

MONTHLY



MurrayRidgeCenter
HELPING PEOPLE...FOR A LIFETIME

MURRAY RIDGE COURIER

AUG 2023



Murray Ridge parade participants ready to march at the North Ridgeville Corn Festival on August 13th! Pictured from left to right: **Sarah Ward**, **Tim Quisenberry**, **Charles Johnson**, and **Jeremy Foster**

In Lorain County, all involved have been extremely fortunate to have a housing corporation governed by highly committed and long-standing board members with significant expertise in areas relevant to the operation of the housing board.



— LCBDD Superintendent Amber Fisher

Read more about the Murray Ridge Housing Corporation on pages 4 and 5



SUMMER FUN WITH FOOD

Adult Program participants at our Elyria Opportunity and Vocational Center (EOVC) have been busy growing, harvesting, and preparing food! Last month, some folks took a trip to Baumhart Berry Farm to pick some blueberries. Back at EOVC, Ken Lewis held his famous “Cooking with Ken” class throughout the summer, where participants choose recipes and then learn how to prepare them.



Left to right: **Joseph Linden** and **Michael Elliott** ready to pick some berries



Haley Philman harvesting blueberries



Ashley Tarrant preparing a meal with friends



Scott Isaak proudly displaying his dish



Pictured left, left to right: **Tim Quisenberry** and **Scott Isaak** showing off their harvest from the EOVC garden

Pictured above, left to right: **Justin Tucker**, **Tim Quisenberry**, **Scott Isaak**, and staff **Mary Shimer** pick green beans from the EOVC garden

Garden Club Harvest

It's harvest season, and our Adult Program participants at EOVC have been picking the vegetables they planted earlier in the year. They've grown and gathered green beans, peppers, fresh greens, and more. They've even collected zucchini, which they baked into zucchini muffins in a “Cooking with Ken” class! Planting and harvesting a community garden provides individuals with developmental disabilities not only with fresh produce but also with a bountiful array of life skills, confidence, and a sense of accomplishment that nurtures both their growth and the garden's.



ART DISPLAY AT THE AMHERST HEALTHPLEX

The Lorain County Metro Parks' Amherst Healthplex has long been a wonderful community resource for individuals with developmental disabilities. After a recent remodeling, the Healthplex has showcased new original artwork created by Adult Program participants from our Opportunity and Vocational Centers!



EARLY INTERVENTION AT THE SPLASH PAD



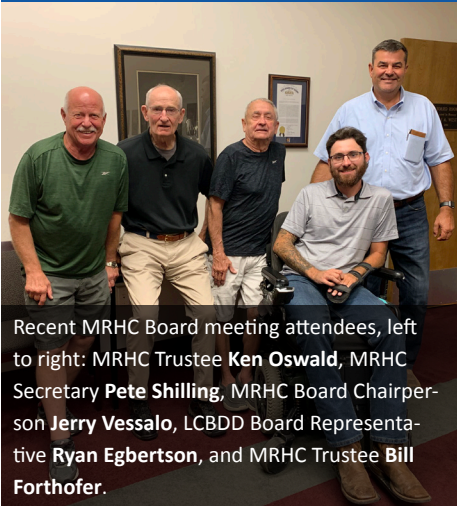
Hailey Diedrick enjoying a slide



Leisel Abraham splashing around with mom, Britney

Recently, some Early Intervention (EI) families and staff enjoyed aquatic playtime at the Splash Pad at Lorain County Metro Parks' Amherst Healthplex! It was a fun opportunity for EI families to meet, and for the children to socialize and explore play spaces in the community.

MURRAY RIDGE HOUSING CORPORATION



Recent MRHC Board meeting attendees, left to right: MRHC Trustee **Ken Oswald**, MRHC Secretary **Pete Shilling**, MRHC Board Chairperson **Jerry Vessalo**, LCBDD Board Representative **Ryan Egbertson**, and MRHC Trustee **Bill Forthofer**.

In the late 1980s, alternatives to licensed group homes and residential facilities for people with developmental disabilities (DD) became available through "Supported Living," a model of home-based service delivery characterized by the separation of housing and services (no organization/individual can provide both housing and Supported Living services to a person with DD*), and the requirement that no more than four people with DD live under the same roof. While Supported Living was designed to increase control of people with DD over their home environments and to promote community-integrated living, a major challenge of the new model was the very limited supply of rental property, particularly affordable

rental property, for groups of three to four adults – that's where non-profit housing boards, like Murray Ridge Housing Corporation (MRHC), came in. In 1992, the Ohio Department of DD began to administer a Community Capital Assistance Program through which county boards of DD and their non-profit housing corporations can access funds to purchase or build/renovate housing that is/will be rented to people with DD. The housing boards act strictly as landlord to their tenants (who are primarily people eligible for and receiving services funded/coordinated by county boards of DD) under lease agreements that comport with Ohio's Landlord-Tenant laws. After a large initial outlay of DODD 'seed dollars' to housing boards for property acquisition in the early 1990s, these boards became much more self-sustaining over time.

