

MONTHLY



MURRAY RIDGE COURIER

NOV 2021



Penni Shuster and Kathy Justy gave this year's Inservice two thumbs up!

2021 Agency In-Service

This past October 22nd, Murray Ridge staff gathered at Lorain County Community College for our Annual Agency In-Service. Last year's event was cancelled as a pandemic safety precaution, so it was especially nice to come together again!



Kim Logar, Laura Yates, Jennifer Ryan, Amber Fisher, and Heather Gurchik

Celebrating All of Our Staff's Hard Work

Needless to say, confronting and adapting to the challenges posed by the pandemic took tremendous effort, courage, and fortitude from our entire team. The goal of this year's In-Service was to give staff a chance to relax, be recognized for their efforts, and celebrate the many significant achievements of the past two years. Fittingly, the themes of this year's In-Service were relaxation, mental health, and, perhaps most importantly, laughter. Social distancing and masks were in place, and staff members were also able to elect to attend virtually via Zoom.



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

For the past several years, Fox 8 has displayed information on the status of our Adult Activities Centers as described below:

- 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 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 children 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.

AWARDS

The following staff members reached years of service milestones in 2021:

5 Years of Service

- Amber Bowers
- Jeffrey Camp
- Dawne Edwards
- Jason Keil
- Lisa Koney
- Alisha Marin
- Michalena McCann
- Maryann Rivera
- Jessica Smith
- Crystal-Rose Stambaugh
- Lauren Stills
- Vanessa Thomas
- Katherine Wade
- Michael Wargo
- Christen Wilhelm

10 Years of Service

- Florence Ayivor
- Amy Daniels
- James Fallon
- Richard Hales
- Sherry Lacko-Chutes
- Laura Lee
- Carol McAtee
- Russell Moye
- Holly Ralich
- Laura Roby
- Angelique Rogozinski
- Amanda Ryan
- Ronnie Vanover

15 Years of Service

- Polly Allman
- Charles Anthony
- Sonia Colvin
- Joan Hoover
- Angela Toich

R.I.C.H.E.S Award winner Harry Koenning

Harry Koenning was presented with his second R.I.C.H.E.S. Diamond Award at the 2021 Agency In-Service! This time, it was for an innovative solution that has saved the agency thousands of dollars.

Many of the agency vans use catalytic converters, which can be tempting targets for theft. Replacing the converters is rather expensive, so an effective means of safeguarding them was needed.

To help prevent their theft, Harry designed, fabricated, and installed special cage-covers over the catalytic converters, making it more difficult to access them.



Penni Shuster and Harry Koenning

Since the protective cages were installed, there have been zero incidents of theft of any catalytic converters in the agency van fleet!

What will Harry come up with next? We're certainly very lucky to have such an innovative and inventive member of our staff.

Years of Service Awards

20 Years of Service

Recipients pictured left to right with their supervisors: Jeffrey Squires (recipient), Heather Gurchik, Dann Swift, Heather Knoble (recipient), Gregg Heiden (recipient), Enrico Rovere (recipient), Trevor Doty (recipient), Cindy Castro-White, and Amber Fisher.

Recipients not pictured: Trena Albrecht, John Bender, Joe Green, Bob Pando, Tina Tucker and Bonnie Valentine Byrd



25 Years of Service

Recipients pictured left to right with their supervisors: Diania Landin (recipient), Terri Camp, Jill Camp, Penni Shuster (recipient), Heather Knoble, Denise Fordanich (recipient), and Amber Fisher

Not pictured: Michelle Bartow, Cheryl Glatz, Rebecca Walker, Deborah Zgonc, and Curtis Zimmerlin

AWARDS (CONT.)

Volunteer of the Year Award Recipient - Dan White

Dan White has served an impressive total of 24 years on the agency's board of directors. His son, also Dan White, has developmental disabilities and for many years has participated in our programs. Dan (senior) has also served as a member or chair of our Special Olympics Committee for many years, and is a regular attendee of our Special Olympics Banquets. Over the years, Dan has been an active and level-headed leader, providing excellent perspective related to any number of complex and challenging issues.

About Dan, his fellow Board members say, "He is a dedicated and enthusiastic supporter of providing quality services to individuals with developmental disabilities. His interest and considerable active service on the Board have contributed greatly to effective board decisions that have positioned the staff to serve consumers well, under both normal and unusual circumstances."

The overall consensus was that Dan is a great guy, a valuable Board member, and very deserving of the Volunteer of the Year Award.

