

MURRAY RIDGE COURIER

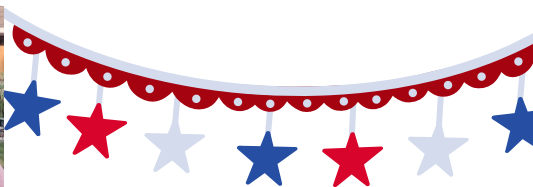


Meister Road Home Residents Shine at Community Days Parade



Pictured (l-r): Jessica Smith (Service and Support Administration Manager), Emily McGuire (MRC staff), Carlton Mitchell, Scott Helbig, Jorgann Mendosa (MRC staff), Diane Pasa, Sara Lempeck, and Sharri Wilson (MRC staff).

On Thursday, July 17, 2025, residents from the Murray Ridge Center (MRC) Meister Road Home proudly joined groups from around Lorain County to march in the Sheffield Lake Community Days Parade. With bright smiles, cheerful waves, and plenty of community spirit, the group made its way down the parade route. MRC was thrilled to be part of such a fun local tradition!



Pictured (left): Sara Lempeck, Jessica Smith (Service and Support Administration Manager), Carlton Mitchell, Diane Pasa, Jorgann Mendosa (MRC staff), and Scott Helbig. Pictured (right): Scott Helbig, Jorgann Mendosa (MRC staff), and Diane Pasa.



Spotlight on Talent!

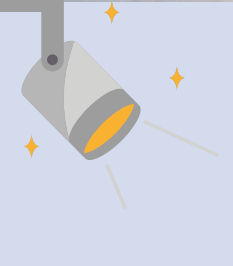
LOVC Holds its Annual Talent Showcase

On Wednesday, July 30, 2025, the Lorain Opportunity and Vocational Center (LOVC) stage came alive for the Annual Talent Showcase—and wow, did our Adult Program participants deliver!

The afternoon was bursting with music, laughter, and heartfelt moments. Michael Elliot wowed the crowd with a beautiful piano rendition of *Music Box Dancer*. Alex Jones and Michael Hawley had the audience on their feet with a powerful version of *Proud to Be an American*. And for the grand finale, Joshua Haught serenaded his girlfriend, Leslie Cirilo, with *You Are So Beautiful*—a sweet, emotional ending to this fantastic show.

A huge thank you to MRC staff Penni Shuster for coordinating the event and designing the stunning set. Your creativity and dedication made the day truly unforgettable!

From start to finish, the LOVC Annual Talent Showcase was a joyful celebration of talent, community, and the courage to step into the spotlight! Thank you to all who participated!



Pictured (above, top to bottom) Michael Elliot on piano; Iveliss Ortiz; Diana Clement.

Limbo and Laughter at Ely Square!

A group of Adult Program participants from the Lorain Opportunity and Vocational Center (LOVC) enjoyed a lively afternoon of music and dancing at Ely Square in downtown Elyria. The event was full of energy and fun—they even joined in on the limbo!



Pictured (left, l-r): Amanda Spreng (holding limbo stick), Laura Witkowski (MRC staff), Jean Morosky, DaeJon Hamlin (holding limbo stick), Karen Pavelschak (MRC staff), and Emilie Grosel. Pictured (right, l-r): Emilie Grosel and Amanda Spreng.

Celebrating 31 Years of Service

The Murray Ridge Housing Corporation is proud to recognize Jerry Vessalo, its dedicated Board President, for an incredible 31 years of service. Jerry was honored at the Housing Corporation's annual night at the Lake Erie Crushers game, where he was featured on the scoreboard (right)!



Throughout his tenure, Jerry has led with dignity, compassion, and unwavering respect for every individual served by Murray Ridge Housing. His commitment and leadership have made a lasting impact, and his dedication continues to inspire all who work alongside him.

Jerry, you are a tremendous asset to the Board, and we are truly grateful for the many years you've devoted to this important role. Let's hear it for Jerry!



