

90-Year Old Employee Retires... But Don't Count On It



Harry "Heckie" Becker pictured with his wife of 63 years, **Evie**.

Twenty-seven years ago, Oakland won the Super Bowl over Philadelphia, "*Ordinary People*" won the Oscar for best picture and IBM introduced its first personal computer. And as many of us were glued to our television sets to watch the marriage between Lady Diana Spencer and Prince Charles, then-63 year old **Harry "Heckie" Becker** was beginning his employment with Murray Ridge Center. Now at 90, Harry is going to "retire" for the second time in his life.

Harry Becker was born in Elyria, Ohio in 1917, the youngest of five children. Always active, Harry caddied at local golf courses and participated in several sports before graduating from Elyria High School in 1936. Soon after graduation, Harry joined the United States Army Air Corps. While stationed in New Guinea, he met **Evelyn**, a Columbus native who was also serving in the Air Corps. "Evie," as she is called, smiles as she recalls "I knew the moment I met Harry that I would marry him. I went back to the base after our first date and told a friend 'I'm going to marry that man.' We were fated to be."

The couple was married on the Island of Leyte in the Philippines while still in the service. And although both had seen the world through their service with the Air Corps, Harry knew that Elyria was the only place he wanted to make his home. Harry went to work for Sam Becker and Sons, a

wastepaper plant that was the family business. Over the next many years, the couple would start a family and build their lives in the city Harry loved. They had three children, one of whom is now deceased, and would eventually be blessed with four grandchildren and two great-grand children. They felt fortunate for what life had given them.

After so many years of hard work, though, it was eventually time to sell the business and retire. So, in 1977, that is what he did. Heckie and Evie would spend the next four years traveling. However, with many years ahead of him yet, and never short on energy, Harry decided that he wanted to spend his free time helping people. When asked why he decided to work for Murray Ridge Center, Harry replied "I wanted to help the people who seemed to need me the most. I felt like I could do the most good here." Adds his wife, "The people at Murray Ridge are special, and Harry wanted to dedicate himself to helping them. Harry is a special man."

Harry has worked for the three Work Activity Centers at Murray Ridge ever since, spending most of his time with consumers who had dexterity issues or who could not see. He wanted each person, no matter what challenges they might have, to feel a sense of pride and accomplishment. **Gary Lyons**, Director of the Elyria Work Activity Center said "Harry has a genuine concern for the people he helps. He is always pleasant and willing to do whatever is needed to help our consumers. Everyone likes him."

"Harry is wonderful," said **Jessica Kolb**, Receptionist at the Elyria Work Activity Center. "He is so nice and is willing to come in almost any time he is needed, except Thursdays. Thursdays are dedicated to his wife only," she adds with a smile.

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Board Meeting Correction

The August LCBMRDD meeting will be held August 29, 2008 at 12:30 p.m., rather than 7:30 p.m. The location is still at the Administration Building, 1091 Infirmary Road in Elyria.

And whether or not it is a Thursday, Harry's good natured, sincere desire to help people extends beyond the workplace. **Bev Monteleone**, Receptionist at Murray Ridge, also happens to be a neighbor of the Beckers. She recalls a knock at her door after she and her husband moved into their new home years ago. "It was such a cold, snowy day and we weren't expecting anyone, so I thought 'Who could that be?'" " She opened the door to see Harry standing there with a plate of his wife's famous baked goods as he gave her a warm "Welcome to the neighborhood!" Monteleone says that the Beckers have been wonderful neighbors ever since, adding "he and Evie are just exceptional human beings."

When not engaged in acts of neighborly goodwill, lifting the spirits of co-workers, or winning the "Man of the Year" award from his Temple, Harry still enjoys taking his wife to Cascade Park to listen to music, or on picnics with nothing but a bucket of chicken and each other's company. Said Evie of their relationship "We each come first for the other."

It is clear from observing the two of them that the couple is still very much in love and committed to one another's happiness. And in talking with Harry, it is also clear why he is so liked and respected by everyone at Murray Ridge Center...and why he will be so missed as he retires this month. You have served your country, your family and your community well, Harry. Your life serves as a reminder to all of us: keep it simple—help others.

Further News You Might Use...



We are often in receipt of information from external sources on offerings designed for people with MR/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.

—The Editor

Happy Labor Day!

