

THE WRANGLER GAZETTE

STORIES AND LEGENDS OF NEW DANVILLE

October 2022

In This Issue!

From the CEO

Thoughts about golf...page 2

Development Corner

October is Estate Planning Month...page 2

Good News That is Good to Know

Tidbits of recent good news...page 2

News and Announcements

Stories in the media and announcements...page 3

Upcoming Events

Not too late to register for golf ...page 3

Fundraising Factoids

Can you help with the Holiday Party?...page 3

Live

Mason's sense of achievement...page 4

Learn

Wrangler perspectives on new classes...page 4

Work

Randy Smyth: Bringing solutions, serving the mission...page 5

Grow

Pallet program expands due to demand...page 5

Wrangler's Tale

Wrangler views of the beginning...page 6

Guest Voices

Founder Kathy Sanders shares the beginning...page 7

Live, Learn, Work, Grow

Photo review...page 8

Important Links

For more info and details...page 8

**Mason's Achievements
Makes Him Ready for
More
...page 4**



New Danville is a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) rural community for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and those who need similar services that is located in Willis, TX.

FROM THE CEO



"Charity begins at home, but should not end there"
Dr. Thomas Fuller

Now more than ever, we understand how important it is to come together and help each other. Yes, we can do this in our daily lives, but sometimes we want to do more—we want to help the greater good. And so it is with New Danville's "[Play a Round for the Wranglers](#)" Second Annual Golf Tournament scheduled for November 7th at The Woodlands Country Club. Golfers of all abilities are welcome to join us in sharing the Wrangler spirit of enthusiasm, joy and fun. Your entry fees and donations on the course at various holes help raise funds that directly support the programs and services at New Danville.

That's the beauty of our golf tournament; it means something. Maybe not to an individual golfer on the day of the event, but to our Wranglers, the cause you are golfing for is everything. Your support is more important than you realize.



You are helping make someone's life better. The tournament offers so many ways for people to come together for the greater good. Regardless of how you participate, I guarantee you'll walk away with more than you imagined—a day spent surrounded by the positive energy of people working together for a cause, the chance to make new

connections and spread goodness in the world, and the chance to be part of something bigger. Think of the power of this. You have a direct impact on the lives of our Wranglers. You are helping to make magic and spread joy. Every participant—from the golfers to the volunteers to the organizers—has come together for a great cause.

Our tournament would not be possible without the countless hours of planning from our dedicated volunteer committee. Their hard work has helped us to bring together this wonderful event. Last year we managed to pull together our first-ever tournament without much experience; however, the results were phenomenal. Our committee, and dedicated volunteers, are now "seasoned professionals" and are looking to expand on last year's success.

We look forward to having you be a part of this outstanding event. Your generosity and support touch many lives. Whether you are a golfer or volunteer, we couldn't do this without you! See you on the course.

GOOD NEWS THAT IS GOOD TO KNOW

We were preliminarily approved for a **\$933,595 grant for infrastructure development** so we can get the south end of campus ready to build 11 new houses. Hopefully, the improvement work will begin about January.

We have a variety of proposals out that could impact **fitness** for the mobility challenged, campus **security**, and **jobs** programs. Watch for updates.

We have begun the process to create a **pocket park** in Meadowbrook, our residential community. It will be placed in a currently vacant lot that is too small for a home. The park will provide a place for **exercise, socialization and good times** for our residents and day program clients. The stationary exercise equipment was funded by Ironman Foundation.

DEVELOPMENT CORNER

October is Estate Planning Awareness Month

Estate Planning Awareness Week occurred October 17-23 as October is Estate Planning Awareness Month. I think of the many planned giving donors that I have worked with over the decades, and nothing summarizes the key to that form of philanthropy better than "awareness."

Awareness of the options and attention to details protects heirs, fulfills wishes of donors, buffers against taxes and maximizes creative solutions to philanthropic goals. To not be aware can result in greater taxes, unintended recipients benefitting from plans that have not



been updated, and lost opportunities to make a difference in ways that only estate planning can achieve.

