the Zoom internet application.

During a recent session held over Zoom, participants talked about program participant **Chelsie Jenkins** (pictured right and below) sharing a video tour of Sandstone Candle Works in Amherst - her family's business where she works. Chelsie has helped out in the candle shop for many years, but with more free time during the closure she has been spending more time helping customers at the shop. She will tell you that the shop and all the employees (including herself) are following all the recommended guidance to keep customers safe and are wearing face masks.

Chelsie has worked with Supported Employment. She is also one of the first program participants with Murray Ridge Center to attend a Project STIR (Steps Toward Independence and Responsibility) training and is now training her peers to be self-advocates. She is one of the founding members of the Self-Advocacy group at Murray Ridge Center and supports new members in finding their voices to speak up for themselves and others.

Chelsie is participating in all four classes offered through Virtual Adult Day Support at Murray Ridge Center: Leisure/Recreation Activities; Self-Advocacy; Physical Fitness; and Socialization/Communication and Community Awareness.

Going forward, Murray Ridge plans to expand individualized 'teleservice,' focusing on connecting small groups, addressing specific interest areas and helping participants work towards achieving desired outcomes.



**Program participant Chelsie Jenkins was featured in a video tour of her family's candle shop, showing available products and demonstrating mask wearing.**



## Helpful Resources Available During COVID-19 Crisis

### ***Local Organizations Sponsor Food Distribution Events***

Obtaining food during the COVID-19 Pandemic has continued to be a major challenge for many families. In addition to many local churches and other organizations that have held food distribution events, one local organization is doing its part on a regular basis to help provide food to those in need.

**The Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio** is sponsoring an ongoing series of drive-through food distribution events at various locations throughout Lorain County.

To find out the latest information about drive-through food distribution events available near you, go to the Second Harvest Food Bank's Facebook page, or go to its website at [secondharvestfoodbank.org](http://secondharvestfoodbank.org).

In addition, each week Murray Ridge's Service and Support Administration (SSA) Department compiles a current listing of various Lorain County locations where food can be acquired. Each Friday, these listings are posted on both the Murray Ridge Center and Murray Ridge School and Pre-school Facebook pages.



### ***Ongoing Food Acquisition Opportunities***

#### **Beyond the Walls Church**

101 Woodford Ave, Elyria  
**Fridays from 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.**  
Contact 216-903-0963

#### **Elyria Cares.com**

Requests Filled Weekdays from 9 a.m.–7 p.m.  
**Food Delivery Every Friday**  
Contact 440-305-0455

#### **Elyria Salvation Army**

716 Broad Street, Elyria  
**Mon. – Thurs. from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.**  
**Friday from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.**  
Contact 440-323-2026

#### **Kipton Community Church**

511 Church Street, Kipton  
**Tuesdays from 6 - 7:30 p.m.**  
Contact 440-774-4148

#### **Lorain Salvation Army**

2506 Broadway Avenue, Lorain  
**Monday – Friday from 9 – 11:30 a.m.**  
Contact 440-244-1921

#### **N. Ridgeville Community Care**

34015 Center Ridge Road, N. Ridgeville  
**Mon., Tues., Wed. from 9:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.**  
**Wednesday from 3 – 6 p.m.**  
**Thursday from 2:30 – 7 p.m.**  
Contact 440-353-9716

#### **Oberlin Community Services**

258 South Professor Street, Oberlin  
**Mon., Wed., Fri. from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.**  
Contact 440-774-6579

#### **Pathways Enrichment Center**

2505 Leavitt Road, Lorain  
**Wednesdays from 10:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.**  
Contact 440-282-1109

#### **Vermilion Salvation Army**

4560 Liberty Ave., Ste. H, Vermilion  
**Wednesday and Friday from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.**  
**and 1st, 3rd Tuesdays from 7 – 9 p.m.**  
Contact 440-967-5446

#### **Well Help Food Pantry**

127 Park Place, Wellington  
**Monday – Friday from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.**  
Contact 440-647-2689



## Showcasing Their Artistic Side . . .

**Kelly Aston** (right), is an accomplished artist who participates in programs at Boots to Grasses Therapeutic Horsemanship program in Berlin Heights. Some of her most special work was commissioned by Boots to Grasses to commemorate their stable of therapy horses and other animals. Many of these works are available for sale at Boots to Grasses as prints, Christmas ornaments, mugs, note cards, t-shirts, sweatshirts, tote bags, and key chains.

Kelly receives referral and linkage services from the Murray Ridge Service and Support Administration (SSA) Department. According to her website - [kastonart.com](http://kastonart.com) - her mediums include watercolor, acrylic paint, and pencil. She also creates larger works in wheelchair art, painting by using her chair as a brush. Influenced by the world around her, and her disability, the circumstances overlap and help her to create unique artwork that transcends the mere visual. Her style is focused on abstraction and Abstract Impressionism stemming from the acquired knowledge of her body and mind.