Remembering Marilyn Hupfer

Every year, in order to commemorate the life of a woman who personified the spirit of helping people, the Lorain County Board of DD presents a deserving individual with the Marilyn Hupfer Volunteer of the Year Award.



Amber Fisher and Dan White

30 & 35 YEARS OF SERVICE AWARDS

2020 and 2021 Recipients

Because the Agency In-Service was canceled last year, many of the 2020 Years of Service Awards were presented at this year's event. The following recipients of the Years of Service Awards enjoyed their award presentation from home via Zoom:

30 Years:

- Jeffry Christopher
- Jennifer Dutton
- Mary Linsky

35 Years:

- Mark Kaminski



Anita Graham, Amber Fisher, and Julie Wukie

Julie Wukie

Julie Wukie joined the Murray Ridge team in 1990. She worked as an RN in several other Murray Ridge Adult Services sites before landing in 1995 at our Elyria Opportunity & Vocational Center, where she works today. Julie says that she has really enjoyed working at Murray Ridge because of the positive nature of those we serve.

Fidel "Angel" Lopez

Angel Lopez started his journey at Murray Ridge in May of 1991, working as an Adult Program Aide for more than 10 years, and then working in both the Seniors and Supported Employment Programs before transferring to LOVC as an Adult Program Instructor. He says that working at Murray Ridge has made him feel more thankful, and that he really loves being a part of the agency.



Amber Fisher, Fidel "Angel" Lopez, and Gregg Heiden

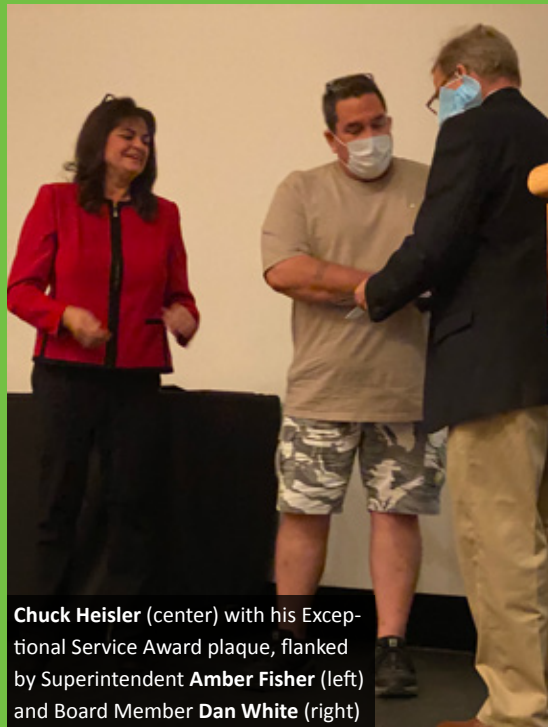
EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AWARD PRESENTED

Congratulations to **Chuck Heisler**, who has been awarded this quarter's Exceptional Service Award! Chuck, according to his nomination letter, "goes beyond the call of duty to make sure the consumers' home is safe and comfortable."

Chuck has been the on-call Maintenance Technician for Murray Ridge Housing Corporation for two years, and services all 33 of the Housing Board's properties. A true jack of all trades, Chuck works on just about everything: plumbing, electrical systems, carpentry, and much more.

His close coworker, Jennifer Ryan, says of Chuck: "I can count on him to take care of any issue we are having in a timely manner and with a smile on his face. He's a certainly a valuable member of our team!"

Congratulations, Chuck!



Chuck Heisler (center) with his Exceptional Service Award plaque, flanked by Superintendent **Amber Fisher** (left) and Board Member **Dan White** (right)



Chuck has always shown such great compassion.

-Chuck's nominator

Perfect Attendance

Congratulations to the following staff-members for perfect attendance from October 1, 2020 through September 30!

- Sheila Amerla
- Doug Johnson
- Florence Ayivor
- Kathryn Justy
- Christine Ash
- Sherry Lacko-Chutes
- Jacob Barnes
- Julie Maurer
- John Bender
- Kelly Moe
- Kathleen Bevaque
- Nicole Myntti
- Brian Chutes
- Stephen Osundina
- Susan Craycraft
- John Renfrow
- John Fedorcio
- Jessica Smith
- Anita Graham
- Kelli Sunseri
- Richard Hales
- Bonnie Ulich
- Robert Hokes
- Kristi Zgrabik



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

Consumer Profile: Fred Leppert

By:
Sarah
Bohannon

Fred Leppert is a fun, cool guy who loves playing video games. He has almost every gaming system that has ever been released, and can even play two different games at the same time! Fred lives with his mother and step-father, and he's very close with his sister, brother, and sister-in-law, as well. When not playing video games, Fred loves spending time with his family and his dog Toby, going out to eat, and watching Family Feud on YouTube. He also likes having popcorn every evening before he goes to bed.



