

# MURRAY RIDGE COURIER



MurrayRidgeCenter  
HELPING PEOPLE...FOR A LIFETIME

## 428 Pounds of Kindness: MRS Boy Scouts Give Back in a Big Way



Pictured, front row (l-r): Ja'quan Warren, Jacob Gladding, Jonas Bennett, Jayden Nagy - all soon-to-be graduating seniors at Murray Ridge School.

Members of the Murray Ridge School (MRS) Boy Scout troop rolled up their sleeves and delivered donations from their recent food drive to Second Harvest Food Bank — and the results were incredible!

These hardworking scouts collected an amazing 428 pounds of non-perishable food for local families in need! From canned goods to pantry staples, every single donation will help stock shelves and support neighbors right here in Lorain County.

We are incredibly proud of the MRS boy scouts for turning service into action and proving that even small acts of kindness can make a huge impact. A big THANK YOU to all who donated, spread the word, and helped make this project such a success!



# Elyria Sports Hall of Fame Induction for 2009 Special Olympics Team

Founded in 1971, the Elyria Sports Hall of Fame is dedicated to honoring the past, present and future of athletic accomplishments in the city of Elyria, Ohio. The Murray Ridge Center 2009 Special Olympics basketball team (pictured, right) was honored during the 54th Annual Elyria Sports Hall of Fame (HOF) dinner and banquet held on May 2, 2026, at Lorain County Community College.



This incredible recognition celebrated the team's dedication, teamwork, and perseverance. The team also received an official proclamation from Elyria Mayor Kevin Brubaker recognizing its achievements and contributions to the community. Congratulations to our Elyria Hall of Famers on this unforgettable honor!



## Talking Sports with WOBL

Recently, Charles Johnson Jr. and Sports Director Dave Rivera (pictured, left) sat down for an interview about the 2009 Special Olympics basketball team being enshrined into the Elyria Sports Hall of Fame. The annual banquet was held on May 2 at Lorain County Community College. Charles remarked that he "is so happy and proud to be a Murray Ridge Raider, and it is a great honor to be in the Elyria Sports Hall of Fame with the team."

We thank Mr. Johnson and his 2009 teammates for bringing honor and recognition to Murray Ridge Special Olympics.

## A Firehouse Adventure for the OOVc

A group from the Oberlin Opportunity and Vocational Center (OOVC) had an exciting opportunity in April to tour the Oberlin Fire Department and get a behind-the-scenes look at the important work firefighters do every day. The visit included hands-on experiences that gave everyone a chance to explore the fire trucks, equipment, and station operations up close.

A big thank you to the Oberlin Fire Department for welcoming the group and making it such a fun and educational day!



Pictured, top (l-r): Joanne Gall and Leon McMain examine firehoses; below, right: Patrick Boey tries out a backpack pump.



**LCBDD PRESENTS**  
**A DISCUSSION ON MENTAL HEALTH**

**When? Where? What Time?** ★★  
 June 5<sup>th</sup> 2026, at 11 am. -  
 Norton Culinary Arts -  
 Center - LCCC 1005 -  
 Abbe Rd N, Elyria, OH  
 44035 **With Special Guest!**  
 Riveon  
 Mental  
 Health &  
 Recovery

For all -  
 Eligible -  
 Adults!

**RSVP IS REQUIRED**

Spots are limited, and an RSVP is -  
 required. -  
 Please RSVP to Provider Support at -  
 440-324-2366 -  
 or providersupport@ -  
 murrayridgecenter.org -

FUNDED BY THE MYRTLE'S ENDOWMENT FUND AND THE -  
 COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF LORAIN COUNTY -

FREE FAMILY  
 FUN DAY!

SATURDAY,  
 APRIL 25TH

11AM - 2PM

**Ensure They Shine**

NORTH PARK  
 ICE ARENA

Department of  
 Children & Youth



Pictured above are Murray Ridge Early Intervention (EI) staff and EI service coordinators and evaluation staff from Neighborhood Alliance

The Ensure They Shine event was held on April 25 at the North Park Ice Arena in Elyria. Murray Ridge Center's Early Intervention Department created a "Little Rays Play Area" specifically for children under the age of three, and also turned a room at the ice rink into a sensory/quiet room for anyone who needed a calm space.

