



MurrayRidgeCenter  
HELPING PEOPLE...FOR A LIFETIME

# The Murray Ridge Courier

February 2018

## Yoga and Meditation Bring Calm to Murray Ridge School

Since beginning her career at Murray Ridge Center in the fall of 2016, teacher Samantha Shaw has taken cues from her class to design lessons that will help them grow and learn in their unique ways. When her students began demonstrating the need for emotional regulation, Samantha turned to something that had worked for her in the past: yoga and meditation.

When working in a previous teaching position at a high school, Samantha enlisted the help of a certified yoga instructor, Laura Srsa, to lead her class in a weekly yoga and meditation class. Once she started at Murray Ridge, she began using meditation as a way for the students and staff to enter a calm environment where they could bond emotionally with each other and reflect on their unique strengths and gifts.



Keegan Manges relaxes after completing cobra pose. He uses candles and chime balls to start his meditation after completing yoga poses.

Based on the success of the meditation course, Samantha once again enlisted the help of Laura Srsa, who visited the school in November 2017 and introduced her class to

yoga. Because of her schedule, Laura was unable to attend weekly classes, so Samantha took over and began teaching her class based on the tools and structure she had learned throughout her years of practice.

The classes took off! In fact, they were so successful that Samantha opened them up to the rest of the Murray Ridge School primary classes, and many students and staff are now participating in the combination yoga/meditation classes on a weekly basis.

"Students feel safe discussing their emotions and are better able to communicate appropriately to peers," Samantha said. "Staff are able to use these tools as well in order to help maintain peace and kindness in the classroom."

In one instance, a student's mom said her child actually directed her to 'take a deep breath in and get control' when she was overwhelmed!"



Teacher Samantha Shaw uses the Hoberman sphere to provide a visual aide for students when practicing deep breathing exercises. The sphere symbolizes the chest expanding as students inhale.

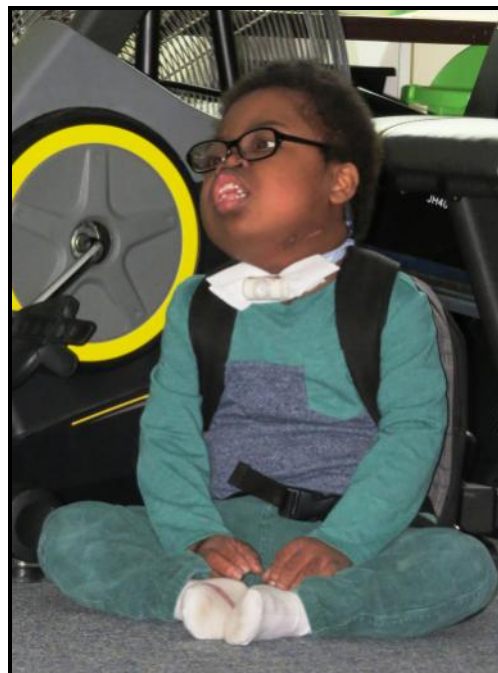


Diane Davis uses her core strength and balance to stretch in a downward dog pose.

*Continued on page 2*

All of the materials Samantha has received for her yoga/meditation class has come from Donor's Choose funding; LED color changing candles, chimes, finger drums, and quartz singing bowls are just some of the meditation tools that help students during the classes. Samantha hopes to eventually add new yoga mats and aromatherapy eye pillows for deeper relaxation.

Samantha could not be happier with how yoga and meditation have affected the students. "They demonstrate a kindness and bond that I have not observed prior to implementing this class," she said. "The staff demonstrates a sense of calm that allows us to provide the most gentle and compassionate approach possible."



Top, left, Aiden Harper sits in butterfly pose with feet bottoms together. Students are encouraged to "flap their wings" and loosen their hips and stretch their legs.

Below, left, Teacher Samantha Shaw offers orange blossom water to Physical Therapist Becky Farmer and student Elijah Feliciano during International Day at school to celebrate the Moroccan tradition of using the water to signify a coming together with friends. Becky and Elijah use the orange blossom water to cleanse their hands and practice deep breathing using natural oils and scents.



Below, right, staff (l-r) Miguel, Sharon, Shelly, Christie and students (l-r) Diane Davis, Owen Richardson, Nathan Reynolds, Elijah Feliciano, and Aiden Harper are starting yoga class with an active gross motor exercise using the parachute.

