

MURRAY RIDGE COURIER



MurrayRidgeCenter
HELPING PEOPLE...FOR A LIFETIME



MRC Softball Teams Shine at Special Olympics State Competition



The Murray Ridge Center (MRC) Raiders had a huge day on September 19 at the Special Olympics Ohio State competition in Marysville, with both the **Scarlet softball team** and **Grey coach-pitch team** winning **Division State Championships!**

The Scarlet Raiders (pictured below, left) opened with a 20–0 win over Shelby County before defeating Westerville 15–13 in a hard-fought championship game. The Grey Raiders (pictured below, right) followed with wins of 22–5 over Lucas County and 26–4 over Westerville to claim their title.

Across four games, the two teams scored an incredible 93 runs while allowing just 22. Two teams, Two championships, and **one unforgettable day** for MRC Raiders teams!



Pictured (l-r), front row: Coach Scott Gezzer, Nick Zwierecki, Tim Dammeyer, Diana Clement, Jon Torres, Robert Assanakis, Coach Russell Moye; second row: Coordinator Shawn Hatcher, Ryan Brown, Robert Messenger, Logan Yatson, Jeremy Foster, Bobby McFadden, volunteers Robert McFadden and Debbie Roberts. Not Pictured: Ryan Busher.



Pictured (l-r), front row: Coach Scott Gezzer, Victor Elder, Sean Ware, Jesse Kimbro, Ajonie' Glinsey, Coach Russell Moye; second row: Noah Griffiths, George Giganti, Andrew Prihoda, Hector Lozano, Kevin Long, Alicia Lawrence Ralph LaGatta, Charles Johnson Jr., and volunteer pitcher Jerry Strickler; third row: Jason St. Marie.



MRC's **Softball Skills Team** also represented the Raiders proudly at State. Eight athletes competed alongside coaches Joe Croftcheck and Sarrah Zeiter, earning two gold medals, one silver medal, one bronze medal, three 4th-place finishes, and one 5th-place finish. Congratulations to Pamela McClain and Kimberly Herman (pictured, left, with their gold medals), Dennis Johnson, Joseph Linden, Kenney Martin, Pamela McClain, Tim Quisenberry, Alex Schneider, and Tyrese Whitfield!

LOVC Ends Summer with a Bash!

The Lorain Opportunity & Vocational Center (LOVC) sent summer out in style with its annual picnic and End of Summer Bash on September 2!

The morning was packed with fun, including face painting, BINGO, Plinko, and the popular dunking booth, where consumers had the opportunity to 'dunk' their favorite staff members with water.

There were sweet treats too, including cotton candy made by LOVC staff Penni Shuster, followed by juicy cheeseburgers grilled by Mark McIlwaine, MRC maintenance technician

And no LOVC picnic would be complete without dancing! Everyone hit the dance floor in the afternoon, filling the day with plenty of smiles and laughter.

A big thank you to everyone who helped make this year's picnic a fun way to close out the summer!

Pictured, top left: Michael Hawley ready to dunk someone; top right, Jalitza Rodriguez enjoying cotton candy; middle right: Iveliss Ortiz trying to dunk Max Diedrick (staff) at the dunking booth; bottom left: Jason Keiser getting dunked; bottom middle: Melissa Glaze having her face painted by Sarrah Pierce (staff); and bottom right: Penni Shuster (staff) handing out cotton candy to Robert Serrano and Cindy Washio (staff).



Boardroom Briefing

The Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities convened at 6:30 p.m. on September 28, 2026.

Board member Rebecca Cornman gave an update on the selection of a nominee to receive the next Quarterly Exceptional Service Award. The Board passed a resolution authorizing for public release a draft of its 2025 Strategic Plan Progress Report, and gave notice of a public forum on this document to held on October 14, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at its Administration Building, 1091 Infirmary Rd., Elyria, Ohio; a copy of the Draft 2025 Strategic Plan Progress Report can be accessed at www.murrayridgecenter.org or by calling (440) 329-3734. The Board appointed Board Member Ryan Egbertson as delegate and Superintendent Amber Fisher as alternate to the 2026 delegate assembly of the Ohio Association of County Boards Serving People with Developmental Disabilities. An upcoming site visit by board members to the Murray Ridge Early Intervention Lending Library and offices was discussed.

Building Skills, Friendships, and Confidence with PEERS



Murray Ridge Center (MRC) Adult Program participants spent the summer learning, practicing, and connecting through an adapted version of the Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS®).



Pictured (l-r), back row: Destiny Kuttler, Sean McCaffrey, Robert Assanakis, Steven Gonzalez, Chelsie Jenkins; front row: Alicia Lawrence, Chris Fowler, Charles Jarrett, Quincy Boulton, Julianuanna Mason, Abby Kisner, and Austin Athey; not pictured: Keith Onacila, Alexis Ayers.

During more than 20 sessions at the Lorain and Oberlin Opportunity & Vocational Centers, 14 program participants worked with Speech and Language Pathologist Jennifer Hakko to build practical social skills for everyday life, including how to start conversations, build friendships, handle conflict, use humor, socialize with others, and stay safe online.

The groups put in a lot of hard work throughout the summer, so there was only one fitting way to wrap it up: pizza and a celebration! Participants from both locations came together at the Lorain Opportunity & Vocational Center to recognize all they had learned and accomplished.

Congratulations to all our MRC Adult Program participants who completed the program!

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

HALLOWEEN DANCE



DON'T FORGET YOUR COSTUME!

