



MurrayRidgeCenter
HELPING PEOPLE...FOR A LIFETIME

The Murray Ridge Courier

June 2014

Murray Ridge School Celebrates the Class of 2014

On May 29, 2014, friends, family members, caregivers, and Murray Ridge Center staff bid farewell to ten graduating seniors during its annual transition ceremony at Murray Ridge School.



Gianna, would be like. Gianna has Down syndrome and was previously in the Early Intervention Program at Murray Ridge Center.

"Each one of you has the opportunity now to leave here

Murray Ridge School Commencement 2014 began with a prelude by music teacher Lissa Lopez and a welcome by Director of Educational Services Dann Swift as he introduced the transferring students, Elisabeth, Tia, David, Karnisha, Agentino "T.T.", Derek, Thumpy, Bianca, and Zef.

The Murray Ridge Bell Choir played "What a Wonderful World," and then Superintendent Fisher took the podium.

"Each of you has individual gifts that will serve you and others well as you chart the courses of the rest of your lives, and the adventure has only just begun!" Fisher said. There are many people to be met, jobs to be done, and interests to pursue, and your family, friends, and service and support administrators will be there to help you plan the next stage of your lives. How exciting it will be to assist into the adult world such an incredible group of young people!"

Denise Zarrella was the guest speaker at the ceremony. Zarrella is a 19 Action News Reporter and author of the book "Not Even the SKY is the LIMIT!" The book is the result of Zarrella's journey to find out what life with her daughter,



Guest speaker Denise Zarrella

and start pursuing your dream," she said. "What is it that will bring you joy in this life? First you have to figure that out, and maybe you already have! Then surround yourself with only those that tell you that you can do anything you set your mind to."

Zarrella concluded her speech with an inspirational reminder, "Remember that people who overcome challenges to succeed are the heroes that become the subjects of news stories, great novels, and major motion pictures. There will be good days ahead, but never forget how far you've come, how unique you are!"

Director of Vocational and Transportation Services Jeff Miller added his own encouraging words to each senior, quoting the late Maya Angelou: "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

Following the keynote address, Board President Michelle Hunt and Board Members Kurt Koepf and Dan White presented each graduate with a diploma. Finally, the thirteenth annual David Elasser Spirit Award was presented to Agentino "TT" Tilley by Kathy Oblak, mother of David Elasser, a previous student at Murray Ridge School who passed away 13 years ago.

The ceremony ended with Dann Swift wishing the seniors best of luck in the future, and thanking them for their hard work and dedication as students at

Murray Ridge School.

The festive afternoon concluded with a luncheon provided by the Parent Support Group for all graduates, their families and friends, and staff members.

Best of luck to our 2014 graduates Elisabeth, Tia, David, Karnisha, Argentino "T.T.", Derek, Thumpy, Bianca, and Zef!

Argentino "TT" Tilley, winner of the David Elsasser Spirit Award, is all smiles with his parents following the ceremony.



The Class of 2014



Jon Block transferred to Murray Ridge School. He has enjoyed meeting new people and making new friends. His hobbies include watching and recording his favorite programs, listening to his favorite music, playing games, and being with his friends. Jon has enjoyed participating in the Special Olympics both here and at his former school. Jon has chosen to walk with his class at Brookside for his graduation, and will go on to work at the Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center.



Elisabeth "Lizzy" Kantz is a very happy and social young woman. She enjoys spending time with her family, playing games, going to the park, and taking trips in the car. Lizzy's favorite weekend activities include helping her parents cook and bake, and going shopping with her mom. She is excellent at completing puzzles and loves relaxing with a magazine. After graduation, Lizzy will be attending the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center.



Karnisha Lucas is an amazing young lady who has a readily infectious smile for friends and staff. She loves switch activated interactive activities in the classroom. Karnisha is always positive and greets you with a double high five. She loves to laugh and finds humor in everything. After graduation, Karnisha will attend the Oberlin Opportunity/Vocational Center.



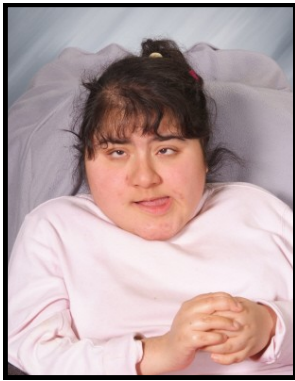
Raul "Thumpy" Montagu is a wonderful young man who has touched many lives at Murray Ridge School. He enjoys spending time with his friends and family. Thumpy enjoyed participating in many special events at the school, especially dressing up for Halloween. After graduation, Thumpy plans to pursue his interests at home.



Tia Pregun is a delightful young lady who has made many friends at Murray Ridge School. During her school years, Tia has participated in the Liaison Program and in Girl Scouts. While in Girl Scouts, Tia has consistently been a top cookie seller. After graduation, Tia plans to continue on to the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center.