**Wendy Smitkowski**, (left), daughter of Cheryl Smitkowski, owner of The Workshop Art Gallery in Oberlin, has been spending her coronavirus 'stay-at-home time' creating art. Wendy said, "I want to make something pretty and happy to share with everybody."

Wendy has been working with paints, yarns, fabric, glass, rocks and slate to create artwork to share her happiness. Wendy, who displayed her art for sale on Sidewalk Sale Saturday, August 1, in front of The Workshop Art Gallery, is a program participant at Murray Ridge's Oberlin Opportunity/Vocational Center.





## **Virtual Sports**

**IT'S TIME TO CONNECT | IT'S TIME TO COMPETE | IT'S TIME TO GET READY**

Athletes will earn points and awards for participating in a variety of virtual events. All virtual activities are accessible with a computer, tablet, smartphone, or telephone. Athletes, family members, friends, and fans are invited to participate.

### **Statewide Virtual Sports Practices**

- Bocce: Tuesdays at 4:00 P.M.
- Cheer: Sundays at 6:30 P.M.
- Equestrian: Mondays at 6:00 P.M.
- Golf: Wednesdays at 5:00 P.M.
- Soccer: Wednesdays at 6:00 P.M.
- More Sports: Coming Soon

### **Virtual Events**

- Led by Special Olympic coaches and local leaders
- Athletes can practice individually or with anyone they have already been regularly in contact with, like roommates, neighbors, family members
- Motivational Speaker: Christopher Milo - Wednesdays at 11:00 A.M.
- Strength & Conditioning: Monday - Thursday at 7:00 P.M.
- Full Event Calendar: [WeThriveTogether.org/upcoming-events/](https://WeThriveTogether.org/upcoming-events/)

### **Earn Points and Awards**

- Attend the virtual practice sessions and virtual activities

### **Connect. Compete. Get Ready.**

- Join by computer/tablet/smartphone: <https://zoom.us/j/8010396858>
- Join by phone: 1-312-626-6799 | Event ID: 801 039 6858
- Need Help: 330-727-9452 | 513-800-3173 | 216-339-2005 | 440-478-5640  
614-400-0113 | 937-499-3739 | 740-588-3140 | 419-377-3271

**Join Virtual Sports: <https://WeThriveTogether.org/VirtualSports>**

## Murray Ridge Begins Cautious Return To Special Olympics Sports with Golf Skills Maintenance Session



Murray Ridge Special Olympics athlete **Ben Lewis** teeing off at Indian Hollow Lake Golf Course in Grafton.

Although Murray Ridge recently decided not to organize and field Special Olympics Softball and Soccer teams for the 2020 season because of ongoing concerns about the safety of athletes during the COVID-19 Pandemic, a four-week golf skill maintenance program was permitted this year due to it being an individual sport held outdoors which facilitated social distancing.

Golfers and unified partners teed it up at Indian Hollow Lake Golf Course in Grafton in order to keep their golf skills sharp given that there are no regional or state competitions scheduled for the rest of the year. Taking part were: **Ben Lewis** and **Ken Lewis Sr.**; **Ryan Eliason** and **David Eliason**; **John Ahart** and **Don Hartman**; and **Steve Slutzker** and **Shawn Hatcher**. Murray Ridge would like to thank **Doug Gardner** at Indian Hollow Lake Golf Course for their long-time support of our program and athletes.

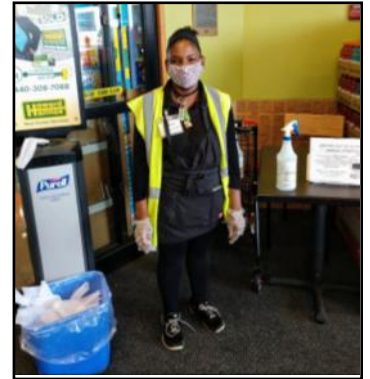
### Baker Mayfield gear!

Get limited edition Baker Mayfield merchandise.  
100% of proceeds benefit SOOH athletes!

## Supported Employment During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Since mid-March, Murray Ridge Supported Employment (SE) staff have offered assistance and resources for those in the SE Program to remain connected with family and friends, and to help ease the frustrations of quarantine. As the economy began to re-open in May, Murray Ridge cautiously resumed support of eligible individuals to participate in community-based work. During the pandemic, our agency's job developer and Vocational Placement Specialists (VPSs) have worked with employers and consumers in a variety of ways.