## Murray Ridge Center Far Exceeded its '50 Acts of Giving Back' Goal in 2017

At the beginning of 2017, to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary, Murray Ridge set out to complete at least "Fifty Acts of Giving Back" to the community that has supported its provision of lifelong services to thousands of local residents with developmental disabilities. This initiative, whereby members of the Murray Ridge Family would 'give back' through at least fifty acts of helping to meet needs in Lorain County, was wildly successful.

By the end of last year, 213 Acts of Giving Back had been completed, with more than 180 program participants volunteering their time at more than 40 locations in Lorain County throughout the year. While many of those individuals volunteered dozens of times, Rosa Ortiz (right), who attends the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center, led the effort with 31 separate volunteer acts!

Thank you to all who contributed to the Fifty Acts of Giving Back!



Rosa Ortiz (above), who led Murray Ridge Center with most volunteer acts, picks up trash and debris at East Park in Elyria, where the Murray Ridge Center Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center's Young at Heart Senior Program participants adopted a trail.

## MRC Says Goodbye to Longtime Board President Michelle Hunt



Murray Ridge Center said goodbye to Board President Michelle Hunt when her term on the Board officially ended at the monthly meeting on January 29. Hunt, who has served on the Board since September 21, 2006, was given a plaque to commemorate her time on the Board, presented by Superintendent Amber Fisher (left).

Throughout her time on the Board, she went above and beyond her duties as Board President to immerse herself in the Murray Ridge community by continuously fighting for the rights of those it serves and taking active roles in the many activities and events for Murray Ridge staff and consumers. Last year, Michelle coordinated our 50th anniversary celebration, an enormous undertaking. Also in 2017, Murray Ridge honored Michelle with the 2017 Volunteer of the Year Award.

Michelle will continue to work enthusiastically with cheerleaders who have developmental disabilities and participate as a member of the Murray Ridge Support Group.

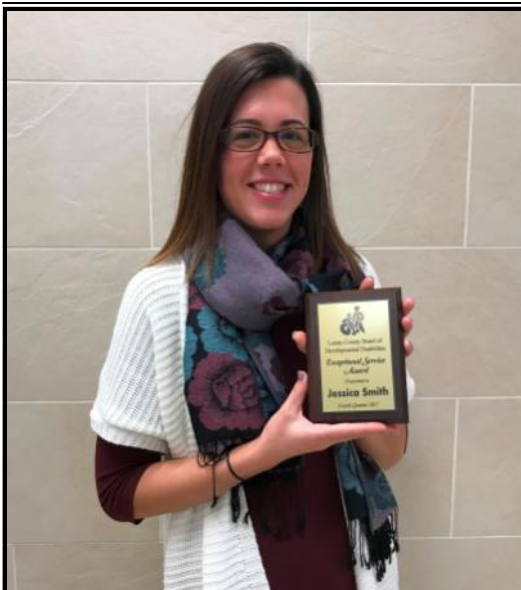
## Keepin' it Kind at Murray Ridge School

Murray Ridge School was awarded the honor of Kind School from Donorschoose.org! The school is only one of 61 schools across the country to receive the honor. Teacher Cheryl Swierz was approached by the organization asking if she would be a Kindness Challenge Captain for the school; she then had to get 50% participation from staff. Cheryl ended up getting 75% participation from staff, and 100% participation from students! Each staff member who participated had to teach and review four lessons provided by Donors Choose. The school will be participating in another challenge beginning at the end of February. Congratulations, Murray Ridge School!



Gus McKee, Lorenzo Cooke, and Annessa Pugh pose with the Kind School plaque.

## Exceptional Service at Murray Ridge Center



Jessica Smith (left), was presented with the Exceptional Service Award—4th Quarter 2017, at a Murray Ridge Center Service and Support Administration staff meeting on January 31st.

In the nomination letter submitted by the McDermott family, whose family member Hanna receives services through Murray Ridge, Mira McDermott wrote "Our family has been appreciative of her compassion and understanding during this highly stressful time. She is never too busy to answer a question or to educate us on the process...she is a benefit to Murray Ridge Center."

Thank you, Jessica, for your exceptional service!