Argentino "TT" Tilley is an energetic young man with a wonderful smile. He has enjoyed many activities at school including participation in the Liaison Program. TT enjoys spending time with family and friends. He loves to sing, dance., and listen to music. After graduation, TT will move on to the Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center.



Bianca Vazquez is a wonderful young lady who enjoys spending time with staff and friends in her class. She is very friendly and easy to get along with. She likes to do things on her own and is a good friend to others. Bianca loves to hum and smile. Bianca's plans for the future include attending the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center.

Derek is a very friendly, social young man. He always has a smile for school staff and students. He enjoys watching movies, visiting with friends, and eating food from Burger King. Derek has done a great job during the transition process and is looking forward to attending the Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center after he graduates.



Nick is a young man with a generous smile. He loves socializing with friends. He enjoys listening to the Beatles and other popular musical selections. Nick loves various visual displays in the classroom and enjoys stories read to him and listening to stories from the ENO board. After graduation, Nick will attend the Lorain Opportunity/Vocational Center to pursue his interests.

Zef Ziegler is a fine young man with a beautiful smile. He enjoys spending time with his family and friends. During his time at school, he has enjoyed community outings and using switches to listen to his favorite music. After graduation, Zef plans on attending the Oberlin Opportunity/Vocational Center.



The Murray Ridge 500!

On May 23, Murray Ridge School students competed in the annual Murray Ridge 500. Students and staff enjoyed creating and racing their cars.



This year, special guests Spiderman and Super Woman from Super Heroes to Kids in Ohio—a nonprofit organization that makes costumed visits to local children's hospitals, charitable organizations, and special needs centers—were on-hand to interact with students and staff!

Congratulations to all our MRS racers! And thank you to Super Heroes to Kids in Ohio and all the parents, staff, and caregivers who came out to cheer on the participants!

Kyle Orozco (right) shows off his ET-inspired bike! Sean McCaffrey and Chloe Breeding (upper right) pose with Spiderman and Super Woman, while Davasia Sales (lower right) displays her impressive chopper chair!



Enchantment Under the Sea at Murray Ridge School Prom

Murray Ridge School held its prom for transitioning students on May 9. Students, family members, caregivers, and staff celebrated the end of the school year and the beginning of summer with great food and even better dancing!

This year's theme was Enchantment Under the Sea, and school staff worked tirelessly to transform the halls and dance floor into an ocean of brightly-colored sea creatures. With help from many parents and through fundraisers and donations, Murray Ridge School was able to provide its senior class with a true high school prom experience, complete with the crowning of our senior students as king and queens of the prom!

Thank you to all the parents, staff, and community volunteers who helped make this year's prom another memorable event!



Pictured: (above left, l-r) teacher Amy Daniels, student Matthew Maraldo, teacher Cheryl Bieri, student C.J. Martin, and teacher Heather Boduch; (above middle) Tia Pregun is crowned queen by Board member Keith Boey; (above right) Emily Gessner with her parents on the dance floor; (top right) T.T. Tilley is crowned king!

Murray Ridge School Students Participate in the 34th Annual Lorain County Special Olympics

On May 22nd, Murray Ridge School students participated in the 34th Annual Lorain County Special Olympics competition at Ely Stadium in Elyria.

More than thirty Murray Ridge athletes competed in a wide range of activities, including the opening ceremony, races, softball throw, and standing long jump. Fifteen school districts throughout Lorain County competed in the games, and hundreds of parents, teachers, friends, and caregivers came out to show their support for the amazing athletes.

Murray Ridge is a proud participant each year in this event where children with developmental disabilities can showcase their exceptional athletic ability. We commend all the athletes that competed in the games, with special congratulations to our Murray Ridge School students who, once again, represented us well! Congratulations, athletes!

Quontae Taylor runs his race, CJ Martin and Mark Axford hold the Murray Ridge School banner in the opening parade, and Alyssa Maraldo gets her ribbon for participation!



Attention: Family and Staff

Adults with Developmental Disabilities and Special Needs Legal Rights and Recourses Seminar

Presented by:

The Murray Ridge Support Group

&

Attorney Mary B. McKee – Hickman & Lowder Co., L.P.A.

Mary B. McKee



Attorney Mary Bresnick McKee, an Oberlin resident who works out of the Firm's Sheffield Village office in Lorain County, not only represents Social Security Disability and Veterans' Disability claimants, but also offers special needs estate planning to help families get and keep government benefits, including guardianship, pre-application advice for parents of adult children, and special needs trusts. As a parent of a son with Down syndrome, she shares many of the same concerns her clients have. Now a shareholder, Mary graduated from Yale magna cum laude in 1982 and from Notre Dame Law School in 1985, where she was a Legal Aid intern with the Older Adult Impact Project in South Bend, Indiana. Mary's 25+ years of legal experience include working for a Social Security Disability and personal injury firm in Philadelphia, and serving as a staff attorney with the Massachusetts Department of Insurance in Boston. She then worked with the General Counsel of the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) review commission in Washington, D.C., before returning to her native Ohio to represent disabled claimants and their families. Mary continues to receive invitations to give talks and write articles for state and local bar associations, as well as for parent and disability support groups. A member of the Lorain County and Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Associations, she is accredited by the Department of Veterans Affairs to represent VA disability claimants and belongs to the National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives (NOSSCR).

