

## Making a Big Difference in the Lives of Those We Serve

On April 25, Murray Ridge Center held its Annual Volunteer Appreciation Reception at the Elyria Work/Activity Center. More than 200 community members and staff volunteered their services to the Agency and consumers in 2006-2007.

This year, Gerry and Ann Findlan were honored as the 2007 Volunteers of the Year. For more than 25 years both Gerry and Ann worked for Murray Ridge Center. After retiring from the Agency in March of 2006, a date picked strategically to enable them to devote much of their time to the levy campaign, they worked tirelessly to pass issue 17.

The Findlans spent countless hours and days at the Administration Building helping to create and disseminate the levy message until the mission was successfully achieved. In addition, they both have been actively involved with the Murray Ridge Golf Classic, currently in its third year, and the 5K run. Their contributions have been deeply appreciated by the Murray Ridge Center Levy Committee, as it has expanded the scope of its fundraising efforts.

Aside from levy efforts, the Findlans have volunteered at many Murray Ridge sponsored events, including the Annual Fun Fair & Safety Fest and Spaghetti Dinner, among others.

In addition, the Findlans have become lifelong advocates of the MR/DD system. They continue to educate the community about the importance of Murray Ridge Center services in the county.

When volunteers give of their time, talent and energy to those we serve at Murray Ridge Center, their generosity results in a ripple effect across the Agency. Their willingness to help others impacts the lives, not only of our consumers, but also their families, Agency staff and the community. Murray Ridge sends a big "thank you" to all of our volunteers who so readily donate their assistance.

If you are interested in volunteering at Murray Ridge Center, please contact Katie Bevan at 440/329-3734.



**Superintendent, Dr. Amber L. Fisher (center) presented the 2007 Volunteer of the Year Award to Ann and Gerry Findlan. The dynamic duo graciously accepted the award and encouraged others to become active volunteers at Murray Ridge Center.**



### Inside this Issue:

Ventilator Alternative	2
Oral Health & Hygiene	3
Consumer Corner	3
Upcoming Events	4
Employee News	5
Menus	6

If you wish to receive future newsletters by e-mail, please send your request to Katie Bevan at [kbevan@loraincountymrdd.org](mailto:kbevan@loraincountymrdd.org).

# Device May Be a Breath of Fresh Air for Many on Ventilators

Breathing is a necessity that many of us take for granted, but for others it can be a struggling task. The Diaphragm Pacing Stimulation System (DPS), an electrical stimulation device, is offering hope to many individuals who are unable to breathe without assistance from a ventilator. This device was recently developed by Thomas Mortimer, professor of biomedical engineering at Case Western Reserve University.

This revolutionary mechanism, on clinical trial, operates by stimulating the diaphragm, a large breathing muscle, using implanted electrodes that draw air into the lungs. The stimulator offers a more natural approach than ventilators, which can cause gasps and interruptions while talking.

Currently, University Hospitals of Cleveland and Shepherd Center in

Atlanta are the only facilities in the nation where the device is being tested.

Director of Nursing at Murray Ridge Center, Karen Smith, R.N., M.S.N. says, "It is tremendously exciting technology! The Diaphragm Pacing Stimulation System (DPS) will impact Pulmonary medicine like the Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (ICD) impacted cardiac medicine. The overall purpose of both devices is to improve the quality of life for people with chronic medical conditions."

The advantage of this device, which is slightly larger than an iPod, is that it could permanently free individuals of cumbersome trachea hoses and bulky 25-pound ventilating machines.

When individuals are on ventilators no air passes through the nose or mouth, causing many patients to lose

their sense of taste and smell. According to Michelle Nemeth, physical therapist at Shepherd Center, the DPS "allows them to actually regain the ability to taste and smell. That's huge for quality of life."

Since 2001, nearly 50 patients have tried the experimental device, including the late actor Christopher Reeve, who was the third person worldwide.

The current ventilator, developed in the 1960's, can cost up to \$15,000 a month for rental, backup equipment, maintenance and health care. The total cost for the DPS could be up to \$20,000, with maintenance fees of no more than \$100 a month, resulting in significant savings for consumers.

Following success of the clinical trials, approval from the federal Food and Drug Administration could come later this year.

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## Mental Retardation & Mental Illness

### What's the Difference?

People often believe that mental retardation is the same as mental illness. The truth is they are entirely different disorders. Read on to separate fact from fiction.

- **Mental retardation refers to sub average intellectual functioning**, while mental illness has nothing to do with intelligence.
- **Mental retardation is present at birth or occurs during the period of development before age 22, and can be expected to be permanent.**

Mental illness can occur at any age. It can be controlled with appropriate treatment or medication, and often people can completely recover from a mental illness.