Today, many Americans may view Labor Day as a final chance for family barbecues and pool parties. However, the origin of Labor Day is something quite different in nature. In the late 1800's working conditions were bad, hours were long and child labor laws were weak. So, on September 5, 1882, more than 10,000 workers gathered in New York for the first Labor Day parade to protest such conditions and to honor one another. While the holiday would not become official for 12 years, other states also began holding parades every September. Finally, in 1894, following a massive railway boycott which drew significant public attention to the plight of laborers, Congress declared the first Monday in September to be Labor Day. This September, we at Murray Ridge honor all Lorain County workers and wish you all a happy Labor Day!



Life's a Picnic

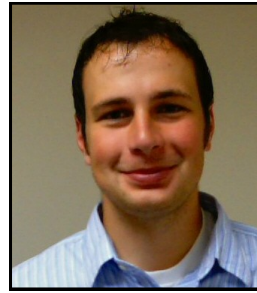


Former Early Intervention (EI) student Jeremy Minnich teaches current EI student Quinten Hines how to bowl at the Annual Early Intervention Picnic held at the Murray Ridge School recently.

New Faces in Murray Ridge Places



Alyssa Anger joins the Liberty Lane Home as a Group Home Aide/Housekeeper. She is studying Special Education at Cleveland State University and enjoys playing volleyball.



Mark Novak joins the Murray Ridge School as a Teacher. He earned his B.S. in Education from Bowling Green State University and enjoys golf and reading.



Cheryl Bieri joins the Murray Ridge School as a Teacher. She earned her B.S. in Education from Ashland University. She resides in Amherst with her husband and enjoys reading and spending time with friends.



Jennifer Samol joins the Meister Home as a Group Home Aide/Housekeeper. She currently is working toward her RN degree at Lorain County Community College. She loves the outdoors, reading and music.



Kristin Frankish joins the Murray Ridge School as a Teacher. She earned her B.S. in Education from Ashland University and previously taught pre-school in Vermilion. She loves to garden and plan parties, and is active in her church.



Terry Strinka joins the Oberlin Work Activity Center as a Workshop Aide. In his spare time, Terry enjoys restoring old cars and motorcycles.



Patricia Friedt joins the Murray Ridge School as a Teacher for a satellite classroom with the Columbia Schools. She earned her B.S. and M.A. degrees from The Ohio State University. In her spare time she enjoys gardening and boating.

Murray Ridge Employees: Save the Date!

The annual employee In-service day will be held on Friday, October 10, 2008 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Lorain County Community College. A variety of topics will be offered.

We look forward to seeing everyone for an informative and inspiring In-service!

The Cream of the Crop

Once again, Murray Ridge Center enthusiastically participated in the annual North Ridgeville Corn Festival Parade on August 10.

Pictured left to right: **Mike Narvaez, Robert Conrady, Alec Seibert** and **Tim Eichelberger**.



Upcoming Class

Triumph Through the Challenges of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, Lorain County General Health District. The three-hour sessions are offered for four consecutive Tuesdays beginning September 16, 2008. Class time are 9:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m. or 5:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m. Taught by Murray Ridge Center Early Intervention Specialist Kathy Bevaque and Lorain County Health District staff Judy Petricevic. There is no cost for the class, but space is limited. For more information call (440) 322-6367 or 236-8722.



September 2008

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
28	29	30	Fall			

Activities & Events

- 9/1—Agency Closed in Observance of Labor Day
- 9/2—First Day of Preschool for Murray Ridge School students
- 9/8—Murray Ridge School Book Fair Week
- 9/8—Murray Ridge Support Group meeting, 4:15 p.m., Elyria Work Activity Center, 1095 Infirmary Road, Elyria
- 9/9—Murray Ridge School Open House
- 9/11—Early Intervention Playgroup, 5:00-6:00 p.m. and 6:00-7:00 p.m., Murray Ridge School, 9750 S. Murray Ridge Road, Elyria
- 9/16—Family Support Parent Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria
- 9/19—Murray Ridge Support Group Dance, 7:00 p.m., Murray Ridge School, 9750 S. Murray Ridge Road, Elyria
- 9/25—Early Intervention Playgroup, 5:00-6:00 p.m. and 6:00-7:00 p.m., Murray Ridge School
- 9/26—LCBMRDD Meeting, 12:30 p.m. Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria



Lunch Menus

Cost Per Day: Youth = \$2.55, Adults = \$2.55

September 15-19
October 6-10

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

September 1-5
September 22-26
October 13-17

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/Lowfat Dressing, Fresh Fruit, Nutri-Grain Bar

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



September 8-12
September 29-October 3
October 20-24

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

Annual Transportation Safety Instruction



Murray Ridge Center wants your ride into our program sites to be a safe one. **Jeff Miller**, Director of Vocational Services for Murray Ridge Center, suggests the following guidelines for both adults and children when utilizing transportation services provided by Murray Ridge Center.