- Individuals who obtained new jobs in March were unable to start due to COVID-related closures. The SE department assisted with delaying start dates until businesses started working again, and communicated with these employers throughout the closures to keep up-to-date on return dates.
- With individuals who have continued to work during this time, VPSs discussed the changes that their work places were requiring of them due to COVID-19. Challenges that they have had were addressed and ideas about how to deal with those challenges were brainstormed. SE staff also worked with employers to ensure employees understood and were following required safety measures.
- SE staff have periodically responded to individual employer requests for them to help SE Program participants better accept new workplace rules and responsibilities.
- SE staff have continued to assist program participants with updating their resumes, with completing applications, and with scheduling interviews. Interviewing during this time has been mostly virtual, which has required SE staff to assist individuals with accessing the virtual interview and teach them about the specifics of a virtual interview. One individual who worked part-time, primarily at our community-based group employment sites, asked for our help with being hired directly by a local employer. He is now working full-time as an employee of ShurTech Brands through The Reserve Network.
- A number of SE Program participants that were laid off due to COVID-19 were helped to secure other employment. One individual who was laid off obtained a new job at Walmart and then was called back to his other job resulting in him now successfully working two jobs!



**Sheila Charlton** at Giant Eagle



**Scott Stephanchick** at Tyson Foods



**Your mental health is just as important as your physical health.**

**COVID CareLine:**  
**1-800-720-9616**

Help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week

#IN THIS TOGETHER  
**Ohio**

## 'Connecting for Kids' Provides Virtual 'Back to School' Programming for Families

Families struggling with concerns about 'back to school' time this fall can get some helpful information from virtual programming being presented by **Connecting for Kids**.



**Connecting for Kids**

*You're not alone*

**Wednesday, Aug. 19 / 7-8 p.m.** — Are you looking for social skills groups, therapists, programs and other activities for your child this fall? Do you want to provide academic, developmental or social skills enrichment opportunities to help curb the regression you have seen during the pandemic? **Join Connecting for Kids' family resource specialists as they lead a group discussion sharing ideas and brainstorming accessible options for your child this fall.** You'll be able to connect with other families and also have the opportunity to meet one on one with a family resource specialist -- virtually -- to find specific resources that are available and a good fit for your family.

All programming at Connecting For Kids is provided at no cost to families and is funded by grants, fundraising and donations from the community, according to the organization's information.

To register for virtual programming, visit <https://connectingforkids.org/Register-adult>

For more information, visit [www.connectingforkids.org](http://www.connectingforkids.org) or call 440-570-5908.

Email: [info@connectingforkids.org](mailto:info@connectingforkids.org)

**OTHER RESOURCES TO HELP . . .** *Connecting for Kids also offers a variety of recommended websites and downloads to explain COVID-19 to children. The resources are organized in four categories: For Children, Expert Advice, Social Stories and Behavioral Support. To access these resources, log on to:*

[https://connectingforkids.org/explain\\_covid-19](https://connectingforkids.org/explain_covid-19)

### BOARD ROOM BRIEFING

**The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 6:30 p.m. on July 13, 2020:**

Superintendent Amber Fisher and Director of Educational Services Dann Swift provided an update regarding the 2020/2021 school year. Murray Ridge School is providing educational service options to parents/guardians; the first option is an entirely remote learning program, and the second option is for a student to receive on-site educational services (on either Monday and Tuesday or Thursday and Friday). Classroom Aides will double-up during on-site instruction to help ensure social distancing, and a Classroom Aide will ride each school bus during the COVID-19 epidemic to assist bus monitors with those students being transported. Some of the parents who have elected on-site education have opted to drive their students to and from school. There will be only one (mid-day) preschool option, instead of the traditional a.m. and p.m. session. Preschoolers will be transported separately from other students. Agency calendars for 2020/2021 were approved by the Board. Dr. Fisher explained anticipated revenues and variable expenses of the Agency's Preschool Program for the 2019/2020 school year, and provided a historical overview of subsidies for Murray Ridge Preschool Program participants with special needs; the Board voted unanimously on a rate structure for school districts that place students in the Murray Ridge Preschool Program for the 2020/2021 school year. Due to the COVID-19 epidemic, the Board voted unanimously that 'typically developing peers' will not be admitted to the 2020/2021 Murray Ridge Preschool Program. Dr. Fisher notified the Board that Jeff Davis, Director of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), has sent a letter to every county board that continues to provide Adult Day Services through the Medicaid Waiver program, requiring that plans for a proportional reduction to the number served be submitted to DODD every six months until spring of 2024. It was announced that the October 2020 Agency Inservice has been cancelled due to COVID-19.

Lorain County Board of  
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center  
1091 Infirmary Road  
Elyria, OH 44035

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Elyria, OH 44035



## News You Can Use

### City of Elyria Fresh Produce Distribution

We Care Elyria will be distributing fresh produce to those in need at Elyria City Hall, 131 Court St. from 1-6 p.m. on **Thursday, August 27**. Free masks for residents will also be available at that event. For more information, check out the City of Elyria's Facebook page.

