



MurrayRidgeCenter
HELPING PEOPLE...FOR A LIFETIME

The Murray Ridge Courier

January 2020

A Message From The Superintendent



Supt. Amber Fisher

As we ring in a new year ... and a new decade ... we at Murray Ridge remain grateful for your support, and energized to tackle new challenges and work strategically to enhance opportunities for those we serve.

2020 will bring a significant number of new Medicaid waiver enrollments (with 65 new enrollments approved for the year), expanded availability of funds through our Family Support Services Program (see the December 2019 edition of the Courier), and numerous programmatic endeavors. Some areas of concentration in the year ahead will include: development of self-advocacy skills of local citizens with developmental disabilities, and more formal measurement of the effectiveness of associated supports; exploration and integration into person-centered plans of technologies that promote independence and quality of life; pursuit of additional accessible options for transportation to community destinations; and recruitment of a variety of service providers capable of addressing the diverse needs and desires of Lorain County residents with developmental disabilities.

Additionally, we plan to work collaboratively with other organizations on an initiative to promote access of infants and toddlers with developmental delays to formal intervention at the critically important ages of 0-3; and will continue to directly serve hundreds of children and families through our Early Intervention Program. Murray Ridge School, where enrollment in the School Age Program has grown steadily during the last decade, will remain an option for local students with significant disabilities, and an extraordinary

community resource. Meanwhile, support of the transition of Lorain County students with developmental disabilities into rewarding vocational activities will be a focus of our Service & Support Administration (SSA) Department.

In 2019, continuing education as a post-secondary option for people with intellectual disabilities in Lorain County was supported through the establishment of a new program, 'Echoing U,' which is operated by Echoing Hills Inc. on the campus of Lorain County Community College; this program will continue into the future. We will continue to focus on expanding community-based employment of, and facilitating community participation by eligible adults. At our Opportunity & Vocational Centers (OVCs), we will continue to facilitate service clubs, and support 'acts of giving back' by those we serve; in 2019, 245 such acts were performed by 193 participants at the Murray Ridge OVCs. Hats off to local citizens with developmental disabilities for so enthusiastically helping others in need within our community!

It is a pleasure and a privilege to serve such wonderful individuals, and to work with the incredible staff and partners of Murray Ridge. We deeply appreciate, also, the many providers and local businesses that work with and employ those we serve. Happy new year to all of you, and thank you for all you do to support the mission of Murray Ridge Center!

Amber Fisher
Superintendent

Holiday Happenings at Murray Ridge!



'A Charlie Brown Christmas' was a popular theme over the holidays at Murray Ridge! **Pictured above left**, are scenes from the school's Intermediate Wing Christmas play. **Pictured above right**, are Sharon's Signers -- a sign language choir for people with disabilities which recently performed A Charlie Brown Christmas-themed show at Murray Ridge Center's Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center, with several Murray Ridge performers taking part.



Above right: Rachael Oser's senior class and staff recently took a field trip to Big Lots to buy items to donate to the Blessing House and Animal Protective League. The class has been talking about the importance of giving to others. The field trip also allowed the class to work on communication, social and money skills. The students ended the shopping trip with lunch at Pizza Hut.



Left, top and below: Students from Murray Ridge School who have worked this semester with Sleep in Heavenly Peace (SIHP), an organization that builds and delivers beds to children in need, were recently treated to lunch by Roger Dorsey, the founder of the Lorain County Chapter of SIHP. The students enjoyed a catered lunch from Bob Evans. The students also each got to pick out a stuffed animal as a gift.

MORE Holiday Happenings . . .



The Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center (EOVC) recently held a holiday decorating contest featuring many festive and creative themes.

The winner of the contest was Area B-2, which featured a full nativity scene (pictured right), including a real miniature horse!

Another area, C-3, was decorated in a 'Christmas Around the World' theme. Pictured left are (l-r) Adult Program Aides **Nicole Skerik** and **Aaron Simmons**, along with one of the contest judges, Administrative Assistant **Michelle Trupo**.



Left: One of the many Christmas 'traditions' at Murray Ridge Center is when 'Santa' **Jesse Frisch**, a program participant at the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center, visits various agency facilities to collect donations for the Make-a-Wish Foundation. One of Santa's stops was to visit **Sherry Hardin** and **Carol Greive** in the Payroll department at the Administration Building.



Above: The Murray Ridge Choraleers had a great time spreading holiday joy in the community with performances for eight different area groups. Pictured (front row, l-r) are: **Tom Altman**, **Tim Quisenberry**, **Steve Mendak**, **Alyssa DeAngelis**, and **Kista Atkins**. Back row (l-r) are: **James Wilson**, **John Hanshumaker**, **Shasta Knarr**, and **Carol Anderson**.