Just under 600 individuals attended from Lorain County and more than 50 community agencies shared their information in the Resources Area.

The event was sponsored by Lorain County Children and Families First Council, Lorain County Children Services, the Elyria Parks and Recreation Dept. and the Ohio Department of Children and Youth, Ohio Children's Trust Fund.

Families had a fun day with face painting, dancing, bounce houses and crafts!

**Back by popular demand:  
 LCBDD Presents BASIC  
 SELF-DEFENSE SKILLS!**

**For All Eligible Adults!**

- **Where:** Tracy's Karate: 2284 Kresge Dr. Amherst, OH 44001
- **When:** The Second Thursday of The month from 11 AM-12 PM
- May 14<sup>th</sup> 2026
- June 11<sup>th</sup> 2026
- July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026
- August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026
- September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026
- October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026
- November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Spots are limited, and an RSVP is required. Please RSVP to Provider Support at 440-324-2366 or providersupport@murrayridgecenter.org

Funded by The Myrtle's Endowment Fund and the Community Foundation of Lorain County

## Honoring Hadley's Bright Light

Murray Ridge School (MRS) was incredibly touched to receive a generous donation from Courtney and Justin Victor; their children Landen, Raelynn, and Liam; and extended family and friends, in loving memory of Hadley Victor, a former MRS preschool student.

Hadley (pictured, top right) brought joy and light to everyone around her, and her family continues to honor her beautiful spirit by supporting organizations that make a difference. We are deeply grateful they chose MRS this year.

Their thoughtful donations will help support therapy events, summer camp activities, and classroom resources that will brighten the days of so many students.

Thank you to the Victor family for your kindness, generosity, and for helping Hadley's light continue to shine throughout our school community.

Pictured, right bottom (l-r): Courtney Victor (Hadley's mom) and Hadley's grandmother with the donations for Murray Ridge School.



## MRS Students Get Some Fresh Cuts

A huge thank you to The Ridge Barbershop for returning to Murray Ridge School to help our students get prom-ready in style!

This wasn't just haircut day — students enjoyed the full barbershop experience by checking in with appointment cards, consulting with the pros on their favorite styles, and even practicing etiquette skills by tipping their barbers.

Best of all, the fun wasn't just for seniors — younger students joined in too!

We're so grateful to the talented barbers at The Ridge Barbershop for donating their time and skills to help our students look and feel amazing.



Pictured getting new haircuts from The Ridge Barbershop staff, above left: Kenneth Kingsley; above right: Ja'quan Warren; and below, left: Luca Dillon.



# Shake, Rattle, and Roll! MRS Prom Brings the 1950s to Life

Murray Ridge School (MRS) held its 2026 prom on May 1, and it was a rockin' success!

The MRS gym was completely transformed into a dazzling 1950s celebration, complete with neon lights, classic vinyl décor, and vintage cars parked out front to welcome guests and set the perfect mood for the evening.

More than 200 students, families, and staff members joined the "Shake, Rattle, and Roll" celebration, many dressed in 50s-inspired outfits that brought extra flair and fun to the dance floor.

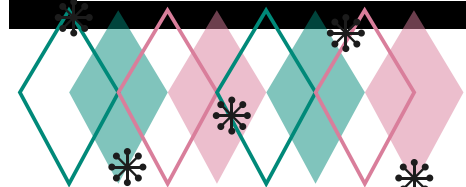
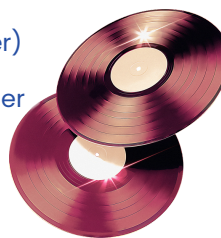
Dancing, photo booth memories, and classic tunes spun by the DJ filled the evening with joy, connection, and unforgettable moments.

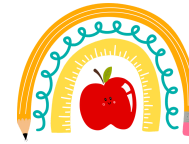
A huge thank you goes out to Lilly Tapia (MRS secretary) and Barb Reynolds (former MRS school staff) for the countless hours of planning, creativity, and hard work that made this magical night possible.

We are also deeply grateful for the amazing support from our community. The DJ, photographers, and photo booth operator all generously donated their time and services, helping to make the evening extra special for our students and families.

Special thanks to **American Legion Post 118** for its generous donation, which fully funded this year's prom and helped create a night our students and families will never forget!

