

## U.S. Womens Olympic Hockey Team Goalie Visits Murray Ridge

Every day, students with developmental disabilities at Murray Ridge School learn everything from functional academics to vocational skills to music and art. Recently, however, they learned a very special lesson about doing what you love when they had a very special visitor.

As music teacher Nevan Eilbeck played the Olympic theme song on the piano, U.S. Women's Olympic Hockey Team goalie and silver medalist **Brianne McLaughlin** entered the gymnasium to excited young fans. Cheers and claps could be heard down the halls as McLaughlin warmly greeted students waving American flags and saluting.

Students were eager to learn more about this local champion who has undoubtedly inspired young female athletes across the world. Assisted by Murray Ridge language development specialist, **Kathy Beatty**, non-verbal students who utilize Augmentative and Alternative Communication, or AAC, devices asked McLaughlin such questions as "do you plan to play in the 2014 games," (she hopes to) and "have you met anyone famous" (she has met Arnold Schwarzenegger and some professional hockey players whom, she said with a grin, "were cute.")

But the most inspiring answers came from one innocent question from student **Savon Heston**. Heston's question "when did you start playing hockey?" prompted a story about a lifelong pursuit of what she enjoyed most. "I started skating when I was two or three years old, but by the time I was four, I knew I wanted to play hockey," answered McLaughlin. She further explained that the inspiration to play the male-dominated sport came from watching her brother Michael play. When, at four years of age, she begged her mother to let her play, too, her mother was less than enthusiastic about letting her little girl play this tough sport. "She looked at me like I was crazy," smiled McLaughlin. But when she was still adamant about playing a year later, her mother relented and she has been playing ever since.

McLaughlin's love of and participation in the sport endured many bumps and bruises, and by the time she began attending Elyria Catholic High School, she was good enough to play on the boys' team. She even got to play on the same team as her inspirational brother for a year when he was a senior and she was a sophomore.

*Continued on page 2...*



**Murray Ridge School student Paul Schoger attempts to get a puck past U.S. Women's Olympic Hockey Team goalie Brianne McLaughlin.**

### Autism Awareness Month

April is National Autism Awareness Month and is a perfect time for individuals to educate themselves about this developmental disability that, according to the Centers for Disease Control, affects approximately one in every 110 American children. Symptoms of Autism Spectrum Disorders, or ASDs, typically begin before the age of three and are characterized by impaired development in communication, social interaction and behavior.

To celebrate this special month, Murray Ridge School will be displaying artwork from its students with ASDs in local businesses throughout Lorain County. In addition, the Lorain Palace Theatre will host a special movie day for Murray Ridge students with ASDs and their families. Many thanks to the Lorain Palace theatre!

If you would like to learn more about ASDs or the programs and services offered by Murray Ridge School, contact Joan Peterson or Lenora Oeftering at 329-3760.

## Goalie...

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Following high school, she had plans to attend Mercyhurst College where she would have been the team's third goalie, leaving her little opportunity to get much playing time. However, on a whim she visited Robert Morris University which offered her the chance to be the starting goalie, and she jumped at the chance. During her senior year at Robert Morris, she got the opportunity to try out for, and ultimately be chosen to play on, the U.S. Women's Olympic Hockey team. This was, for McLaughlin, the experience of a lifetime. "The past few months have been amazing," she said.

Following the question and answer session, students in Joan Lundsford's class got the chance to help McLaughlin warm up for the hockey shoot-out with some "Brain Gym" exercises, a program using simple movements to integrate right and left brain functions. Then it was time for the much-anticipated hockey shoot-out. Student after student lined up for a chance to get a puck past the Olympian. One young student, **Evey Rodgers**, was even successful. Another student was even heard declaring "I want to play hockey!"

While it remains to be seen whether any of the students at Murray Ridge School will go on to be Olympic Hockey champions, it was clear from their faces that they were inspired to follow their own dreams, win or lose.



Murray Ridge consumer **Tim Eichelberger**, right, recently met U.S. Womens Olympic Hockey Team goal-keeper **Brianna McLaughlin**, left, on a Sunday trip to an Elyria ice arena. Eichelberger even got to see what it was like to wear a real Olympic silver medal!