MRHC, which was formed as a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation in 1992, today owns 31 houses throughout Lorain County and has 113 tenants, all of whom have DD. Supported Living services for MRHC tenants are delivered by DODD-certified private providers; specified by service recipients and their support teams; included in Individual Service Plans that are written/overseen by Murray Ridge Service & Support Administrators; and funded primarily through Medicaid waivers that

are administered by the Lorain County Board of DD (LCBDD), and funded through a combination of federal funds (65.12%) and LCBDD dollars (34.88%). **In Lorain County, all involved have been extremely fortunate to have a housing corporation governed by highly committed and long-standing board members with significant expertise in areas relevant to the operation of the housing board.**

Current MRHC Board Members:

Jerry Vessalo, Owner/ Midwest Siding Company, *MRHC Trustee since 1998, current MRHC Chairperson*

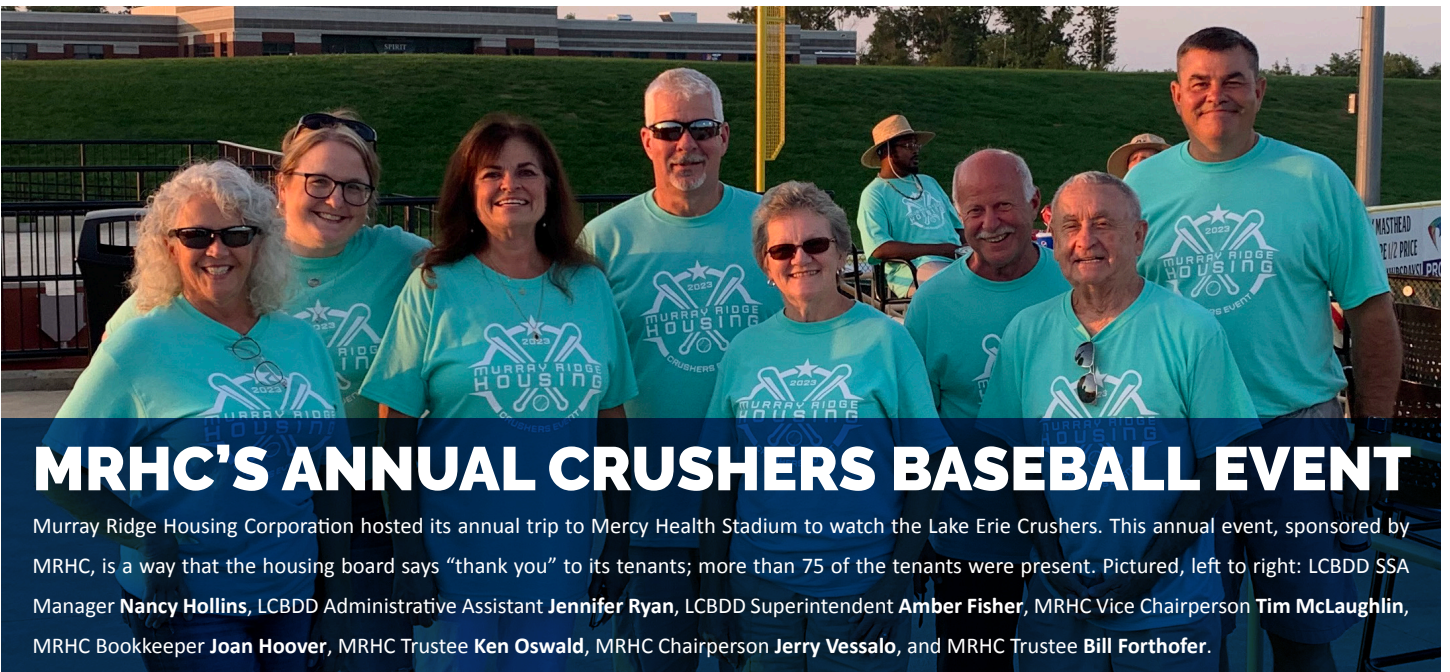
Terry "Pete" Shilling, Attorney, *MRHC Trustee since 2012, current MRHC Secretary*

Tim McLaughlin, Certified Financial Planner with White Pines Wealth Management, *MRHC Trustee since 2018, current MRHC Vice Chairperson*

Ken Oswald, Semi-retired owner of Carpentry by Kenny Inc., *MRHC Trustee since 2019*

Bill Forthofer, City of Elyria Engineering Project Manager, *MRHC Trustee since 2022*

**There are some very narrow exceptions to this under the law.*



MRHC'S ANNUAL CRUSHERS BASEBALL EVENT

Murray Ridge Housing Corporation hosted its annual trip to Mercy Health Stadium to watch the Lake Erie Crushers. This annual event, sponsored by MRHC, is a way that the housing board says "thank you" to its tenants; more than 75 of the tenants were present. Pictured, left to right: LCBDD SSA Manager **Nancy Hollins**, LCBDD Administrative Assistant **Jennifer Ryan**, LCBDD Superintendent **Amber Fisher**, MRHC Vice Chairperson **Tim McLaughlin**, MRHC Bookkeeper **Joan Hoover**, MRHC Trustee **Ken Oswald**, MRHC Chairperson **Jerry Vessalo**, and MRHC Trustee **Bill Forthofer**.