- **Mental retardation, while impacting a smaller percentage of the population, requires considerably more resources than does mental illness, due to its lifelong nature, and the higher level of supervision and assistance with activities of daily living that it generally necessitates.**

According to the Public Images Network, mental illness impacts 16-20 percent of the national population, but most can be treated successfully with short-term therapy.

Mental illness and mental retardation are completely different conditions, and are addressed through different service systems, but share an important commonality— the need for support and understanding of the local community.



## Murray Ridge School News

### Prom

Murray Ridge School (MRS) will be holding the Senior Prom on Friday, May 18 from 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. at MRS, 9750 S. Murray Ridge Rd., Elyria. The evening's festivities will include dinner and dancing. Prom is free for senior students. Those interested in attending should notify their classroom teachers as soon as possible.

### Transition Ceremony



The 2007 Transition Ceremony will be held at MRS on June 1 at 11:00 a.m. All are welcome to join our students and staff in celebrating this momentous occasion.

### Summer Camp Details

Murray Ridge Center's five-week long summer camp, open to MRS students, will be held June 12 through July 12 at MRS. Registration forms will be sent home with students in May. For more information, contact school personnel at 440/329-3760.

## Oral Health and Hygiene: Caring for Your Choppers and Beyond

For many, just the thought of visiting the dentist brings on a terrible bout of nerves. The bottom-line is: Everyone needs dental care every day. Often, for individuals with developmental disabilities and their caregivers, maintaining a daily routine of oral hygiene can be a struggle.

The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research reports data that indicates that people with mental retardation have more untreated tooth decay, and a higher prevalence of gingivitis and other periodontal diseases than the general population.

Regular oral care can make a major impact in a person's *quality of life*.

Proper brushing technique and regular flossing are crucial activities that affect our overall health. It is no surprise that a healthy mouth encourages healthy self-esteem, and helps people eat well and avoid pain. The American Dental Association recommends annual or more frequent check-ups and cleanings. Preventative treatment can help ward off potentially major oral problems, including gum disease and tooth decay.

Successful dental care guidelines for caregivers of individuals with developmental disabilities:

- **Choose a Location...** The bathroom isn't the only place to brush someone's teeth. The kitchen or dining room may be more comfortable
- **Show and Tell...** Dental care can be intimidating for some individuals. To alleviate anxiety, show the person how to properly brush, or how you will help them complete their oral hygiene. Also, explain each step of the process
- **Routine is Key...** Be consistent using the same technique, time and place each day. A routine may soothe fears and eliminate behaviors
- **Be Creative...** It may be helpful to play a person's favorite music or allow the individual to hold a favorite toy for comfort

A developmental disability should not be a barrier to dental treatment. If you have a loved one with MR/DD and need additional advice on oral hygiene, contact your dental professional.

## Consumer Corner: Focus on What We Can Do











Artist, Ryan Tomes, 19, has been drawing for 10 years. He enjoys sketching, and is quite talented as can be seen in his playful drawing of Tigger.

Tomes graduated from Midview High School in 2006, and recently entered Murray Ridge Center's Community Employment program. When not busy drawing, he enjoys playing with the Murray Ridge soccer team.



# May 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 	9	10 	11 	12
13	14	15 	16	17	18 	19
20	21	22	23	24 	25	26
27 		29	30	31 		

## Murray Ridge Center Events

- 5/8- Primary Election Day– Polls open 6:30 a.m.- 7:30 p.m.
- 5/10- Early Intervention Evening Playgroup, Murray Ridge School (MRS), 9750 S. Murray Ridge Rd., Elyria, 5-6:00 p.m. and 6:00-7:30 p.m.
- 5/11- Spring Fling Dance, MRS. 7-9:00 p.m.
- 5/15- Family Support Parent Committee Meeting, Administration Building, 6:00 p.m.
- 5/15- LCBMR/DD Meeting, Administration Building, 1091 Infirmary Rd., Elyria, 7:30 p.m.
- 5/16- Market Day Pick-Up, MRS, 3-4:30 p.m.
- 5/17- Murray Ridge Support Group Meeting, Lorain Work/Activity Center, 4360 Oberlin Ave., Lorain, 4:15 p.m.
- 5/18- Prom, MRS, 6:30 p.m.
- 5/24- Early Intervention Evening Playgroup, MRS, 5-6:00 p.m. and 6:00-7:30 p.m.
- 5/25- Special LCBMR/DD Meeting, Administration Building, 1:00 p.m.
- 5/28- All Agency Facilities Closed– Memorial Day
- 6/1- Transition Ceremony, MRS, 11:00 a.m.
- 6/6- Last day of classes at MRS

## Memorial Day

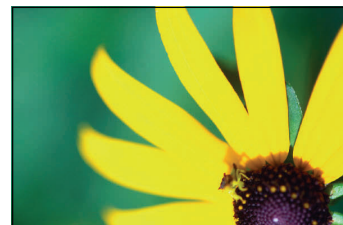
Originally called Decoration Day, Memorial Day is much more than a three-day weekend marking the beginning of summer. To many people, especially the nation's thousands of combat veterans, this day, which began in 1868, is an important reminder of those who have died serving their country.



