

# MURRAY RIDGE COURIER



## Murray Ridge Center Honors National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Each October, National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) reminds us that people with developmental disabilities belong in every workplace—and their inclusion strengthens our entire county.

Through the Murray Ridge Center (MRC) Supported Employment Program, adults with developmental disabilities are connected with meaningful, community-based jobs that match their strengths and interests. With ongoing coaching and employer partnerships, we help individuals build independence, confidence, and lasting careers.

This year's NDEAM theme—*"Celebrating Value and Talent"*—reflects exactly what we see in action across Lorain County every day: talented, dedicated individuals with developmental disabilities contributing to local businesses and shaping a more inclusive workforce.



Pictured, right (top-bottom): Alex Felici preparing food at Taki's Restaurant; John Jones packaging items for Vocational Guidance Services.

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Employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities still lag behind those for people without disabilities. That's why Murray Ridge Center is committed to job training, advocacy, and on-the-job support. Our partnerships with employers across the county create not just jobs, but also pathways to success—for workers and businesses alike.

As we celebrate NDEAM, let's continue planting the seeds of inclusion by supporting workplaces that recognize ability, not limitation. Together, we can ensure that every person has the opportunity to grow, work, and thrive!

For more information on MRC's Supported Employment Department, visit our website at [murrayridgecenter.org](http://murrayridgecenter.org).



Pictured, above: Nick Zwierecki, Bat Boy for Lake Erie Crushers baseball team.



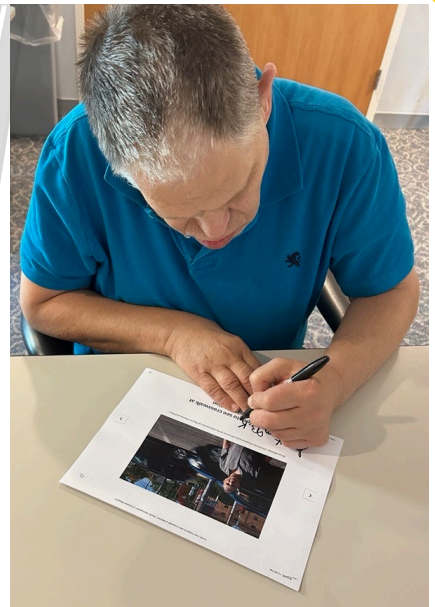
## Leading the Way for Safer Streets in Lorain

Meet Jonathan Kahn (pictured, right), a Lorain resident and MRC Adult Program participant whose dedication to community safety is inspiring change—he has become a passionate advocate for a safer crosswalk at the busy intersection of Meister Road and Oberlin Avenue.

With help from his Service and Support Administrator, Emily Ramos, and independent providers, Kristian Wright (pictured with Jonathan, bottom right), and Crystal Clark, Jonathan is pursuing his goals—both personal and civic. "I just want a safe way to get across," he told *The Chronicle* in a 2024 interview, emphasizing the need for crosswalk improvements for himself and his neighbors, including children and people with disabilities.

Jonathan's advocacy aligns with Lorain's Active Transportation Plan, which already identifies this intersection as a priority for safety upgrades.

Jonathan's dedication is an everyday reminder that one person's voice can make a real difference. [Read his full story at chroniclet.com!](https://www.chroniclet.com)





# Murray Ridge's Own Author Spreads Holiday Cheer!

Meet Christopher (Chris) Wiles—writer, artist, cat snuggler, and now published author! With a lifelong love of writing, drawing, and treasure hunting at flea markets, Chris has turned his creative passions into something truly special: his very first book, *The Three Wise Polar Bears*.

With the encouragement of his dad and independent provider Ron Wiles, the guidance of his Service and Support Administrator (SSA) Theresa Godhard, and the friendship of fellow author Sherry Jones (from Jamie's Flea Market), Chris brought his Christmas story to life. "If you can make someone's dreams come true, you should do it," says Sherry—and that's exactly what she helped Chris do!