# Ladies and Gentlemen... Our Murray Ridge Raiders Basketball Teams!



## Team 1

Back row: Coach Russ Moye, Steve Locurto, Logan Yatson, DJ Overall, Ryan Eliason, Asst. Coach Tyler Robinson. Front row: Raul Torres, Jon Torres, Raymond Behner, Jeff Torres.

## Team 2

Back row: Coach Wes Partin, General Hodge, Tim Dammeyer, Dan Montgomery, Tony Harris, Coach Leroy Keen. Front row: Tom Dammeyer, Isaiah Wicks, Hector Lozano, Matt Anthony, Ryan Brown.



## Team 3

Back row: Coach Brian Chutes, Charles Johnson, Bill Lacko, Kevin Long, Mark Oliveras. Middle row: Noah Griffiths, Angel Rivera, Marco Govich, Robert Assanakis, Eric Bryner, Victor Elder, Coach Jeff Colatruglio. Front row: James Papenfuss, Sean Ware.

## Lady Raiders

Back row: Coach Jim Ward, Alicia Lawrence, Jennifer Moccabee, Chelsea Jenkins, Maria Pincura, Shari Reitenbach, Katie Bryant, Brittany Botson, Maria Poling, Coach Shannon Gains. Front row: Steph Budweg, Diana Clement, Megan Craig, Elena Reinhold, Sarah Ward, Jennifer Hunsucker, Katie Mihalic (not pictured).



## Skills Team

**Catch your favorite team at one of the remaining season games...**

2/12/18	Home	6:30	2	Stark
2/13/18	Home	5:00	3	Medina
2/13/18	Home	6:30	2	Medina
2/14/18	Home	6:00	Ladies vs Team 3	Ladies & Team 3
2/15/18	Home	6:00	1 & 2	Team 1 & 2
2/22/18	Visitor	5:00	1	Geauga
2/22/18	Visitor	5:00	3	Geauga
2/27/18	Home	6:00	All Teams	Fan Night

## or March 1-4 at the Ohio Special Olympics North Section Basketball Tournament at Lorain County Community College

Catch all of our Raiders Teams at the 23rd annual Ohio Special Olympics North Section Basketball Tournament set to be played on March 1st-4th at the campus of Lorain County Community College in Elyria, Ohio. This annual event will bring more than 1,100 athletes with developmental disabilities together for a weekend of competition and camaraderie. Details on game times will be available on our Murray Ridge Facebook page.

## Important Weather-Related Announcements

Murray Ridge program closing information will be available on TV station Fox 8, on the Fox 8 website fox8.com, on radio stations WEOL 930 AM and WOBL 1320 AM, and on Murray Ridge Center's Facebook page. **There will be two separate listings for Murray Ridge Center:**

- **Murray Ridge—Adult Activities Centers**
- **Murray Ridge School**

There has been a change to how the information for our Adult Activities Centers is displayed by Fox 8 on its website and on television.

On fox8.com, the information is now under the 'Daycare' tab in the School Closings section.

On Channel 8, information about the status of our Adult Activities Centers will now scroll beneath the School Closings information at the very bottom of the television screen under 'Daycare', from left to right. These listings are in alphabetical order by county; however, no county names will be listed due to the limitations of Fox 8's computer systems. Therefore, you must continue to monitor that 'Daycare' listing, as you will have no indication which county is being listed at any given time.

You can also sign up to receive text alerts on Murray Ridge School and Adult Activities Centers closings. To do so, click the Closing Text Alerts under the School Closings section of the Fox 8 website.

Parents and caregivers of school students should disregard the "Murray Ridge—Adult Activities Centers" listing, and follow only the listing for "Murray Ridge School." Conversely, adult consumers who attend our Opportunity/Vocational Centers and their parents/caregivers should disregard the "Murray Ridge School" listing, and follow only the listing for "Murray Ridge—Adult Activities Centers."

If "Open—No Transportation" follows the announcement for "Murray Ridge—Adult Activities Centers," parents/caregivers are welcome to transport adult consumers to their day service sites. Regular programming will be provided. Consumers should be dropped off no earlier than 8:30 a.m. and must be picked up by 3:45 p.m.

