

MONTHLY



MurrayRidgeCenter
HELPING PEOPLE...FOR A LIFETIME

MURRAY RIDGE COURIER

MAY 2022



Mad Dog Manson (EOVC Program Specialist **Jim Nagy**) throwing his opponent **Soda Pop Johnson** across the ring at **Breaking Down Barriers X** while referee **Marcus Pack** watches for foul play.



Wrestler **El Taino** sizing up an opponent from ringside

Mega Championship

Wrestling's Big Show

Several weeks ago, **Mega Championship Wrestling** (MCW) held its 10th Annual 'Breaking Down Barriers' fundraiser for Friends of Murray Ridge. These popular family-friendly wrestling events have raised more than \$15,000 since they began back in 2011! **Jim "Mad Dog Manson" Nagy**, who wrestles for MCW, started the event with co-promoters **Jeff Traxler** and **Brandon Xavier** for the benefit of Lorain County residents with developmental disabilities. MCW strives to be active in its community by working with organizations like Friends of Murray Ridge, Toys For Tots, and many others.

Breaking Down Barriers X Fundraiser



Wrestling fan **Michael Hawley** enjoying the spectacle

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

JOHN BENNINGTON'S VALOR HOME FOOD DRIVE

This past April 18th, **John Bennington**, a program participant at the Elyria Opportunity and Vocational Center (EOVC), organized a food drive for the Lorain County Valor Home, which provides transitional housing for homeless male veterans in Lorain County. John is a regular attendee of the EOVC's Service Club meetings, where program participants brainstorm ways to give back to their community. With some help from the EOVC staff, John set up and organized the schedule for the food drive, created the drive's promotional fliers, and went shopping for items with his own funds. He even helped transport the donation package to the valor home and spent some time with some of the residents there. Congratulations on a job well done, John!



John Bennington with a Valor Home resident

SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

Senior Pictures

Dominic Price, a local photographer, came out to Murray Ridge School to take senior portraits of our graduating seniors. He took some great photos of our students in their caps and gowns! Dominic, who runs **FirstXXIV Media Group**, has come to previous proms and taken pictures, volunteering his time and talent. Thank you very much, Dominic!



Donations

Recently, **Wee Care Closet** made a kind donation of brand new shoes, clothes, blankets, and more than 35 filled Easter baskets for our students at Murray Ridge School! Thank you, Wee Care Closet!

Early Intervention Success Story



Meet Drew!

Drew Cole is a 3-year-old boy who worked with our Early Intervention Program to help address his speech apraxia

In February of 2020, Ericka Cole told her eleven-month-old son Drew's pediatrician that she didn't think he was hitting his developmental milestones for speech. The pediatrician told her not to worry, but something still didn't sit right with her.

"That 'mom' gut just told me that something wasn't clicking with him," Ericka recalls. After some persistence, she was able to get a referral from her son's pediatrician to pursue speech services for her son.

Drew was diagnosed with apraxia, a motor speech disorder that makes it difficult to speak. He started working with a number of speech therapy programs in addition to Murray Ridge Center's Early Intervention Program.

Rather than serving as the primary source of instruction, the EI program focuses on providing parents and families with strategies and techniques for helping their child on a daily basis. "I wasn't there to fix Drew," explains Bonnie Minnich, a Developmental Specialist at Murray Ridge Center who worked with Drew. "I was there to help [the parents] to be able to provide the great environment for Drew to be able to flourish."

This use of a coaching interaction style has many strengths, but one in particular stands out: rather than intervention occurring just a day or two a week, it becomes a full-time family affair. "It's not just a speech thing, it's how do we retrain the brain," Bonnie points out. "We're there to help the family help the child."

"Working with Bonnie was great," says Ericka. "She always had tips, tricks, and things to help us with." The process was difficult, but Bonnie was very encouraging with the parents, which meant a lot to the family.

Drew's family's dedication and Bonnie's assistance paid off. "By February of this past year, he was finally putting words together," beams Ericka. "Within the last 6 months, he's totally blossomed."

Drew, who now uses four and five word sentences, aged out of the EI program when he turned three this past April. He'll be starting preschool in the Fall, where he'll receive some in-class speech therapy and some private speech instruction outside of school.

"He's a fun kid. He really is," Bonnie says of Drew. "It's been exciting to see him change, and it's been exciting to see mom and dad be a really huge part of it. They try to credit everybody else, but they worked really hard."

ABOUT EARLY INTERVENTION



Our Early Intervention Program services children from birth to three years of age. We serve families of children who have developmental delays or disabilities. We currently serve more than 400 children, and served 868 children in 2021.

Our Early Intervention Department staff provide specialized instruction to families that focuses on the development of strategies for them to use in promoting the development of their children in their own homes on a day to day basis.

Happy Easter!

From Murray Ridge Preschool

Preschoolers at Murray Ridge School had a great time during their annual Easter Egg Hunt!



Left to right: Gabriella Blaz, Sebastian Serrano, and Brodie Reynolds.

UPCOMING EVENT!
SAVE THE DATE!