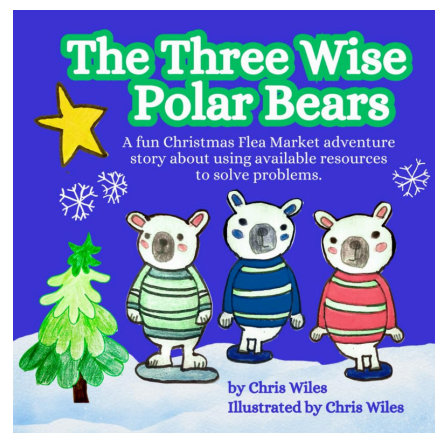
*The Three Wise Polar Bears* is a heartwarming holiday adventure starring three lovable polar bears—Pugwash, Pemberton, and Ponoka—who set out on a flea market mission to find gifts for Santa. Along the way, they discover the true spirit of Christmas in the most unexpected way. It's a charming read for anyone who loves holiday traditions, meaningful messages, and stories that make you smile.

Chris's goal is to sell 1,000 copies and inspire others with disabilities to chase their creative dreams. His dad beams with pride when talking about what Chris has accomplished, saying "I'm incredibly proud of my son and happy to support him in this endeavor." Theresa adds, "We're celebrating Chris for this amazing achievement and can't wait for book number two—already in the works!"

A signed copy of Chris's book now hangs proudly in the SSA Provider Compliance Office—a joyful reminder of his creativity, determination, and holiday spirit.

Support Chris and grab your own copy by [visiting his Amazon store](#)—100% of proceeds go directly to him!

Pictured (top-bottom) Chris with his book; (l-r) Sherry Jones, Chris, and Ron Wiles; Chris signing his book for the SSA office.





## Celebrating National DSP Week at Murray Ridge!



Pictured above: OOVCS DSPs and building staff.

From September 7-13, Murray Ridge Center celebrated National Direct Support Professional (DSP) Week, a time to recognize the incredible dedication and compassion our DSPs show every day.

Throughout the week-long celebration, Terri Camp (Director) and John Syrowski (Habilitation Manager) treated their amazing DSP staff to fresh donuts, and rolled out a yogurt buffet complete with fresh fruit, granola, and other tasty toppings—sweet ways to say thank you for all they do.

John also created a sign, suited up in a giant bear costume, and had an absolute blast skipping around the parking lot to greet staff as they arrived to work. There's nothing like starting the morning with smiles, laughter, and a very enthusiastic bear!



Pictured, above: John Syrowski.

The joyful smiles were a reminder to all at MRC just how special our DSPs are. Their hard work, positivity, and care make a world of difference—and we're so grateful to have them as part of the Murray Ridge family!



## Let's Hear it for Our MRC Volunteers!

MRC Adult Program participants spend a lot of time volunteering at the Friendship Animal Protective League (FAPL)—and it is always a “paws-itively” wonderful experience!

During their volunteer work, participants helped care for the animals by preparing treats, organizing supplies, and lending a hand wherever needed. Most of all, they enjoyed spending time with the cats and dogs, giving them love, attention, and a few extra belly rubs.

The partnership with the Friendship APL gives these volunteers a chance to give back to the community while practicing important job and social skills—all while surrounded by furry friends!



Pictured (l-r): MRC volunteers Jackie Allen and Tim Quisenberry, and Cassie Kilgore.

## LOVC Savors the Last Days of Summer!

Adult Program participants from the Lorain Opportunity and Vocational Center (LOVC) made the most of summer's final few sunny days.



The men enjoyed a peaceful afternoon at Beaver Creek Reservation, soaking up the sunshine, fresh air, and scenic views—a perfect way to unwind and wrap up the season.



The ladies gathered at Lorenzo's Pizzeria in Lorain to celebrate Chelsie Jenkins' birthday with delicious food, laughter, and great company.

From the beauty of nature to the joy of friendship, it was a wonderful way for everyone to celebrate the end of summer together!

Pictured, left (l-r) Annie Cirilo, Tiajana Crumble, Michelle Miller, D'Ronda Fleming, and birthday girl Chelsie Jenkins! Pictured right (l-r) Steven Gonzalez, Robert Serrano, Fred Biller, and Hector Ortiz (standing).