Above left and center: North Pointe Ballet once again visited Murray Ridge School to work with students and perform selections from 'The Nutcracker.' **Above right:** Speech Therapist **Becky Farmer** was the winner of an 'Ugliest Christmas Outfit' Contest at Murray Ridge School. Shown congratulating Becky on her 'win' is teacher **Kristin Dickerhoff**.

Weather-Related Announcements Reminder

Murray Ridge program closing information will be available on **TV station Fox 8**, on the **Fox 8 website (fox8.com)**, and on **radio stations WEOL 930 AM** and **WOBL 1320 AM**, as it has in the past.

There will be two separate listings for Murray Ridge Center:

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

REMINDER: In 2018, there was a change made as 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 will be under the 'Daycare' tab in the School Closings section.
- **On Channel 8**, information about the status of our Adult Activities Centers will now scroll from left to right beneath the School Closings information at the very bottom of the television screen under 'Daycare.' 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, if you choose to use the TV to determine the status of the Adult Centers, you must continue to monitor that 'Daycare' listing until it has run a complete cycle.

NOTE: You can also sign up with Fox 8 to receive text alerts on Murray Ridge School and Adult Activities Centers closings. To do so, click on 'Closing Text Alerts' in 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.



Consumer Profile: Meet Dorothy Morrison



'Social butterfly' Dorothy Morrison.

Dorothy is a social butterfly! She is a great conversationalist and is guaranteed to make you laugh! She has a personality like Sophia Petrillo from "The Golden Girls." She is funny, kind, and helpful; and loves giving back to her community.

Dorothy is supported by her Murray Ridge Center Service and Support Administrator, Michalena McCann. Michalena assists Dorothy with the development of her Individual Service Plan (ISP) that identifies the services and supports that help Dorothy live her best life. Michalena also monitors her services and helps to keep her plan up-to-date as Dorothy's life aspirations change. In 2017 Dorothy was awarded an 'ICF (Intermediate Care Facility) downsize' I.O. (Individual Options) Waiver which helped her move

from an ICF to a small group setting. Michalena assisted Dorothy throughout the entire transition process and with finding her new home.

Dorothy lives in a small group setting in Elyria with two housemates.

She receives supports from ResCare, Inc. ResCare is an agency that supports people to perform life tasks like personal care, cleaning, cooking, scheduling medical appointments and taking medications.



Dorothy is active in the Lucy Idol Center day program.

When Dorothy is at home she loves to relax by reading the Bible and doing arts & crafts. She enjoys helping out around the house by keeping her room clean and doing anything else that needs done. She also enjoys helping out in the kitchen including making fruit salad and macaroni salad! When it comes to fashion, Dorothy likes to look good by having the latest styles and being sure her accessories match her outfit! Dorothy enjoys making people cards to help celebrate their special life events. Dorothy likes to go to local events in her neighborhood and going to new places.



Dorothy enjoys watching TV.

During the week, Dorothy attends the Lucy Idol Center in Vermilion. In 2019 the Lucy Idol Center celebrated

65 years of serving those with diverse challenges and disabilities in Lorain and Erie Counties. The Lucy Idol Center creates "opportunities for people with diverse challenges to enhance their personal growth, develop relationships and have life experiences that they choose to promote positive mental and physical health." When Dorothy arrives at her day program, she is in charge of taking attendance. She lets staff know who is there and who is not there each day. Dorothy really enjoys doing this! Dorothy loves doing anything that involves coloring and arts & crafts. She also enjoys doing crossword puzzles. Dorothy likes watching her friends play board games and will join in if she chooses. Dorothy loves going out into her community while attending Lucy Idol. This includes enjoying Cedar Point, Music in the Park, and Jamie's Flea Market; playing BINGO at nursing homes; and volunteering at a local church. When volunteering, she stuffs backpacks for kids, helps fold and hang clothes, and distributes food to people in need.



Taking attendance is one of Dorothy's responsibilities at Lucy Idol.

Dorothy is also active in the Next Direction Program through the Lucy Idol Center, which offers more opportunities to take part in community events and activities. Dorothy loves when she goes with her friends and staff for ladies' night which includes getting her nails and hair done! She adores being pampered! She also loves going out to eat!



Dorothy enjoys a shopping trip.

Dorothy is living her life to the fullest, and now doing some things that she never got to do before! She is making her own choices and doing what makes her happy!

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

Navigating Insurance & Medical Necessity



January 23, 2020 / 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Murray Ridge SSA Office
9740 Murray Ridge Road / Elyria, Ohio 44035



Join **Marla Root**, the Founder of Ohio Autism Coalition, as she explains how to navigate private and public insurance benefits to meet the needs of individuals with autism!