Losses in the MRHC Family

Sadly, the following four remarkable individuals passed away during their terms of service on the MRHC Board. Each having generously served on the MRHC Board of Directors for many years, we would like to recognize their invaluable contributions to Lorain County residents with developmental disabilities. Current MRHC Board Chairperson **Jerry Vessalo** provided below some warm reflections on these individuals and their contributions to the MRHC Board.



Harold West

Served on
MRHC Board
1995 – 2011

"Harold, our board's 'legal department', was a dedicated, honest, and true gentleman. He was totally dedicated to his work for the board."



Stephen Ross

Served on
MRHC Board
2000 – 2018

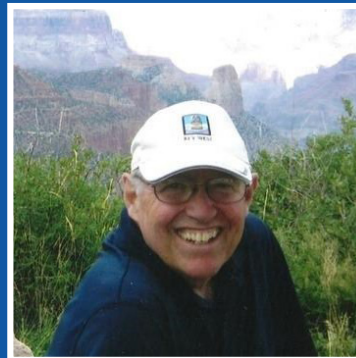
"Steve was a builder who brought real expertise to our board. He was a great asset for judging the quality of homes we were buying, as well as construction projects we needed to do on our homes."



Lester Spike

Served on
MRHC Board
1998 – 2019

"Les was the real estate agent who became a real asset to our board at a time when our board was really growing. He was a wonderful person, a real joy for our board."



Pete Barth

Served on
MRHC Board
2012 – 2023

"Pete was a real gentleman who had a great understanding of our tenants, their needs, and living conditions. His passing represents a real loss for our board. He will be missed."

LOVC Meets the Crushers' Mascot



Left to right: Kyle Brello, Kenny Martin, Jessica Mager, Rovinson Villafane, John Armstrong, and Michael Vega.

Last month, a group of Adult Program participants from our Lorain Opportunity and Vocational Center enjoyed a Lake Erie Crushers game at Mercy Health Stadium. Those present were excited to meet Stomper, the Crushers mascot.



Pictured above, left: the inimitable Stomper with Julie Sobol



Pictured above, right: the incomparable Stomper with John Armstrong

Check out our Facebook page for more photos with Stomper!



Left to right: Ashley Tarrant, Cassie Kilgore, Harold Kilpatrick, Dennis Johnson, and Brendan Stull

EOVC Visits Vermilion Beach Lighthouse

Last month, a group of Adult Program participants from the Elyria Opportunity and Vocational Center took a relaxing trip to Vermilion Beach and had a nice photo opportunity by the lighthouse.

LOVC Enjoys a Boat Ride on the Mystic Belle!

Recently, a group of Adult Participants from our LOVC spent a warm sunny afternoon cruising down the Vermilion River on the Mystic Belle. For more pictures of the boat ride, check out our Facebook page!



Left to right: Melinda Leitner, Marty Wooten, and Ronald St. Peter



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



Murray Ridge School receives IDEA Part B grant funds. If you would like to review, or provide suggestions concerning our use of these funds, please contact our Director of Educational Services Dann Swift at 440.329.3760.

Now Hiring!

FEATURED positions



Direct Support Professionals (Home Setting)

We have openings available for full-time, part-time, and PRN (as-needed) positions to care for residents of our Meister Road Home. Hours vary based on position and/or assignment.

Service and Support Administrator (SSA)

We have openings for full-time Service and Support Administrators. Hours are generally during the day.

Licensed Practical Nurse

We have openings for for part-time, full-time, and PRN Licensed Practical Nurses.

SSA/Behavioral Analyst

We have an opening for a full-time Behavioral Analyst. Hours are generally during the day.

Direct Support Professionals (Adult Program Setting)

We have openings available for full-time, part-time, and PRN (as-needed) positions to serve participants in our Adult Program. Hours are generally during the day.

Murray Ridge School Teacher

We have openings for full-time and PRN (as-needed) teachers at Murray Ridge School.

Lifeguard (Full-time, 9-month)

We have openings for full-time (9-month) Lifeguards that will function also as classroom aides at Murray Ridge School.

School Aide

We have openings for PRN (as-needed) and Full-time (9-month) School Aides at Murray Ridge School.

**We provide the training.
You provide the ♥**

To see our current openings and to apply, go to the Murray Ridge website and click "Join Our Team"

All candidates:

Must have valid Ohio drivers license, good driving record, and High School Diploma/GED. Must pass background check, drug test, and physical.

Lorain County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center
1091 Infirmary Road
Elyria, OH 44035

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Photo of the Month: Some of Murray Ridge Center's Special Olympians participated in the Northeast Golf Competition on August 12th! Pictured, left to right: Special Olympics Coach **Tonya Guitar**, Kevin Plata, Robert McFadden, John Ahart, Bobby McFadden, Annie Cirilo, and Don Hartman

Contact Us

Phone :
440.329.3734

Address :
1091 Infirmary Road
Elyria, OH 44035

Web & Email :
www.murrayridgecenter.org
kevin@murrayridgecenter.org

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