Friday, October 30	7:00pm - 9:00pm	Murray Ridge School 9750 Murray Ridge Rd. Elyria
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****You must have a "Statement of Understanding for Attendees of Evening Dances at Murray Ridge Center" signed and on file to attend.**

NO ONE WILL BE ADMITTED WITHOUT THIS FORM ON FILE!

Fun at the Lorain County Engine Show

Adult Program participants from the Oberlin Opportunity & Vocational Center (OOVC) got to rev their engines on September 18 when they attended the Lorain County Engine Show! Brian Austin (pictured below) found his favorite car!



Delivering Meals – and Smiles!

Tyler Watkins (pictured, right) has been lending a hand with Meals on Wheels, helping deliver meals and brighten days along the way.

The volunteer opportunity has become a favorite for Adult Program participants from the OOVC, who have built wonderful relationships with the staff and volunteers at the Amherst Office on Aging. It's a great way to give back, connect with others and be part of the community.

Way to go, Tyler and the OOVC team!



Movie Day Brings Plenty of Laughs!

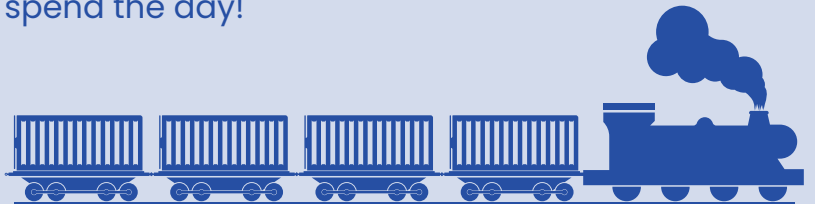
Jacob Pantalone, Cathy Pence, Brenden Stull, and Eddie Holland (pictured, right) enjoyed an afternoon movie, seeing "Coyote vs. Acme" at Regal Cinemas. Judging by all the laughter, it was a hit! The group had a great time relaxing, enjoying the movie, and sharing plenty of laughs together.



Lunch, Trains, and a Great Day Out!



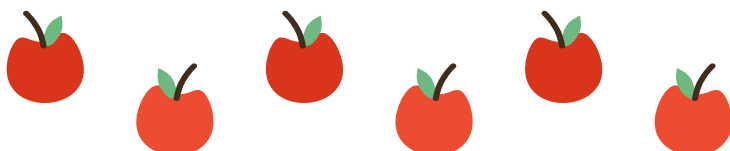
Lyn Welch (MRC staff), Clayton Rhodehamel and Steven Lender (pictured, left) – Adult Program participants from the Oberlin Opportunity & Vocational Center (OOVC) – enjoyed a fun afternoon out on September 22, starting with lunch at Wendy's before heading to Vermilion's rail viewing platform. It was the perfect way to spend the day!

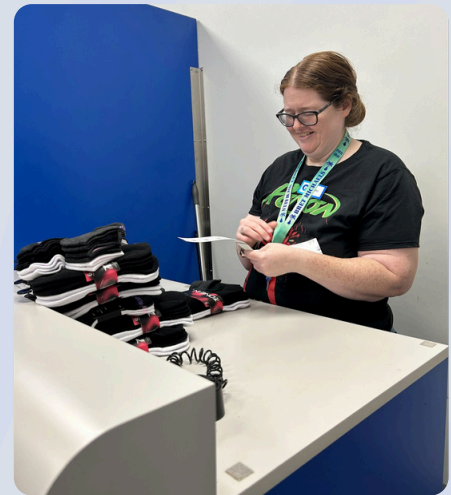


A Fall Day at Quarry Hill Orchard

Roz Everett and Brenden Stull (pictured, right), Adult Program participants from the OOVC, enjoyed a beautiful fall outing to Quarry Hill Orchard on September 28.

It was a great day to get outside, enjoy the orchard, and soak up some early autumn fun!





MRC Honors NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), a time to celebrate the talent, skills, and contributions people with disabilities bring to workplaces every day.

At Murray Ridge Center (MRC), we see that impact firsthand. Through our Supported Employment Program, adults with developmental disabilities are matched with community-based jobs that fit their interests, abilities, and goals. Job coaching and partnerships with local employers help individuals build confidence, gain independence, and grow in their careers.

This year's NDEAM theme, "Celebrating Value and Talent," is a fitting reminder that when people are given opportunities to contribute their strengths, employees, businesses, and our entire community benefit.

Pictured, top (l-r): Jane Squires at IGA bakery, Ben Werley at Giant Eagle, and Jennifer Swiers at Gabe's. Pictured, left: Dan Fenik at the Justice Center



Lending a Hand at Safe Harbor

On September 16, a group of Adult Program participants from the Oberlin Opportunity & Vocational Center (OOVC) rolled up their sleeves and spent the day giving back at Safe Harbor in Elyria!

The group helped clean up after a recent event by folding tablecloths, putting supplies away and packing up chairs. They also helped assemble hygiene bags for people served by Safe Harbor.

It was a great day of teamwork, helping others, and making a difference in the community. Thank you to everyone who pitched in!

Pictured, left (l-r): Dustin Mitchell and Jacob Pantalone.



Making the Most of September!



Adult Program participants from the OOVC headed to Lake Erie Lanes for a fun afternoon of pizza and bowling.

Pictured, above: Patrick Boey.



Recently, Adult Program participants from the Lorain Opportunity & Vocational Center enjoyed a visit to the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo!

Pictured, above (l-r): Jalitza Rodriguez, Gabe Maldonado, Austin Carpenter, and Hannah Hughes.



OOVC Adult Program participants volunteered with Neighborhood Alliance to support Meals on Wheels, lending a hand with meal preparation for local community members.

Pictured, above (l-r): Matt Schoerverth, Destiny Kuttler, and John Hall.

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.