Monday, June 9, 2014

7:00 P.M. TO 8:30 P.M

EOVC Cafeteria

This seminar is approved for One ODDD Credit Hour

For further information, contact George Gedid at EOVC

440-284-2720 ext. 1745

A PRESCHOOL OPTION

The Murray Ridge Preschool Program offers students with a variety of developmental disabilities the advantages of in-room therapies, an array of state-of-the-art equipment, outstanding staff and an opportunity to learn alongside typically-developing peers.

Murray Ridge Preschool Offers:

- Individualized Speech, Occupational and Physical Therapy in the classroom
- An extensive collection of early childhood educational equipment
- Full-time nurse on site
- Behavior Support Services
- Music classes



- A well-rounded curriculum based on the Ohio Early Learning Content Standards
- Dynamic, ODE-certified staff
- Physical development through indoor/ outdoor physical education classes
- Door-to-door transportation services

Did You Know...

The Murray Ridge preschool serves children with a wide range of developmental disabilities, from those with mild delays to those profoundly impacted, and Murray Ridge is a recognized leader in its comprehensive approach to teaching children with autism. The Preschool Program runs Tuesday through Friday. Children with disabilities must be referred to the Murray Ridge Preschool Program by their local school district. Applications for typically-developing children are available through Murray Ridge School (see below).

For More Information Contact:
Dann Swift
Director of Educational Services
Murray Ridge School
9750 Murray Ridge Road
Elyria, Oh 44035
440.329-3760
dswift@murrayridgecenter.org
www.murrayridgecenter.org



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June 2014

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
School Day Camp						
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
School Day Camp						
29	30					
School Day Camp						

Activities & Events

- 6/4 - Family Support Parent Committee meeting , 6:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road in Elyria
- 6/5 - Murray Ridge Support Group meeting, 4:15 p.m., Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center, 1095 Infirmary Road in Elyria
- 6/10 - Last day of school for Murray Ridge School
- 6/14 - Avon Duck Tape Festival
- 6/16 - Murray Ridge School Day Camp
- 6/19 - LCBDD Finance Committee meeting , 12:00 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria
- 6/20 - Murray Ridge Support Group Dance, 7:00 p.m., Murray Ridge School, 9750 Murray Ridge Road in Elyria
- 6/27 - Regular Meeting of the Board and Ethics Council, 12:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria
- 6/29 - Lorain International Parade

Breaking Down Barriers 4 a Huge Success!

The Breaking Down Barriers 4 event held on May 3 by Mega Championship Wrestling (MCW) brought in huge crowds and a huge donation! MCW wrestler and Murray Ridge staff member Jim "Mad Dog" Nagy presented the Board President Michelle Hunt with a check for \$1,606.24 payable to Friends of Murray Ridge at the May 30th Board meeting.

This event was bittersweet for Mad Dog, as BDB 4 marked his retirement from professional wrestling. The consumers and staff from Murray Ridge Center honored

Jim Nagy at the Board meeting with a plaque acknowledging his years of considerable contributions on behalf of people with developmental disabilities.

Superintendent Fisher and Mad Dog Manson.



BOARD ROOM BRIEFING

The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 12:30 p.m. on May 30, 2014:

Jim Nagy, MRC staff member and Mega Championship Wrestler, presented Friends of Murray Ridge with a \$1,606.24 donation from its Breaking Down Barriers 4 event held in May; Superintendent Amber Fisher presented Jim with a plaque acknowledging his years of dedication to the event. The Board discussed the recent conference in Columbus on Employment First. Director of Business John Bonko presented the tax budget; the Board unanimously approved. The Board also unanimously approved the following policy revisions: *Governing Rules and Regulations*, *Agency Chain of Command*, and *Separation*. In other news, the Murray Ridge Support Group will hold an educational program on June 9 (see flyer on p. 5); the MRSG will hold a meeting on June 5 and it's last dance until September will be held on June 20.

Lorain County Board of
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center
1091 Infirmary Road
Elyria, OH 44035

Standard Presort
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 146
Elyria, OH 44035



Inclusive Playground FREE Admission!

Visit the Lorain County Metro Parks Inclusive Playground! Free at this time, the unique playground incorporates water play (shut down for season), structured play, and natural play environments. People of all ages and abilities will be able to use the area and enjoy the play features. Stop in and visit today!

47160 Hollstein Drive,
Amherst, Ohio
(440) 984-3470



Exceptional Service Award

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 Jennifer Judkins, Public Relations/Volunteer Director. 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 at regular scheduled meetings, usually held on the last Friday of each month at 12:30 p.m. in the Board Room. If you have any questions, contact Jenn Judkins at 440-329-3734 or jjudkins@murrayridgecenter.org.