Murray Ridge Center programs will not be held on Monday, May 28 in observance of this federal holiday.

Farewell Spring.

Hello  
Summer!



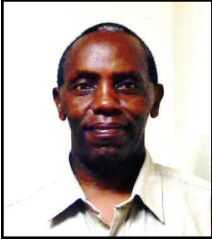
## Monkeying Around at the Zoo



The Early Intervention (EI) program will be having its annual trip to the Cleveland Metro parks Zoo on June 15, beginning at 10:00 a.m. All EI families are invited to spend the day exploring new sights and sounds, while learning about a variety of animals. Children age two and under are FREE! Participating families are encouraged to join fellow EI families for lunch at either the picnic area next to the primates or near the zoo entrance.

For more details and to sign-up for the event, please contact your EI Specialist at 440/326-0200.

## New Positions Assumed



**John Kamau** recently filled the Residential Assistant and Cook position at Meister Road Group Home. Kamau has an Associate Degree in Education, and worked as a teacher for 30 years in Kenya. Residents of Elyria, he and his wife have five children together. Kamau is actively involved in Cross Community Church.



Carlisle Township resident, **Guy Lombardo** recently became a Teacher Aide at Murray Ridge School. Prior to coming to the Agency, he worked as a Union Roofer for 31 years. He and wife, Lori have three children. In Lombardo's spare time he enjoys shooting pool.

## Upcoming Conferences & Workshops

### Brain Gym 101

Brain Gym, developed by Paul E. Dennison, PhD., uses simple movements to integrate left and right brain functions for a task. The movements are easy, enjoyable and can bring about improvements in concentration, memory, reading, writing, organizing, listening, physical coordination and more.

Conducted by Pamela Fox Denzler, OTR/L, and Barbara Latona Samson, M.Ed.

June 18, 8:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m., June 19 and 20, 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Murray Ridge School, 9750 S. Murray Ridge Rd., Elyria, 44035

*For more details on this course, please visit [www.loraincountymrdd.org](http://www.loraincountymrdd.org). To register, contact Pam at 440/892-9232, or Barb at 440/942-8811.*

### Nutrition Basics

Sponsored by the Lorain County Children and Family Council, this three part series will help to educate families about menu planning, the essentials for preparing healthy meals and snacks, how to get more for your money at the grocery store, and what nutrients are and how they affect your overall health.

May 3, 24 and June 7, 6:30-8:30 p.m., The Twelve INC, 221 Gulf Road, Elyria. To register, contact Theresa Prihoda at 440/284-4434.



## Board Room Briefing

At the April 25 meeting of the Lorain County Board of MR/DD Board:

Dr. Fisher presented the new Consumer Transportation Policy which reflects updates to the Ohio administrative code and a rule waiver recently granted by the Ohio Department of MR/DD. The rule waiver outlines requirements for transportation in staff-owned personal vehicles, and makes this mode of transportation a viable option. The policy was unanimously accepted and approved by the Board. The Board also approved the 2007 Education Service Center Agreement. Al Sprague, Director of Residential Service and Support Administration, presented an overview of the Family Support program from 1996 through 2006, noting that the first year's total of 527 participants had risen to 822 by the end of last year. The Board was also informed by Director of Operations Bill Flecher, that the designs for the new SSA building had successfully passed the local planning commission and that bids for construction could be let out as early as May

10 and May 17; the bids would then be opened on May 23, and could possibly be put before the Lorain County Commissioners as early as their May 31 regularly scheduled meeting. Dr. Fisher also announced that she and other agency personnel will be meeting with Lorain County Community College president Dr. Roy Church and members of his staff on April 30, to collaboratively explore post-secondary education opportunities for Murray Ridge consumers. In other business, the Board moved to hold a special meeting on Friday, May 25 at 1:00 p.m. and to move the regular Board meeting day to the third Monday of each month at 8:00 p.m., for the months of August through December.

Lorain County Board of Mental Retardation &  
Developmental Disabilities

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## Lunch Menus for Murray Ridge Center

Cost Per Day: Youth = \$2.45, Adults = \$2.50

### Week of April 30 - May 4 and May 21-25

**Monday-** Ham, 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

### Week of May 7-11 and May 28 - June 1

**Monday-** Chicken Patty on a Bun, Potato Wedges, 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, Jelly, Cookie

**Thursday-** Pepperoni & Cheese Pizza, Fresh Fruit, Nutri-Grain Bar

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

### Week of May 14-18 and June 4-8

**Monday-** Salisbury Steak w/Gravy, Scalloped 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