## Caring Hearts



Recently, family and friends of Murray Ridge consumers who have passed away gathered together with Murray Ridge staff for the annual Caring Hearts Memorial Service. Initiated several years ago by staff members **Kiki Watchorn** and **Nancy Seighman**, the Caring Hearts Committee raises funds throughout the year to provide flower arrangements and teddy bears to adult consumers who are sick and to the families of consumers who have passed away.

### April is National Child Abuse Awareness Month

While the abuse of a child may be a difficult thing for most of us to imagine, it is important to consider a few sobering facts. For example, in 2007 there were nearly 800,000 confirmed cases of child abuse nationally, and more than 1,750 children died as a result of abuse. That same year in Lorain County, there were more than 2,000 substantiated cases of child abuse. Developmental Disabilities are among the many devastating consequences of child abuse, so during the month of April, Murray Ridge is supporting the community education efforts of other local agencies. Among other activities, Murray Ridge Center will host a booth at the Rally for Kids event at Midway Mall on April 24 from noon to 5:00 p.m. In addition, the 5th Annual Child Abuse Awareness Conference will be held Wednesday, April 14 from 7:45 a.m.—5:00 p.m. at the Lorain County Community College. For more information about any of these awareness events, please contact Heather Knoble at 284-3655.

## Thanks From the Murray Ridge Support Group

The Murray Ridge Support Group (MRSRG) would like to extend a sincere "thank you" to all who joined them for the Annual Spaghetti Dinner on March 20. The group would also like to thank Am-Vets Post 55 in Sheffield Lake for generously donating its food, facility and volunteer time for the second year in a row! The event was a great success and raised more than \$3,000 to go toward programs and activities for Lorain County citizens with developmental disabilities.



***Reuben A. Nodal, Field Representative from Congresswoman Betty Sutton's office, enjoys an Italian feast at the annual MRSRG Spaghetti Dinner.***

For more than 20 years, the MRSRG has been providing support for programs and activities for persons impacted by developmental disabilities. Comprised of parents, siblings and other advocates, the MRSRG plans educational seminars, sponsors several dances throughout the year, hosts the annual Transition Ceremony Luncheon for graduating Murray Ridge School students, organizes the annual Spaghetti Dinner and provides funds for various Murray Ridge Center events such as Santa's Shop, Senior Prom and Bring A Child To Work Day. Currently the MRSRG is seeking new members willing to participate in its activities.

If you would like to know more about the MRSRG and how you can join, contact Andrea Elek at (440) 323-2741 or George Gedid at (440) 282 2131.

## "Exceptional Service Award" Nominations Sought by Board

If you are a consumer, parent, guardian, sibling or other relative, or a community member and would like to participate in recognizing a Murray Ridge Center employee whose work efforts reflect remarkable dedication in meeting the needs of Murray Ridge consumers, you are encouraged to nominate those staff members who, in your opinion, have made significant contributions to the lives of those we serve. The nominating criteria are purposefully wide to reflect the diversity of staff duties and contributions, but in general, the nominees will reflect a standard of service that exceeds, *in the opinion of the one making the nomination*, the already high standard of service set by the agency.

Nominations for this award should be submitted to Racheal Seibert, Community Education and Volunteer Manager ([rseibert@murrayridgecenter.org](mailto:rseibert@murrayridgecenter.org)) by May 18, 2010. When making a nomination, it is requested that you write a brief narrative (of at least one paragraph), outlining your reasons for nominating the employee.

All nominations will be forwarded to the Board for selection at its discretion.

It is the intention of the Board to present this quarterly award to its recipient (s) at one of its regularly scheduled meetings, which, in 2010 will normally be held on the last Friday of each month at 12:30 p.m. in the Board Room.

If you have any questions, contact Racheal Seibert, Community Education and Volunteer Manager, or Tim Donohue, Director of Communications, at 440-329-3734.

## BOARD ROOM BRIEFING

### The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 12:30 p.m. on March 26, 2010:

Director of Educational Services, Dann Swift, presented the results of surveys of Lorain County school superintendents regarding their estimates of the number of children to be placed in Murray Ridge Preschool for the 2010-2011 school year. Dr. Fisher projected that the Preschool would operate one classroom during the upcoming school year and recommended no change to the current charge to local school districts (\$7,500 per student). The Board unanimously approved this recommendation. Superintendent Fisher further recommended that, for typically-developing preschoolers in the program, the Board continue to charge \$5.00 per day per student, with the additional charge of \$7.50 per day if agency transportation services are accessed. It was also suggested that charges be billed in quarterly installments, payable in advance, and that there be a pro-rated reimbursement should a student disenroll. The Board unanimously approved these recommendations. Superintendent Fisher then updated the Board that there will be an 8.6%, or \$121,963, cut in state funding to the agency for Fiscal Year 2011, which begins July 1, 2010. In other business, Board member Jane Spiegelberg announced that the Staff Recognition Award Committee selected the first recipient of the "Exceptional Service Award" from five nominations. The Board unanimously approved selection of the first award recipient. Following this discussion Superintendent Fisher presented strategic questions for consideration in the development of the 2011-2015 five year strategic plan. Dr. Fisher suggested to the Board members that they continue to give consideration to additional topics they feel should be addressed during the upcoming Strategic Planning process. Finally, Al Sprague, Director of Residential Service & Support Administration, updated the Board on quarterly Family Support allocations, and the Board unanimously approved the requested Second Quarter budget.





# April 2010



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 Good Friday	3
4 	5	6	7	8 	9	10
Spring Break for Murray Ridge School Students						
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20 	21	22 	23 	24
25	26	27	28	29	30 	

## Activities & Events

**4/2—Agency Closed in Observance of Good Friday**

**4/5-4/9—Murray Ridge School Closed for Spring Break. Classes resume April 12; Preschool resumes April 13**

4/8—Murray Ridge Support Group meeting, 4:15 p.m., Elyria Work/Activity Center, 1095 Infirmary Road, Elyria

4/8—Early Intervention Playgroup, 5:30—6:30 p.m., Murray Ridge School, 9750 Murray Ridge Road in Elyria

4/20—Murray Ridge Center Volunteer Banquet, 5:00—7:00 p.m., Elyria Work/Activity Center, 1095 Infirmary Road in Elyria

4/20—Family Support Parent Committee meeting, 6:00 p.m., Administration Building, 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria

4/22—LCBDD Finance Committee meeting, 12:00 p.m., Administration Building, 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria

4/22—Early Intervention Playgroup, 5:30—6:30 p.m., Murray Ridge School, 9750 Murray Ridge Road in Elyria

4/23—Murray Ridge Support Group dance, 7:00 p.m., Murray Ridge School, 9750 Murray Ridge Road in Elyria

4/30—LCBDD Meeting, 12:30 p.m. Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria



## Lunch Menus

Cost Per Day: Youth = \$2.75, Adults = \$2.80

**April 12-16**  
**May 3-7**

**Monday-** Salisbury Steak w/Gravy, Scaloped Potatoes, Corn, Peaches, Cookie

**Tuesday-** Ham & Cheese on Wheat Bread, Peas & Carrots, Pears, Nutri-Grain Bar

**Wednesday-** Meat Lasagna, Green Beans, Tossed Salad w/Low fat Dressing, Wheat Bread, Cookie

**Thursday-** Pepperoni & Cheese Pizza, Tossed Salad w/Low fat Dressing, Banana, Nutri-Grain Bar

**Friday-** Fish Patty, French Fries, Cole Slaw, Apple Slices, Wheat Bread, Cookie

**March 29-April 2**  
**April 19-23**  
**May 10-14**

**Monday-** Ham, Wheat Bread, Rice Pilaf, Diced Carrots w/Herbs, Applesauce

**Tuesday-** Hamburger on a Bun, Potato Wedges, Corn, Crushed Pineapple, Cookie

**Wednesday-** Chicken Patty w/Gravy, Au Gratin Potatoes, Green Beans, Fruit, Wheat Bread, Cookie

**Thursday-** Pepperoni & Cheese Pizza, Tossed Salad w/Low fat Dressing, Banana, Nutri-Grain Bar

**Friday-** Macaroni & Cheese, Cooked Carrots, Diced Pears, Cookie



**April 5-9**  
**April 26-30**  
**May 17-21**

**Monday-** Chicken Patty on a Bun, Potato Rounds, Corn, Crushed Pineapple, Cookie

**Tuesday-** Meat Lasagna, Tossed Salad w/Low fat Dressing, Diced Peaches, Nutri-Grain Bar

**Wednesday-** Rigatoni w/Meatballs, Green Beans, Tossed Salad w/Low fat Dressing, Wheat Bread, Cookie

**Thursday-** Pepperoni & Cheese Pizza, Tossed Salad w/Low fat Dressing, Fresh Fruit, Nutri-Grain Bar

**Friday-** Meat/Cheese Burrito, Spanish Rice, Cole Slaw, Applesauce

# A PRESCHOOL OPTION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

The Murray Ridge Preschool Program offers students with a variety of developmental disabilities the advantages of in-room therapies, an array of state-of-the-art equipment, outstanding staff and an opportunity to learn alongside typically-developing peers.

## Murray Ridge Preschool Offers:

- Individualized Speech, Occupational and Physical Therapy in the classroom
- An extensive collection of early childhood educational equipment
- Full-time nurse on site
- Behavior Support Services
- Music classes



- A well-rounded curriculum based on the Ohio Early Learning Content Standards
- Dynamic, ODE-certified staff
- Physical development through indoor/outdoor physical education classes
- Door-to-door transportation services

## Did You Know...

The Murray Ridge preschool serves children with a wide range of developmental disabilities, from those with mild delays to those profoundly impacted, and Murray Ridge is a recognized leader in its comprehensive approach to teaching children with autism. The Preschool Program runs Tuesday through Friday. Children with disabilities must be referred to the Murray Ridge Preschool Program by their local school district.

### For More Information Contact:

Dann Swift  
Director of Educational Services  
Murray Ridge School  
9750 Murray Ridge Road  
Elyria, Oh 44035  
440.329-3760  
[dswift@murrayridgecenter.org](mailto:dswift@murrayridgecenter.org)  
[www.murrayridgecenter.org](http://www.murrayridgecenter.org)



Lorain County Board of  
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center  
1091 Infirmary Road  
Elyria, OH 44035

Visit our Web site  
[www.murrayridgecenter.org](http://www.murrayridgecenter.org)

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If you have a news item that you would like to include in the **Murray Ridge Courier**, please email relevant photos, stories or event information to Racheal Seibert at [rseibert@murrayridgecenter.org](mailto:rseibert@murrayridgecenter.org).

**Submissions are due by the 20th of each month for the following month's newsletter.**



### Further News You Might Use...

We are often in receipt of information from external sources on offerings designed for people with DD. Some examples include summer camps and special interest classes. Many such offerings have an associated cost to the participant. Although we are not in a position to "vouch for" or promote such offerings, we recognize that these opportunities may be of interest to our consumers, their families and/or guardians. If you are interested in learning more about such consumer-oriented events and opportunities, please contact Albert Sprague, Director of Residential Service & Support Administration. You may reach him by telephone at 440-324-2366.

## Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Classes

### *"Triumph Through the Challenges of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder"*

Learn about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) and how to best work with those affected in order to help them reach their fullest potential.

This course is for caregivers and those who work with individuals that may have had prenatal exposure to alcohol or drugs.

Sessions are free and are offered on the following dates/times:

- **April 22:** Section 1, 8:30—11:45 a.m.; Section 2, 12:45—4:00 p.m.
- **April 29:** Section 3, 8:30—11:45 a.m.; Section 4, 12:45—4:00 p.m.

For more information visit [www.loraincountyhealth.com/fasdcourse](http://www.loraincountyhealth.com/fasdcourse) or call the Lorain County General Health District at 322-6367.