Many of our consumers are also able to travel about the community through the use of public transportation. We want your trips to be safe ones!

WAITING FOR THE BUS

1. Be five minutes early. Wait for the bus at least ten feet from the road.
2. Dress properly-winter clothing, hats, mittens and boots will help to keep you warm in the winter.
3. Watch for the bus red lights.
4. Wait until the bus has stopped and the door opens before stepping into the roadway.
5. Wait for the driver to signal to cross. Cross at least ten feet in front of the bus.
6. Use the handrail when stepping onto the bus.
7. If you use a wheelchair, it must be equipped with a functioning seat belt. The wheels should lock, as well.

BUS SEAT SAFETY RULES

1. Follow all of the driver's instructions.
2. Speak softly so the driver will not be distracted. At railroad crossings, be quiet.
3. Stay seated until your stop.
4. Never put head, arms or hands out of the window.
5. Keep aisles clear and free of tripping hazards.
6. Tell the driver or monitor if you are being bullied.
7. Do not eat on the bus as this could present a choking hazard.

GETTING OFF THE BUS AT HOME

1. If you have to cross the street in front of the bus, walk at least ten feet ahead of the bus along the side of the road, until you can turn around and see the driver.
2. Make sure that the driver can see you.
3. Wait for the signal from the driver before beginning to cross.
4. When the driver signals, walk across the road, keeping an eye out for sudden traffic changes.
5. Do not cross the center line of the road until the driver has signaled that it is safe for you to begin walking.
6. Stay away from the bus' rear wheels at all times. If you drop something near the bus, leave it.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

1. When you enter or leave a vehicle, watch for slippery or uneven pavement and other hazards that could cause you to fall.
2. Have your LCT ID, bus fare, ticket, or pass ready to avoid losing your balance while looking for it.
3. Do not carry too many packages-always leave a free hand to grab a railing.
4. Allow extra time to cross streets, especially in bad weather.
5. If it's dark outside, wear light-colored or reflective clothing.
6. Do not talk to strangers. If you are being bothered by someone, tell the driver immediately.
7. If you use a stop assistance card, remember to show it to the driver as you board the bus.
8. Most LCT stops are not sheltered. Dress appropriately for the winter weather, and utilize sunscreen in the summer.
9. Whether you are in a bus, car or van-**ALWAYS WEAR YOUR SEATBELT IF THE VEHICLE IS EQUIPPED WITH ONE.**

FIRST STUDENT CHANGES

Murray Ridge Center contracts with First Student, Inc. for most of our transportations services. First Student is in the process of installing a system that will enhance safety. The Zonar System will not only make routine vehicle inspections easier, it will also notify the driver if the post-trip inspection for remaining passengers has been missed. If the driver fails to go to the back of the bus after the bus is turned off, an alarm will sound. This alarm can only be disabled at the back of the bus.



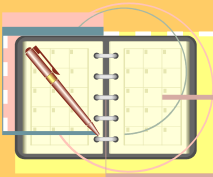
Lorain County Board of Mental Retardation
& Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center
1091 Infirmary Road
Elyria, OH 44035

Visit our Web site
www.loraincountymrdd.org

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Save the Date



The 8th Annual Ohio Adult Sibling Conference will be held November 7-8 at the Marriott Airport Hotel. This annual conference

is designed to give adult siblings of brothers and sisters with developmental disabilities an opportunity to share information, ideas and family experiences. This year's topics include Advocacy and Future Planning, Accessing Services and Supports, Sibling Research, The Vision of the Future and Assistive Technology.

The registration fee is \$85 and includes meals and materials. Registration can be completed online at www.ohiosibs.com, or you may contact Dr. Tom Fish at fish.1@osu.edu for more information.

Limited scholarships are available through the Lorain County Board of MR/DD. For more information, contact Racheal Seibert at (440) 329-3734.

A Rafting We Will Go



Recently, more than 50 staff, family and friends of Murray Ridge Center converged on Fayetteville, WV for the annual White Water Rafting event. The group paid their own way and staff used vacation time to learn team building while navigating the rapids of the New River in "Wild and Wonderful" West Virginia.