Fred has a Level 1 Waiver and is supported by **Lauren Stills**, his **Murray Ridge Service and Support Administrator (SSA)**. Lauren helps Fred utilize his Level 1 Waiver and develop his Individual Service Plan (ISP), which lists the services and supports that he has decided will work best for him. Lauren also monitors Fred's services and keeps his ISP up-to-date as his life goals change.



Fred uses his Level 1 Waiver for Homemaker Personal Care (HPC) services. Fred and his **HPC provider, Tim**, have been working together for more than 7 years now! Fred looks forward to spending time with Tim, and they go out every Tuesday night after work. Some of the activities Fred enjoys with Tim include going out to dinner at Blue Sky (their favorite restaurant), seeing a movie, shopping for video games, or going for a walk outside. While they're out, Tim helps Fred with anything he may need.



During the day, Fred attends **Triad Adult Day Program** in Elyria. Triad has been serving the individuals of Lorain County for more than 10 years by providing residential and adult day program services. Since it opened this past July, Fred has been attending Triad's Elyria location, where he enjoys hanging out and playing games with his peers. He also likes participating in Triad's community activities like shopping, visiting the park, and going for walks, as well as the seasonal activities at Triad's other day program locations. Fred also participates in cooking club, and while his favorite part is eating the final product, he also helps with all the preparation!

Left to right: Lutz Fazekas, Daniel Montgomery, Debbie Roberts, Robert Assanakis, Robert McFadden, Maureen Assanakis, Jeremy Foster, Brittany Tidd, Jaclina Rush, Maria Poling, Diana Clement, Renee Mele, Amber Fisher, Maybeth Clement (seated), Tina Tucker, Mark Botnik, Juliette Casey, Sarah Ward, Charles Johnson, and Kathy Bevaque waiting for the parade to begin!



**Thank you,
Vermillion community!**

2021 WOOLLYBEAR FESTIVAL & PARADE

For many years, Murray Ridge Center has had a presence at the Vermillion Woollybear Festival and Parade, but this event was canceled in 2020 due to COVID. This year, we were thrilled that Murray Ridge Center was once again featured in the Woollybear Parade, which took place on October 10th. Participants representing Murray Ridge Center included many individuals with developmental disabilities, as well as their providers and family members.

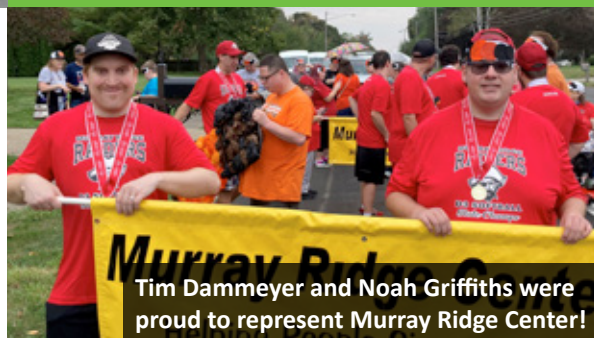
The huge parade was one of the major highlights of this year's 49th Annual Woollybear Festival — the largest one-day festival in the state of Ohio.



Ryan Eliason and Billy Sherrard
with their woollybear!

Dressed for a Fest!

Our Murray Ridge representatives came to the parade in style, wearing woollybear themed headbands and carrying woollybear banners. Members of our state championship winning softball team wore their team shirts, too!



Tim Dammeyer and Noah Griffiths
were proud to represent Murray Ridge Center!

Now Hiring!

Direct Support Professionals (Home Setting)

We have openings available for permanent and as-needed positions to care for residents of our Meister Rd. home. Hours vary based on position and/or assignment.

Custodial/Maintenance

We are looking for as-needed custodial/maintenance help, a full-time Lead Maintenance Technician and two full-time Maintenance Technicians. Hours are generally during the day.

FEATURED positions

Direct Support Professionals (Adult Program Setting)

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

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



School Setting

We have openings available for permanent and as-needed classroom aides

**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

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Photo of the Month: Meister Road Residents on a visit to Schuster's Pumpkin Patch!
From left to right: Clayton Rhodehamel, staff member Trevor Doty, Vito Faga, Sara Lempeck, Danny Velez (front, seated), staff member Young Killinger (back, standing), Mark Salisbury, staff member Ciarra Barbee, Diane Pasa, and Kara Zudell (seated)

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