



MurrayRidgeCenter
HELPING PEOPLE...FOR A LIFETIME

The Murray Ridge Courier

October 2020

National Disability Employment Awareness Month Observed



James Peters

For many years, **James Peters** has received assistance from the Murray Ridge Supported Employment Department with honing skills on supervised work crews; securing employment by local businesses; and meeting the expectations of the businesses that have hired him through the use of Murray Ridge job coaching, follow-along services, and transportation assistance. James began attending the Adult Day Program at the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center (EOVC) in 2001. He has excelled in his job training at our Adult Day Center, and in Murray Ridge-supervised community-based group work sites, primarily performing janitorial services. Among the many sites at which he has worked are the Murray Ridge Service and Support Administration (SSA) Building, Splash Zone, Avon and Sheffield Municipal Buildings, Lorain County Jail, Lorain Port Authority, First Church in Oberlin, Traq Performance, Cuyahoga Vending, Hickman and Lowder, Lake Erie Crushers, Amherst Township Hall, Amherst Cinema, Oberlin ODOT, and Green Impressions. James also was employed by Oberlin College last year as a dining area attendant and, since the COVID shutdown, he received assistance from our Supported Employment Department to become employed by the Elyria Pizza Hut. He has been doing so well at Pizza Hut that he was offered an additional day to work! In October he was also scheduled to begin participating through Murray Ridge on a work crew at AVI Foodsystems at Oberlin College. When asked about his jobs, James says he loves working! Thank you James for being a productive and valued member of Lorain County's workforce.

Murray Ridge Center is once again pleased to participate in NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH — an annual awareness campaign that takes place each October. We're proud to salute the Lorain County citizens with developmental disabilities who are part of the local workforce, and the local businesses that provide jobs for these individuals. Through our Supported Employment Program, Murray Ridge Center continues to focus on finding and placing individuals in positions where they can grow and excel in today's competitive job market. Anyone interested in employing someone with a developmental disability can call our Supported Employment Program at (440) 324-4993.

Dana Phillips began working at Wesleyan Village in Elyria as a unit helper in September 2008. In December 2019 she was transferred to the activity department as an activity aide. She loves her job, as her new position allows her to interact in a direct care capacity with the residents. When family supports are not available, she uses Uber to get to and from work independently. Dana is a valued team member at Wesleyan Village. Her positive attitude, pleasant demeanor and personal appearance on the job are noticed by all she comes in contact with. She is agreeable to working extended shifts or extra shifts when needed. In fact, earlier this year she received a small bonus (a \$10 Giant Eagle gift card) from the Wesleyan Village Human Resources Department to acknowledge her team spirit . . . and her direct supervisor, Barb Hopkins, also bought her lunch. Dana is a 2008 Elyria High school graduate and she also attended the Lorain County JVS Job Training Program. She lives at home in Elyria with her mother Mable Phillips.



Dana Phillips



KEEP CALM **and Avoid** Coronavirus Scams

Here are **5 things** you can do to avoid a Coronavirus scam:



Ignore offers for vaccinations and home test kits.

Scammers are selling products to treat or prevent COVID-19 without proof that they work.



Hang up on robocalls.

Scammers use illegal sales call to get your money and your personal information.



Watch out for phishing emails and text messages.

Don't click on links in emails or texts you didn't expect.



Research before you donate.

Don't let anyone rush you into making a donation. Get tips on donating wisely at [ftc.gov/charity](https://www.ftc.gov/charity).



Stay in the know.

Go to [ftc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.ftc.gov/coronavirus) for the latest information on scams. Sign up to get FTC's alerts at [ftc.gov/subscribe](https://www.ftc.gov/subscribe).

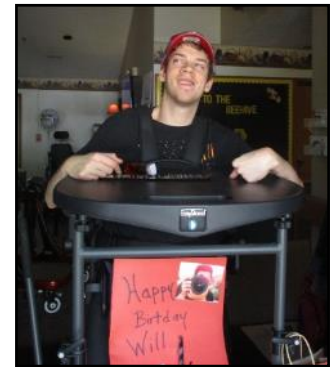


Federal Trade Commission

If you see a scam, report it to
[ftc.gov/complaint](https://www.ftc.gov/complaint)

LOVC Provides Consumers with Special Birthday Surprises

Lorain Opportunity Vocational Center (LOVC) staff have been surprising some of our Adult Program Participants on their birthdays. Staff have been dropping off hand-made birthday cards and other goodies. The cards are decorated with the individuals' likes and are signed by all LOVC staff. The birthday cards and visits let our consumers know that we are thinking of them. These birthday celebrations help to lift everyone's spirits.



Top left: **Moses Velez**
 Top right: Some of the festive birthday cards.
 Above left: **Randy Yeary** and his mom, **Treva**
 Above center: Staff member **Sheila Amerla**
 Above right: **Will Foster**
 Left: **Randy Yeary** (center) with staff members **Sheila Amerla** and **Mary Wright**
 Below left: **Erika Kaminski** and staff member **Sheila Amerla**
 Below right: **Teauna McFadden** and her mom, **Georgia**



Annual Transportation Safety Instruction

Murray Ridge Center wants you to be safe when travelling. These are guidelines that students, eligible adults, and their caregivers should be aware of when utilizing transportation services.

WAITING FOR A BUS

- Wait for the bus at least 10 feet from the road.
- Dress properly - winter clothing, hats, mittens, and boots will help keep you warm in the winter.
- Watch for the bus' red lights.
- Wait until the bus has stopped and door opens before stepping into the roadway.
- Wait for the driver to signal to cross. Cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus.
- Use the handrail when stepping onto the bus.
- If you use a wheelchair, it must be equipped with a functioning seat belt. The wheels should lock as well.
- Store all belongings in a backpack so nothing gets dropped.

BUS SEAT SAFETY RULES

- Follow all of the driver's instructions.
- Speak softly so the driver will not be distracted. At railroad crossings, be quiet.
- Stay seated until your stop and keep the aisle clear.
- Never put head, arms, or hands out of the window.
- Never do anything to distract the driver.
- Keep aisles clear and free of tripping hazards.
- Never throw things on the bus or out the windows.
- Tell the driver or monitor if you are being bullied.
- If there is an emergency, listen to the driver and follow instructions.
- Do not eat on the bus, as this could present a choking hazard.

GETTING OFF THE BUS AT HOME

- If you have to cross the street in front of the bus, walk at least ten feet ahead of the bus along the side of the road, until you can turn around and see the driver.
- Make sure that the driver can see you.
- Wait for the signal from the driver before beginning to cross.
- When the driver signals, walk across the road, keeping an eye out for sudden traffic changes.
- Do not cross the center line of the road until the driver has signaled that it is safe for you to begin walking.
- Stay away from the bus' rear wheels at all times. If you drop something near the bus, leave it. If you leave something on the bus, never return to get it. The driver may not see you come back and start to move the bus. If you drop something near the bus, tell the bus driver before you pick it up so he/she knows where you are.

OTHER TRAVEL GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

- When you enter or leave a vehicle, watch for slippery or uneven pavement and other hazards that could cause you to fall.
- Have your LCT ID, bus fare, ticket, or pass ready so you don't lose your balance while looking for it.
- Do not carry too many packages – always leave a free hand to grab a railing.
- Allow extra time to cross streets, especially in bad weather.
- If it's dark outside, wear light-colored or reflective clothing.
- Do not talk to strangers on transit. If you are being bothered by someone, tell the driver immediately.
- If you use a stop assistance card, remember to show it to the driver as you board the bus.
- Most LCT stops are not sheltered. Dress appropriately for the winter weather, and utilize sunscreen in the summer.
- Whether you are in a bus, car, or van – **ALWAYS WEAR YOUR SEATBELT IF THE VEHICLE IS EQUIPPED WITH ONE!**



Graphic by: clipground.com

Virtual Adult Day Services Update



One example of the creative new virtual programming is pictured above - a lesson about Japan. As part of the lesson, staff delivered chopsticks and noodles to participating consumers and demonstrated how to use those utensils via a virtual 'chopstick showdown' to see who could pick up the most items in 25 seconds!

While the phased reopening of the Murray Ridge Adult Day Centers for eligible individuals who reside in the family home continues to move forward, staff and other consumers continue to interact online through **Virtual Adult Day Services**.

Many sessions have focused on socialization and communication on topics important for community awareness — such as the COVID-19 virus. According to Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center (EOVC) Speech and Language Pathologist **Jennifer Hakko**, "The participants have had great discussions, learning how to take turns on Zoom. They always enjoy socializing during the opening of each meeting. Some even sign on early just to be able to catch up with their friends."

These sessions have included: an overview of how to stop the spread of germs; how to properly put on, wear, and take off masks, and social distancing; videos of how the Adult Day Centers have changed; staff guests sharing how the virus has affected them; reopening of the movie theaters and changes there due to the virus; sanitizing surfaces due to COVID-19; how to access virtual vacations/tours; contact tracing; COVID-19 Bingo; and COVID and coins. The participants are also working on a COVID-19 Time Capsule which they will share during the month of November, along with sharing what they are grateful for.

EOVC activity aide **Bryan Hessler** has taken a lead on creating specialty breakout sessions including a six-week Fall Sports Talk session in which the participants watch game highlights, play sports trivia, and discuss how COVID-19 has affected the world of sports with a focus on football, baseball, and basketball.

Self-Advocacy Video Series Debuts

Just a reminder . . . the Lorain County Board of DD has developed a series of eight videos on consumers' rights, entitled "**Knowing My Rights**." The series aims to help educate adults with developmental disabilities in Lorain County on the importance of self-advocacy. One video will be released every few weeks with a short 30-minute program through Zoom.

The first video, "Vocational Training and Citizenship," was released October 14. Upcoming video topics will include: Respect and Choices, Mental and Medical Health, Nutrition and Wellness, Living Conditions, Bullying, Decision Making and Advocating for yourself.

If you have any questions about the series, contact Jaclina Rush at (440) 324-2366 or via email at jrush@murrayridgecenter.org for more information. Funding for the project was provided through the Myrtle Endowment Fund of the Community Foundation of Lorain County.



MY LIFE, MY RIGHTS KNOWING MY RIGHTS

VIDEO SERIES RELEASE STARTING
IN OCTOBER. STAY TUNED!

Flu Shots are Important - Now More than Ever

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has emphasized the added importance of getting a flu vaccine during the 2020-2021 flu season because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. While it is unclear how the pandemic will affect the flu season, CDC is preparing for COVID-19 and seasonal flu to spread at the same time. Co-circulation could place a tremendous burden on our health care system and result in many illnesses, hospitalizations and deaths. Getting a flu vaccine is something easy that people can do to protect themselves and their loved ones and to help reduce the spread of flu this fall and winter.

Flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19. But vaccination has many other benefits and is part of a comprehensive public health strategy to reduce the burden of flu, which can flatten the curve of respiratory illnesses overall, help protect essential workers from flu, and preserve medical resources for care of patients with COVID-19. Ohio Governor Mike DeWine has been very vocal about the importance of flu shots - especially this year. "While the flu can be deadly on its own, we also are concerned that Ohioans who get both the flu and COVID-19 at the same time could become severely, if not fatally, ill. Our youngest and oldest Ohioans, those who are pregnant, those in long-term care facilities, and those with chronic health conditions may be especially susceptible to severe illness or complications from the flu."