Participants will be able to:

- Explain the different types of health insurance plans in Ohio and which offer an autism treatment benefit.
- Define details from the Medicaid ABA benefit.
- List the barriers that still exist to access ABA, speech and OT for individuals with autism.
- Learn how to access ABA, speech and OT for individuals with autism.
- Define the Coalition's efforts to build service capacity and assure access to prescribed treatments.

*** TO REGISTER, CALL (440) 324-2366 BY JANUARY 21 ***

Marla Root is the Founder of the Ohio Autism Insurance Coalition. The Coalition supports families, providers, state agencies and health care systems in building service capacity and assuring access to prescribed treatments such as behavior analytic treatments, and speech and occupational therapies. Marla's experience as an administrator in mental health, DD services, and program development led to her 2010 Advocate of the Year award by The Governor's Council for People with Disabilities, and for many years she was the Public Policy Chair for the Autism Society of Ohio. Marla is the proud parent of Eli, age 22, with severe ASD/ID.



Gajdos Receives Volunteer of the Year Award

Congratulations to Murray Ridge Board President **Bob Gajdos** (pictured left, with Superintendent **Amber Fisher**) for receiving this year's Marilyn Hupfer 'Volunteer of the Year' Award. Bob has spent countless hours on the Murray Ridge board working on behalf of Lorain County residents with developmental disabilities. He is also the father of sons with developmental disabilities and has entertained residents of our Meister Road Home over the holidays by singing and playing the guitar. Thank you Bob for your tireless efforts on behalf of Murray Ridge and the individuals we serve!

Exceptional Service Award Nominations Sought

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 **Chris Vasco**, Community Education/Volunteer Director.

Please 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. If you have any questions, contact Chris at (440) 329-3734 or cvasco@murrayridgecenter.org

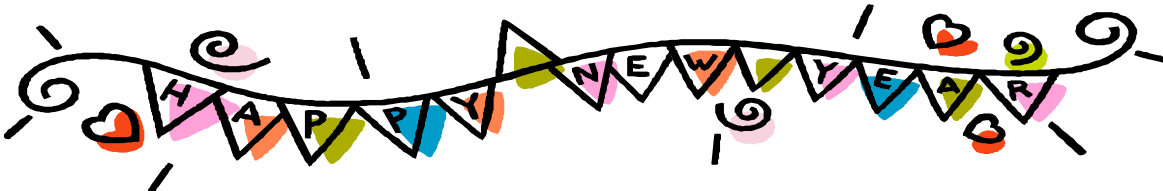
January 2020

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Activities & Events

- 1/1 - Agency/School closed for New Year's holiday.
- 1/15 - LCBDD Finance Committee meeting, 12:30 p.m. Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria
- 1/20 - Agency closed for Martin Luther King Jr. holiday
- 1/23 - Autism Spectrum Disorder: Navigating Insurance & Medical Necessity program, 6-8 p.m., Service and Support Administration (SSA) Office, 9740 Murray Ridge Rd., Elyria
- 1/27 - Organizational and Regular Meeting of the Board and Ethics Council, 6:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road in Elyria



BOARD ROOM BRIEFING

The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 6:30 p.m. on December 16, 2019:

Superintendent Fisher and Director of Business Greg Westgate presented the 2020 employee health insurance rates under the County Health Plan, as well as an historical overview of health insurance costs. Board member Beverly Gedid reported on the Public Relations Committee meeting; a major project for 2020 will be enhancement of the Agency website. Board Member Dan White announced that a nominee had been selected for the next Exceptional Service Board Award, which will be presented at an upcoming staff meeting. The Board reviewed the cost ceilings for Supported Living services, and unanimously approved revisions to the Supported Living Program policy. The Board unanimously approved an annual agreement with the Murray Ridge Production Center. Board President Robert (Bob) Gajdos was presented with the 2019 Volunteer of the Year Award; his extraordinary support of the mission, consumers and staff of Murray Ridge Center are deeply appreciated.

Lorain County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center
1091 Infirmary Road
Elyria, OH 44035

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Work at the Ridge!

Check out our website,
murrayridgecenter.org to see
our open positions!



News You Can Use

Connecting for Kids 2020 Winter Programs

Registration is now open for all the Connecting for Kids 2020 Winter programs. Among the winter program highlights is:

Speaker Series

How to Meet the Needs of Typical Siblings,
Tuesday, January 21, 6:30 p.m. / Westlake
Porter Library.

Connecting for Kids is an organization that provides education and support to families who have concerns about their child. For more information go to connectingforkids.org, email info@connectingforkids.org, or call/text (440) 570-5908.