FCA METRO CLEVELAND PRESENTS

ALL ABILITIES CAMP

SATURDAY • SEPTEMBER 17

MINI-CAMP SCHEDULE

AGES 5-12
9:00AM - 11:30AM

AGES 13+
1:00PM - 3:30PM

T3 PERFORMANCE
965 RECREATION LANE
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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AWARD PRESENTED

Congratulations to **Sarah Campbell**, who has been awarded this quarter's Exceptional Service Award! Sarah is a Service and Support Administrator (SSA) at Murray Ridge Center. Sarah's nominator Geraldine Locurto says of her, "She is knowledgeable, helpful, caring, and considerate. She also always tries to include me when helping my son ... It is so important to me to feel that the people involved in his life genuinely care about him as a unique individual. I feel that Sarah has proven this to me."

Sarah has worked as an SSA since March of 2019 and has made a big impression during those three years. Of Sarah, SSA Manager Nancy Hollins says, "She's extremely caring and insightful. She has the ability to listen and understand what's important to somebody. She really does go above and beyond."

Congratulations, Sarah!



Superintendent Amber Fisher, SSA Sarah Campbell, and Board Member Rebecca Cornman



She's really extremely caring and insightful. She has the ability to listen and understand what's important to someone.

-SSA Manager Nancy Hollins

45 Years Ago:

The "504 Sit-In"



Judy Heumann

Judy Heumann, who contracted polio in 1949 and began to use a wheelchair for her mobility, was one of the principle organizers of the sit-ins and has been a lifelong activist and inspiring advocate for disability rights.



A quick look back at history...

Last month marked the 45th anniversary of the "504 Sit-In", an important moment in the history of disability rights. The name comes from Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which became the first disability civil rights law to be enacted in the United States. In 1977, demonstrations led by people living with disabilities were staged at federal buildings across the U.S. to demand that Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act be signed. The tremendous dedication and effort of the activists were just the beginning of the disability rights movement in America!

Paving the way for Equality!



Murray Ridge Center's Poster Child Turns 22!

Do you recognize the adorable young boy on our homepage at murrayridgecenter.org? Well, his name is **Steven Fosdick** and he just turned 22 on April 18th!

Happy 22nd Birthday, Stevie!



JUNE 11, 2022

Save the Date

LORAIN COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES PRESENTS:

Lorain County Annual Advocacy Event for Eligible Adults, Their Families, and Their Providers

Because I Said I Would is a social movement and nonprofit dedicated to bettering humanity through promises made and kept. Alex is a five time Ted Talk speaker and his charitable work has been featured on ABC World News, CNN, The Today Show, NPR, and many other programs.



Featuring: 5x TED Talk Speaker, Alex Sheen

**LCCC - SPITZER CONFERENCE CENTER
FROM 11:30 AM - 4 PM, FOOD PROVIDED**

Contact Information: Jaclina Rush at 440-324-2366

Funding Provided by the Myrtle's Endowment Fund and the Community Foundation of Lorain County



Nominations Sought for Exceptional Service Awards

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 Kevin Naughton, 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 Kevin at (440) 329-3734 or kevin@murrayridgecenter.org

Boardroom Briefing

The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 6:30 p.m. on April 25, 2022

Superintendent Fisher reported that the Murray Ridge Housing Corporation is currently discussing the construction of another home for tenants with developmental disabilities; the Board unanimously agreed that it would pay rent for an 'emergency suite' within this home, once constructed. Dr. Fisher reported that current leases for parts of the Elyria Opportunity & Vocational Center (EOVC) that are being used by private providers of Adult Day Support/Vocational Habilitation will soon be expiring, and that one of the providers has expressed an interest in expanding into additional space; the Board unanimously passed a motion recommending the renewal of the existing EOVC leases, including additional space for one provider, at the average cost per square foot reflected in the current leases. (Murray Ridge Adult Services will continue to operate in the sections of EOVC that are not leased.) The Board approved a Preschool Student Calendar for the 2022-2023 academic year.

Now Hiring!

FEATURED positions



Direct Support Professionals (Home Setting)

We have openings available for permanent and PRN (as-needed) positions to care for residents of our Meister Road Home. Hours vary based on position and/or assignment.

Direct Support Professionals (Adult Program Setting)

We have openings available for permanent and PRN (as-needed) positions to care for participants in our Adult Program. Hours are generally during the day.

Custodial/Maintenance Positions

We are looking for PRN (as-needed) custodial/maintenance help and two full-time Maintenance Technicians. Hours are generally during the day.

Service and Support Administrator (SSA)

We have openings for full-time Service and Support Administrators. Hours are generally during the day.

SSA Data/Account Clerk

We are looking for a full-time SSA Data Clerk. Hours are generally during the day.

We are looking for PRN (as-needed) Speech and Language Pathologists

**We provide the training.
You provide the ♥**

To see our current openings and to apply, go to the Murray Ridge website and click on "Opportunities"

All candidates:

Must have valid Ohio drivers license, good driving record, and High School Diploma/GED. Must pass background check, drug test, and physical.

www.murrayridgecenter.org

Lorain County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center
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Photo of the Month: He may look mean, but **Jim “Mad Dog Manson” Nagy**, one of the organizers of Mega Championship Wrestling's recent “Breaking Down Barriers” fundraiser event, has a big heart.

Contact Us

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Be sure to follow us on Facebook!