In the event of bad weather, the decision to transport individuals to Murray Ridge Center will be based on the ability of our buses to travel safely on city and county roads. Regardless of whether or not transportation is available through Murray Ridge Center, if our Opportunity/Vocational Centers are open, but there is an individual concern about the weather, adult consumers should feel free to stay home. Likewise, parents/caregivers of Murray Ridge School students who have individual concerns regarding the weather should feel free to keep their child at home, even if school is in session.

Please be aware that transportation to enclave sites is generally available even if transportation to the Opportunity/Vocational Centers is cancelled. Murray Ridge Center does not broadcast the status of enclave transportation on the television or radio. Consumers should assume that enclave transportation will be available unless they receive a phone call from a member of our Supported Employment Department.

First Student bus company can be reached at 288-2222.



## **Murray Ridge Support Group Annual Spaghetti Dinner**

- Saturday, April 28 from 3:00-6:30 p.m.
- AmVets Post 55, 530 Abbe Road in Sheffield Lake
- Sponsored by the Murray Ridge Support Group

This Italian feast, which includes spaghetti with meatballs, fresh bread, salad, desserts, and beverages, is being generously donated by the AmVets Post 55. Take-outs are available! Activities will include a gift basket auction and a 50/50 raffle. Proceeds will go toward programs and services for Lorain County citizens impacted by developmental disabilities.

Tickets are \$8 for persons 6 years of age and up, and free for kids 5 and under. Sponsorships are available. For more information, please contact Joaquin Page at 440-453-2576.

## **Finding Funds Grant Workshop**

Learn the keys to **finding funds** for your child with special healthcare needs!

Tammy Eisenreich, Parent Partner at Lucas Co.DD, will share info on:

- \*How to find grants
  - \*How to apply for grants
  - \*Tips & Suggestions that have WORKED!
- Come with your questions!

**Wednesday, March 7, 2018**

**Two Sessions:**

**4:00 - 5:30**

**6:30 - 8:00**

**Murray Ridge School  
9750 Murray Ridge Rd. Elyria, OH 44035**

Open to parents, caregivers and professionals wanting to obtain more knowledge about funding for families for children ages 0-22!

Sponsored by Murray Ridge Center

RSVP to [EI@murrayridgecenter.org](mailto:EI@murrayridgecenter.org), The Facebook Event page or (440)-284-3655

Questions? Please contact:

Heather Knoble or Stacie Starr at (440) 329-3760  
or Tammy Eisenreich at (567)-377-5710



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### **BOARD ROOM BRIEFING**

**The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 6:30 p.m. on January 29:**

At the annual Organizational Meeting, held immediately prior to the regular meeting of the Board and Ethics Council, Board President Michelle Hunt announced the reappointment of Board members Kurt Koepf and Dan White; both had taken the Oath of Office in January, 2018. President Hunt also stepped down from her position, as her term with the Board has ended after 12 years. The Board elected the following officers for 2018: Kurt Koepf, President, Keith Boey, Vice-President, and Bob Gajdos, Secretary; newly elected President Koepf then made Board committee appointments for the year. The regular Board meeting began with a special recognition of out-going Board President Michelle Hunt, who served three consecutive terms from 2006-2018. The Board approved a resolution to provide educational services to children ages 6-21 in the 2018/2019 school year, and discussed the Murray Ridge School summer camp program for 2018. Director of Human Resources, Faira Corbett, reported on accomplishments related to the Agency's 2017 Risk Management Plan, and discussed the goals that have been established by the Risk Management Committee for 2018. Superintendent Fisher reported on 2018 activities, and the 2018 Board calendar was established.

Lorain County Board of  
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center  
1091 Infirmary Road  
Elyria, OH 44035

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## February 2018

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			

### Activities & Events

- 2/14 - LCBDD Finance Committee meeting , 12:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria
- 2/14 - Murray Ridge Support Group Meeting, 4:15 p.m., EOVC, 1095 Infirmary Road, Elyria
- 2/16 - Murray Ridge Support Group Dance, 7-9 pm, Murray Ridge School, 9750 Murray Ridge Road, Elyria
- 2/19 - **Agency closed for President's Day holiday**
- 2/21 - Family Support Parent Committee meeting, 6:00 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria
- 2/26 - Regular Meeting of the Board and Ethics Council, 6:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria