

## A Message From The Superintendent



As we embark upon a new year, it is a pleasure to experience the energy and optimism that permeate Murray Ridge Center! A new decade has arrived and with it, new norms, needs, challenges and opportunities. In 2009, unprecedented economic adversity resulted not only in the steady implementation of changes consistent with fiscal sustainability, but also in

an outpouring of creativity, camaraderie, and continued commitment to excellence. It is my belief that, in the coming year, collective ingenuity, good communication, and a spirit of cooperation and collaboration will enable us to progress further toward doing 'more with less,' as we adjust to the prospect of decreasing resources.

Driven by the goal of capturing revenues and efficiencies while enhancing services and consumer outcomes, last year brought many changes (large and small) to every department of Murray Ridge Center. Space does not permit an enumeration of all that was done, but some examples include: the enrollment of 114 individuals on the "Level I Waiver," a program that enables participants to access home-based support, while allowing the agency to pull down federal funding for adult day services; the implementation of a charge for students enrolled in the Murray Ridge preschool program; and the acquisition, through federal stimulus dollars, of computers (20), software, equipment, and a 9-passenger wheelchair accessible van for use at Murray Ridge School. The latter, which is scheduled to arrive early this year, will greatly increase opportunities for community-based application of skills acquired in the classroom. At the state level, Senate Bill 79 removed the words "mental retardation" from the names of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities and county boards of developmental disabilities.

Abundantly apparent at this time is the need to continue to adjust operations in a manner that will ensure fiscal sustainability in the years ahead. The single largest impact of the federal stimulus bill (the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009) on Murray Ridge Center is the increased federal financial participation in Medicaid funded programs of the

agency. It is important to recognize that most of the dollars gained through this temporarily enhanced funding stream are being offset by a reduction in state funding (of more than \$700,000/yr.). While there is no expectation that lost state funding will be reinstated, the flow of stimulus dollars is currently scheduled to end on December 31, 2010. Additionally, more than \$1,600,000/yr. in state funding that currently holds the agency harmless from the loss of dollars once generated through the Tangible Personal Property Tax is scheduled to begin being phased out on July 01, 2011. Therefore, rather than bolstering the budget, federal stimulus dollars received in 2009 and 2010 will sustain a period of relatively flat funding, allowing time to prepare for the anticipated future decline in current revenue streams.

As 2010 is the final year of our current five year strategic plan, the Board will be focusing on the development of a new five year plan for Murray Ridge Center. Given the fiscal outlook, the plan will address the preservation of what's most important to our customers, the enhancement of what exists, and a strategy for meeting new and emerging needs. Now, more than ever, it will be critically important to examine the programmatic implications of a changing external environment... Which practices are less relevant or obsolete? Which operations should be modified to capture efficiencies or increase effectiveness? How have changes within our world, community, and economy impacted needs and preferences of the individuals we serve and their families?

We will tackle questions such as the following: How can we sustain and enhance supports for families caring for adults and children with developmental disabilities? How can we most effectively collaborate with parents and other community agencies to meet the needs of infants and older children with developmental disabilities, including Autism Spectrum Disorders? How can we sustain and enhance the top-notch educational services provided at Murray Ridge School and within our preschool program? What are the activities and outcomes most desired by our adult consumers, and how can we effectively engage in person-centered planning for the diverse needs and interests of more than 1,000 eligible adults? How can we best assist consumers to access a wide

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## Superintendent... *Continued from page 1*

variety of vocational and day activities that are stimulating and rewarding? How can we encourage and expand community participation while maximizing the use of family caregivers and other natural supports? Given a significant waiting list for residential services and the aging of family caregivers, how can we make comprehensive residential care available to those in need of this service?

As we endeavor to answer strategic questions, and to address the need to do more with less, we will closely examine the interests of our stakeholders within the context of each area of the agency.

Careful consideration of the experiences and 'wisdom' of the past will enhance our insight as we proceed with designing our future. Openness to new ideas will ensure that we avoid obsolescence, embrace existing opportunities, and adjust effectively to a changing environment. A focus on your input will ensure recognition of and action upon the expectations of our customers and our community.

I look forward to serving and working with you in what promises to be an exciting year ahead!

*Amber Fisher*

## Choraleers Perform



Murray Ridge Choraleer members (sitting, left to right) **Joanne Eschke**, **Kista Atkins** (standing left to right) **Shari Reitenbach** and **Carol Anderson** bring a little holiday cheer to the Elyria Work/Activity Center with some much-loved carols.

## Board Announces "Superior Service" Awards

At the December 18 meeting of the Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities, it was determined that a quarterly award of recognition would be presented to a Murray Ridge Center employee whose work efforts reflect remarkable dedication in meeting the needs of Murray Ridge consumers. Nominations for this award are to come from consumers, their parents, guardians, siblings and other relatives, and community members.

If you are a consumer, parent, guardian, sibling or other relative, or a community member and would like to participate, 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 March 12, 2009. 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.



If you would like to receive The Murray Ridge Courier via email, contact Racheal Seibert at (440) 329-3734 or email her at [rseibert@murrayridgecenter.org](mailto:rseibert@murrayridgecenter.org).

## Important Weather-Related Announcements

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. **However, rather than the listing "Lorain County Board of MR/DD," there will be two separate listings for Murray Ridge Center:**

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

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 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 busses to travel safely on city and county roads. Regardless of whether or not transportation is available through Murray Ridge Center, if our Adult Activities 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.

Please be aware that transportation to enclave sites is generally available even if transportation to the Adult Activities 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 Community Employment program.

### A Visit From Ol' Saint Nick!



Murray Ridge School student **Chase Blackham** shares his Christmas list with Santa .

### Holiday Cheer



Consumers and staff at the Lorain Work/Activity Center welcome the holidays at the annual Christmas party.





# January 2010

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## Activities & Events

**1/1/10—Agency Closed in Observance of New Year's Day; Agency Re-opens 1/4/10**

1/4—Murray Ridge School-Age Classes Resume

1/5—Murray Ridge Preschool Classes Resume

1/11—Murray Ridge Support Group meeting, 4:15 p.m., Elyria Work/Activity Center, 1095 Infirmary Road, Elyria

1/14—Early Intervention Playgroup, 5:45--7:00 p.m., Murray Ridge School

1/15—Murray Ridge Support Group dance, 7:00 p.m., Murray Ridge School, 9750 Murray Ridge Road in Elyria

**1/18—Agency Closed in Observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

1/22—LCBDD Finance Committee meeting, 11:45 a.m., Administration Building, 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria

1/22—LCBDD PR Committee meeting, 12:30 p.m., Administration Building, 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria

1/27—Family Support Parent Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road in Elyria

1/28—Early Intervention Playgroup, 5:45--7:00 p.m., Murray Ridge School

1/29—LCBDD Meeting, 12:30 p.m. Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria

1/29—Strategic Planning Meeting, immediately following the regular LCBDD meeting, 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria

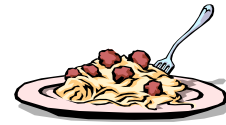
## BOARD ROOM BRIEFING

**The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 12:30 p.m. on December, 18 2009:**

Jeff Miller, Director of Vocational Services and Transportation, reported to the Board that the proposed elimination of Lorain County Transit fixed routes would leave more than 50 Murray Ridge consumers in Community Employment without transportation to their community job sites. After considering transportation alternatives for these consumers, the Vocational Services department suggested that it would be more cost-effective to utilize Murray Ridge vehicles to transport consumers to job sites than it would be to utilize the current contracted transportation service for these additional needs. Final route adjustments have not yet been made, however, and there is still hope for other funding sources to provide operating funds for Lorain County Transit. In other business, the Board unanimously approved the 2010 operating agreement between the agency and Murray Ridge Production Center, Inc. The Board further unanimously approved the Family Support Allocation for the first quarter of 2010. Al Sprague, Director of Residential Service and Support Administration reported that the Funding Caps for Supported Living, which are reviewed each December, appear to be appropriate and that adjustments would be unnecessary. In other business, the Board agreed to present an award each quarter to a Murray Ridge employee whose work efforts reflect remarkable dedication in meeting the needs of Murray Ridge consumers. Farewells were expressed to departing Board member James H. Uldrich who received a plaque in appreciation of 22 years of volunteer service on the Board.



# 2010 Lunch Menu



For the convenience of Murray Ridge consumers and their families, we are posting the lunch menu for the 2010 year in its entirety in this issue of The Murray Ridge Courier. **Please maintain this copy for your records and refer to it in the coming months, as monthly newsletters are not disseminated before the first of each month.** The menu will also be available on our website in the January 2010 edition of the monthly newsletter. If you have questions or need a replacement copy, please contact Racheal Seibert at 329-3734 at any time during the year.

**Please note that the cost of adult lunches will be \$2.80 as of January 1, 2009. The cost of student lunches will still be \$2.75.**

—	January 4-January 8	January 11-15
January 18-22	January 25-29	February 1-5
February 8-12	February 15-19	February 22-26
March 1-5	March 8-12	March 15-19
March 22-26	March 29-April 2	April 5-9
April 12-16	April 19-23	April 26-30
May 3-7	May 10-14	May 17-21
May 24-28	May 31-June 4	June 7-11
June 14-18	June 21-25	June 28-July 2
July 5-9	July 12-16	July 19-23
July 26-30	August 2-6	August 9-13
August 16-20	August 23-27	August 30-September 3
September 6-10	September 13-17	September 20-24
September 27-October 1	October 4-8	October 11-15
October 18-22	October 25-29	November 1-5
November 8-12	November 15-19	November 22-26
November 29-December 3	December 6-10	December 13-17
December 20-24	December 27-31	

**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

**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

**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

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.

### Support the Raiders!



Come cheer for the Murray Ridge Raiders Basketball Teams at the Murray Ridge School as they gear up for another exciting season!

**Home games** this season are as follows:

- 1/5/10—Team 3 vs. Elyria Vipers, 5:30 p.m.
- 1/11/10—Team 2 vs. Erie, 6:00 p.m.
- 1/11/10—Team 1 vs. Erie, 7:00 p.m.
- 1/13/10—Lady Raiders vs. Geauga, 5:30 p.m.
- 1/23/10—Team 1 vs. Cuyahoga, 10:00 a.m.
- 1/25/10—Lady Raiders vs. Sandusky, 5:45 p.m.
- 1/26/10—Team 2 vs. Geauga, 5:30 p.m.
- 1/26/10—Team 3 vs. Geauga, 6:30 p.m.
- 1/28/10—Lady Raiders vs. Stark, 6:00 p.m.
- 2/1/10—Team 1 vs. Summit, 6:00 p.m.
- 2/1/10—Team 2 vs. Huron, 7:00 p.m.
- 2/3/10—Team 3 vs. Ashland, 6:00 p.m.
- 2/8/10—Team 3 vs. Wayne, 6:00 p.m.
- 2/9/10—Lady Raiders vs. Medina, 5:00 p.m.
- 2/10/10—Team 2 vs. Lake, 6:30 p.m.
- 2/20/10—Team 1 vs. Stark, 11:00 a.m.