Sweet Success at LOVC's Can-It-Forward Day

On August 1, the Lorain Opportunity and Vocational Center (LOVC) joined in celebrating International Can-It-Forward Day—a worldwide event dedicated to the time-honored art of canning and preserving food; and to raising awareness about how canning helps make fresh, healthy food more accessible, reduces waste, and supports sustainability for communities everywhere.

Special guest, Marty (aunt to MRC staff Sarrah Zeiter), demonstrated step-by-step how to create and can homemade strawberry jam, giving a hands-on look at the process. And the highlight for LOVC Program participants was sampling the warm, delicious jam they helped prepare!

Thank you, 'Aunt Marty', for sharing your expertise and making Can-It-Forward Day at LOVC both fun and memorable. This was more than just a tasty afternoon—it was an opportunity to learn a skill that's been passed down through generations and still makes a big difference today.



Pictured (top, l-r) Eric Hodge, Aunt Marty, Iveliss Ortiz, Devyn Dixon Sweeting; (bottom, l-r) Eric Hodge, Sarrah Zeiter, Aunt Marty, Kimberly Nadolski, Iveliss Ortiz, Jeffrey Ringlein, Alec Jones, and Dennis Johnson.



A Record-Breaking Night at the Ballpark!

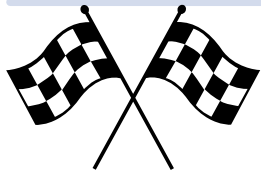
On August 7, the Murray Ridge Housing Corporation (MRHC) hit a home run with its annual night at the Lake Erie Crushers game—and set a new record with 170 attendees from Murray Ridge who filled the stands, creating a sea of MRC pride as they cheered on the home team.

A huge thank-you to everyone who joined us and helped make this our biggest and best Crushers night yet. And a special thank you to our sponsors who helped make this experience possible: **Midwest Siding, Jamie's Carpet Shop, Schlather Insurance, Tim McLaughlin with White Pines Wealth Management, Eco Tree Services, Good Neighbor Thrift Shop with Avon Lake United Church of Christ, and Stewart's Appliance.**

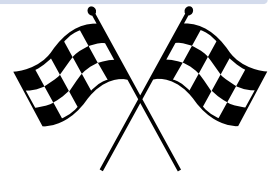
Here's to breaking the record again next year!



Pictured (top left, front row l-r): MRHC Liaison Nancy Hollins, MRHC Bookkeeper Joan Hoover, MRHC Program Assistant Jennifer Ryan, MRHC Board Member Lynne Barth, MRHC Board President Jerry Vessalo, MRHC Treasurer Ken Oswald, MRC Superintendent Amber Fisher, Charles Johnson Jr. and (back row: l-r): MRC staff Dave Biggs, MRHC Maintenance Technician Chuck Heisler, and MRHC Vice President Tim McLaughlin. Pictured (top, middle): Jerry Vessalo, being presented with an honorary engraved gavel for his 31 years of service. Pictured (top, right): Charles Johnson Jr. and Andrew Prihoda, holding his signed baseball. Pictured (bottom, left): Andrew Prihoda throwing out the first pitch; (bottom, right): Crushers mascot Stomper, Sergio Garcia and Javon Hodge



Revving Up Fun at the LOVC Classic Car Show



On July 18, 2025, the Lorain Opportunity and Vocational Center (LOVC) transformed into a car lover's paradise for the Annual Classic Car Show! From gleaming vintage beauties to the sleek lines of a modern Tesla, there was something for every car enthusiast!

The afternoon was filled with excitement as Adult Program participants and guests admired the lineup.

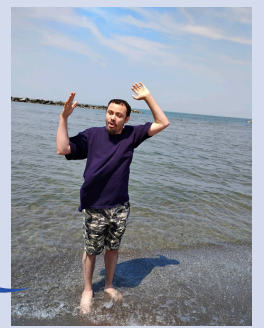
A big thank-you to everyone who brought their vehicles, shared their passion, and helped make the event such a success!