Pictured, right (top-bottom): Charlotte Bush (center) with her family; Barb Reynolds (former MRS school staff) and Lilly Tapia (MRS staff); Sariah Lugo with her family; Micah Samms and Diane Davis; left to right; Dann Swift (MRS staff) congratulating all of our Prom Kings, Ja'quan Warren, Jonas Bennett, Jacob Gladding, Jordan Wicker, Nathan Reynolds, and Jayden Nagy.





## Murray Ridge Teacher Appreciation Week

During Teacher Appreciation Week, our school's admin team wanted to make sure the incredible School staff felt love every single day. They give so much to our students, and it was our joy to give a little back to them!

### Here's how we fueled up this week -

Monday - Kicked things off with a Hydration Station and new cups for the team!

Tuesday - A snack table to keep the energy high.

Wednesday - A morning boost with muffins, juice, and iced coffee.

Thursday - Personalized individual gifts (because our teachers and staff are one of a kind!).

Friday - Ending on a sweet note with a full Ice Cream Sundae Bar!

Thank you



Pictured, above (l-r): Dann Swift (Education Director), Bre Hedges (School Supervisor), and Stacie Starr (School Supervisor) serve up MRS staff some delicious ice cream sundaes.

To our teachers and staff: You are the backbone of everything we do. Thank you for your dedication, your passion, and your hearts. You are appreciated beyond words!

## Celebrating the Heart of MRC



Nurses Week was celebrated at Murray Ridge Center (MRC) May 6-12, but our appreciation for our incredible nurses lasts all year long!

Every day, MRC nurses bring strength, compassion, patience, and dedication to the individuals and families we serve. They do so much more than provide care — they create connections, offer comfort, share laughter, and make people feel safe, supported, and valued. Their kindness truly changes lives.

Nursing is not just about healthcare, but also about heart, connection, and bringing joy to others. See Director of Nursing Anita Graham sharing a joyful dance with Kara Zudell (pictured, left).

To all of our amazing MRC nurses: THANK YOU for everything you do. We appreciate you today and every day!

## Smiles All Around at LOVC!

The Lorain Opportunity and Vocational Center (LOVC) recently welcomed students from the Lorain County Community College (LCCC) Dental Hygiene program for a fun and educational visit focused on healthy smiles and good dental habits!

Adult Program participants learned helpful tips for taking care of their teeth through interactive activities and engaging presentations that kept everyone smiling and involved throughout the day.

From brushing basics to healthy habits, the LCCC students made learning both fun and informative.

A big THANK YOU to the Dental Hygiene students for sharing their time, energy, and enthusiasm with us. We truly appreciated this wonderful experience – and all the smiles that came with it!



Pictured, top (l-r): DaeJon Hamlin and Anthony Cogar receive tips from members of the LCCC Dental Hygiene program. Bottom, (l-r): Michael Telloni and VJ Mills with the LCCC Dental Hygiene team.

## Boardroom Briefing

The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 6:30 p.m. on April 27, 2026. Agency calendars were approved for July 01, 2026 – June 30, 2027; these are posted on the Agency website. Superintendent Fisher reported on the existing lease for parts of the building at 1095 Infirmary Rd., Elyria (the previous site of the Murray Ridge Elyria Opportunity & Vocational Center) that are being used by a private provider of Adult Day Support/Vocational Habilitation, ViaQuest; the Board unanimously passed a motion recommending the renewal of the lease, with additional space, for the upcoming fiscal year (July 2026 – June 2027). Director of Business Greg Westgate explained, and the Board approved a proposed agreement for LCBDD to participate in an RFP for electricity through the Ohio Schools Council.

## 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](mailto: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.

# Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities

1091 Infirmmary Rd.  
Elyria, OH 44035



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1091 Infirmmary Road,  
Elyria, OH 44035

## Super Hero Day Was Super at the OOVC



Adult Program participants from the Oberlin Opportunity and Vocational Center (pictured l-r): Timothy Rederick, Eddie Holland, Gus McKee, Eddie Taylor, Connie Rogers, Caitlin Roldan, and Patrick Boey showed off their heroic spirit with fun costumes, big smiles, and plenty of enthusiasm throughout the day. It was a fun-filled day celebrating everyone's inner superhero!