October is a good time to get vaccinated, but as long as flu viruses are circulating, vaccination can continue - even in January or later. The CDC recommends everyone 6 months and older be vaccinated against flu. It protects the person getting vaccinated and the people around them. Flu vaccines have been shown to prevent flu illness and reduce the risk of hospitalizations and deaths. Flu vaccination is proven to help protect pregnant women and people with chronic health conditions while reducing the burden of flu on our communities and health care system. This year, especially, it will be most important to protect those at higher risk for flu complications. Many of these people are also at high risk for COVID-19 illness or serious outcomes. It is also important for caregivers and essential workers to protect themselves and those around them from flu by getting a flu vaccine.

For more flu information from the CDC go to: cdc.gov/flu/

For a listing of some upcoming Free Flu Shot Clinics sponsored by Lorain County Public Health, please see Page 8 of this newsletter.



October is Down Syndrome Awareness Month

Did you know that each year in the United States, about 6,000 babies are born with Down syndrome? That's about one in every 700 babies born. Down syndrome is the most commonly occurring chromosomal condition, and it is estimated that today in the United States there are more than 400,000 people living with Down syndrome. Since the 1980s, American families touched by Down syndrome have observed October as National Down Syndrome Awareness Month: a time to recognize that those born with Down syndrome can indeed live happy, long and productive lives. This October, please join us in celebrating our friends and neighbors with Down syndrome. To learn more, visit the National Down Syndrome Society website at ndss.org.



DonorsChoose Helps Students 'Adopt an Animal'

'Adopt an Animal,' which uses plush pets to help students learn responsible pet ownership, is just one of the latest DonorsChoose projects funded at Murray Ridge School.

Founded in 2000 by a high school teacher in the Bronx, N.Y., DonorsChoose (donorschoose.org) empowers public school teachers from across the country to request much-needed materials for their students. Right now there are thousands of teacher requests that you can help bring to life with a gift of any amount. At school or at home...wherever learning happens, you can make a difference. With teachers and students facing the toughest learning challenges in a generation, you can help provide the supplies to keep kids learning.



Evan Clarke (left) and TJ Nagy

BOARD ROOM BRIEFING

The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 6:30 p.m. on September 28, 2020:

The 2021 Organizational Meeting of the Board was scheduled for January 25 at 6:30 PM. The 2020 Superintendent Development Plan, addressing training/continuing education for the year, was adopted. Superintendent Fisher reported on the public forum on the 2019 Strategic Plan Progress Report, stating that one of the topics addressed at the forum was the Family Support Services (FSS) Program (a program which is available through the county board to family members of children and adults with developmental disabilities who live with them, and provides funding for such things as respite care, adaptive equipment, home modifications, and summer camp programs); a Board committee studied this topic in 2019 and consequently, effective 01/01/2020, the availability of FSS funding was expanded, and the FSS co-pay structure was liberalized for families with an eligible member not enrolled on a Medicaid waiver. The Board unanimously approved the draft 2019 Strategic Plan Progress Report. The Board also passed a policy on Purchase of Employee Awards/Rewards.

Lorain County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

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News You Can Use

Lorain County Public Health Offers Free Flu Shots

Get your flu shot each year in November for your best protection through the peak flu season in Northeast Ohio. Call (440) 284-3206 to make an appointment for a flu shot in November. Or, visit one of the following November community flu clinics:

-- **Drive-thru flu shot clinics** for adults 16 years and older:

Monday, Nov. 2 from 3 to 7 p.m. at Oberlin Fire Department, 430 S Main St. in Oberlin

Saturday, Nov. 7 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Elyria Fire Department Station No. 2, 330 E. Broad St. in Elyria

-- **Walk-in flu shot clinics** for families with children 6 months through 15 years:

Monday, Nov. 2 from 3 to 7 p.m. at Lorain County Fairgrounds, 23000 Fairgrounds Rd. in Wellington

Saturday, Nov. 7 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Lorain County Community College in the Ewing Activities Center, 1005 Abbe Rd. N. in Elyria