## Fall Fun for MRC Adults!



Brenden Stull and Cathy Pence (pictured, l-r) enjoying lunch and a walk at Black River Landing.



Brenden Stull picking apples at Apple Hill.



Schuster's Farm Halloween fun! Pictured (l-r) Destiny Kuttler, Patrick Boey, and Sandra Kilgore.



Joyce Cox at the Carlisle Reservations art gallery.



A visit to Oberlin Library! Pictured (l-r) Cassie Kilgore, Saundra Kilgore, Mary Gressler, Becky Young, Amanda Neal.



Taylor Tanner enjoying Oberlin Opportunity and Vocational Center coffee bar!



Schlechter Brothers Country Harvest in Amherst (bottom pictures). Pictured, left (l-r): Will Schlechter (owner), DaeJon Hamlin, Thomas Wohlever, Joseph Linden, Dennis Johnson (back), Justin Tucker, Helena Hunt (back), Austin Carpenter, Penni Shuster (staff, back), John Armstrong (purple), Gabriel Maldonado (back), and Dennis Bills. Dennis Johnson and Joseph Linden. (middle) and DaeJon Hamlin, Austin Carpenter, and Dennis Bills (right) enjoy a hayride!



# MURRAY RIDGE RAIDERS

## 2025 – 2026 HOME BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

| DATE                         | TIME     | TEAM    | OPPONENT              |
|------------------------------|----------|---------|-----------------------|
| 11/12/2025                   | 6:00 PM  | RED     | STRONGSVILLE          |
| 11/12/2025                   | 7:30 PM  | GREY    | STRONGSVILLE          |
| 11/29/2025                   | 11:00 AM | SCARLET | STARK PUBLIC          |
| 12/04/2025                   | 6:00 PM  | GREY    | ASHLAND COUNTY        |
| SUPER SATURDAY<br>12/06/2025 | 8:30 AM  | RED     | STRONGSVILLE          |
| 12/06/2025                   | 10:00 AM | GREY    | STRONGSVILLE          |
| 12/06/2025                   | 11:30 AM | SCARLET | ROCKETS               |
| 12/06/2025                   | 1:00 PM  | RED     | LAKE COUNTY           |
| 12/06/2025                   | 2:30 PM  | GREY    | TUSCARAWAS            |
| 12/06/2025                   | 4:00 PM  | SCARLET | TUSCARAWAS UNIFIED    |
| 12/15/2026                   | 6:15 PM  | RED     | SANDUSKY WOMEN'S TEAM |
| 12/16/2025                   | 6:00 PM  | GREY    | LAKE COUNTY           |
| 01/07/2026                   | 6:00 PM  | GREY    | GEAUGA                |
| 01/08/2026                   | 6:00 PM  | RED     | PORTAGE COUNTY        |
| 01/10/2026                   | 10:00 AM | GREY    | MEDINA                |
| 01/10/2026                   | 11:15 AM | SCARLET | MEDINA                |
| 01/12/2026                   | 6:00 PM  | RED     | ERIE COUNTY           |
| 01/17/2026                   | 10:00 AM | GREY    | SUMMIT                |
| 01/17/2026                   | 11:30 AM | SCARLET | SUMMIT                |

**All Home games are played at Murray Ridge School,  
9750 Murray Ridge Rd, Elyria, OH 44035**



## Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities

1091 Infirmary Rd.  
Elyria, OH 44035



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1091 Infirmary Road,  
Elyria, OH 44035

## Boardroom Briefing

**The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 6:30 p.m. on September 29, 2025:**

Board member Rebecca Cornman gave an update on the selection of a nominee to receive the Quarterly Exceptional Service Award. The next board meeting was rescheduled for November 03, 2025. The date/time of the next Organizational Meeting was set for January 26, 2026, at 6:30 pm. The Board appointed Board Member Ryan Egbertson as delegate and Superintendent Amber Fisher as alternate to the 2025 delegate assembly of the Ohio Association of County Boards Serving People with Developmental Disabilities. The Board visit to Murray Ridge School, to occur on October 16, 2025, was discussed, as was upcoming Board training on Charting the Life Course, and HCBS Settings and Care Coordination.