Pictured (top, l-r): Eric Hodge and Ron Hause (MRC staff); (bottom): Fred Biller.



First Splash!

During a recent Community Connection event, MRC Adult Program participant James Wilson (pictured, right) experienced the lake for the very first time. James, who is blind, had never stepped into the water before—but the joy on his face said it all!



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.

murrayridgecenter.org

Breaking Down Barriers and Giving Back!

At the June Board meeting, MRC Program Specialist Jim Nagy (pictured, right, with MRC Board President Bev Gedid and Superintendent Amber Fisher) proudly presented a check for \$1,051.48 to Friends of Murray Ridge on behalf of Mega Championship Wrestling (MCW).



The donation came from MCW's annual Breaking Down Barriers event—held on May 3 this year—which benefits local residents with developmental disabilities. Thank you, MCW!

CAMP

Summer Fun at MRS Camp!

Murray Ridge School (MRS) was once again buzzing with laughter, learning, and adventure as students enjoyed another unforgettable session of Summer Camp!

From arts and crafts to outdoor games, water play, and themed activities, every day brought new opportunities to explore and have fun.

Campers enjoyed new themes each week, with the final week of camp being all about caring for our earth! They made "How to Save the Earth" spin wheels, collected items for recycling, created real compost using natural materials, and even got up close with live worms--learning all about how they help the soil.

A big thank-you to our amazing Camp staff for bringing energy, creativity, and care to every activity. Here's to a summer filled with smiles, memories, and the kind of magic only camp can bring!



Pictured (front row, l-r): Alexis Miranda, Lana Ayala, Sariah Lugo; (back row, l-r): Sebastian Serrano, Josiah Tripp; Sariah Lugo and Jennifer Hakko (MRS Speech Language Pathologist); Scarlet Wallace and Nicole Geen (MRS Occupational Therapist); and Luca Dillon.



Blooming Fun at Baumhart Farm!



A group of Adult Program participants from the Lorain Opportunity and Vocational Center (LOVC) had a blooming good time at Baumhart Berry Farm! With the sunflower patch in full bloom, everyone enjoyed picking their own bright bouquets of sunshine. A beautiful butterfly even made a surprise appearance, adding a touch of magic to the day.



Pictured (l-r): Penni Shuster (MRC staff), Judy Armstrong, Austin Carpenter, Gabriel Maldonado, and Hector Ortiz.



Putt-Putt Fun at Swings-N-Things!

Adult Program participants from the Oberlin Opportunity and Vocational Center (OOVC), (pictured, l-r) Sean McCaffrey, Sandy Tite, and Andrea Stewart had a blast swinging into summer fun with a round of putt-putt at Swings-N-Things, showing off their putting skills and cheering each other on. It was a hole-in-one day full of smiles, friendly competition, and great memories!



Rocking It for Safe Harbor!

Adult Program participants from the Oberlin Opportunity and Vocational Center (OOVC) wrapped up their last volunteer project with Lorain County Safe Harbor by painting rocks for their beautiful Rock Garden—and got the special chance to visit the garden itself!

Seeing the colorful creations on display was a perfect way to celebrate the end of this wonderful opportunity. Thank you to everyone who helped brighten this community space with your creativity and kindness! Here's to making a difference, one rock at a time.

Pictured (left, l-r): Jeremy Risner, Cassie Kilgore, and Mandy Raycher paint rocks; (right, l-r): Jeremy Risner (front), Dustin Mitchell, Cassie Kilgore, and Mandy Raycher visit the rock garden.



Do a Job That Matters: Work for MRC!

Go to the Murray Ridge website murrayridgecenter.org and click "**Join Our Team**" (or scan the QR code, below) to see all current openings, read job postings, and to apply!



All Candidates Must:

- Have valid Ohio drivers license, good driving record, and High School Diploma/GED
- Pass background check, drug test, and physical

Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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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 awards@murrayridgecenter.org or call Jen Ryan at 440-329-3734. 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.