Not many people leave charities in their estates, but, speaking for all charitable organizations, thank you to those who do. Designations in estates can range from hundreds of dollars to millions. Few philanthropic areas are as open to creativity as are estates. At New Danville, we celebrate those who choose us with recognition in The Windmill Society, which is a tip of the hat to our identity and to the qualities of windmills – always serving, no matter the conditions.

Feel free to reach out if you'd like to learn more about how your estate plans can empower Wranglers to live, learn, work and grow to their potential:

936-253-5757

Dion.McInnis@NewDanville.org

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Danville is upping its social media game in a big way! Check out the latest at these New Danville pages: [Linked In](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#). PLEASE **like** and **share** as we continue to spread the word of New Danville's Wranglers as they live, learn, work and grow. Engage in conversation; we love the interaction! We will soon be offering some more fun prizes to help increase the size of our online family.

We recently added Family Feud to our class list; it has been a hit! Interest grew so much that we recently had **New Danville Feud**. A good time was had by all and the [media](#) picked up on the fun story.

Thanks to the City of Conroe, we will be able to purchase a **new accessible bus and van**. Check out the story [here](#).



Thank you to the volunteers who helped make Wine Walk such a success. And thank you to [Wine & Food Week](#) for again choosing New Danville as a beneficiary.



(L-R) Board member Deven Hennessey and his wife, Amanda, pause with New Danville Development Director, Dion McInnis at the VIP reception for the

Into the Woods Halloween Event. A project of [The Woodlands Charities](#), the event benefits nine nonprofits, including New Danville.



Team members at [Jazzy Junque](#), celebrate for Kelly Cook who won two tickets to the Into the Woods Halloween Event. Jazzy Junque is New Danville's upscale, home décor resale store in Outlets at Conroe center.

FUNDRAISING FACTOID

Our Wranglers sure love parties and one of the biggest of the year is coming up...the Holiday Party!

Please [click](#) here if you can make a contribution to help us provide the best party possible. Thank you!

Please remember our [Amazon Wishlist](#) next time you are shopping online. We have a variety of items that represent all aspects of New Danville's programs and services.



UPCOMING EVENTS

It's not too late to register for the November 7 golf event, **Play a Round for the Wranglers**. [Register or support](#) the event!



There are a million ways that we can say thank you to all of those who make contributions, volunteer for projects, serve in the classes, work at Jazzy Junque...and more. But none of the ways are quite as fun as the Wranglers saying THANK YOU as they do in this [video](#).

LIVE: A SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT

Mason said he likes ties, even though the one he wore for this story was the first one he had, but he tied it himself.

“I did it (tied) on my own. It was an achievement. I learned from the internet. A lot of people have their wives or girlfriends tie their ties for them. I learned and did it.”

He plans on getting more ties when he gets a job; it looks like he will have a spot on the pallet team soon at New Danville. Working and learning are important parts of living for Mason. He is a new resident in Meadowbrook, New Danville’s independent living community. Though it was scary to begin with, Mason said, he got accustomed to living independently pretty quickly. He is taking cooking and baking lessons during the day so he



can apply them in the evenings, and his mother is helping him learn to cook on the stove. Achievement leads to achievement.

Living at New Danville is like getting a new family, Mason said. “Everyone is friendly. I kept praying to be able to move here and then it happened.”

Mason enjoys the social aspects of living in a small community, especially being able to visit with friends. He likes the outings that residents take, too. Of course, there are more mundane aspects of independent living, like keeping house. “I like the smell of clean. I clean everything on Fridays. I mop the floors and spray everything with Lysol. I like the lemon scented spray.”

Next on the tie achievement list is bow ties, which he fully intends to learn to tie, also. After that, he wants to get his driver’s license. “I challenge myself,” he said. Achievement begets achievement.

LEARN: NEW CLASSES GET RAVE REVIEWS



New Danville’s approach of letting clients pick their classes and changing the offerings during the year appeals to pretty much everyone. (L-R) Jake, Oleg and Sarah were more than happy to explain why. They were happy to share about Laser Magic, Treasure Hunting and Family Feud, respectively, all of which are new classes that began in August.

The trio agreed that they enjoy being able to select classes and their strategies for selecting were similar: find a subject that you’re good at, and find a class that provides something totally new that you want to try.

Jake said that classes were chosen for him at other day programs that he had been to. The Laser Magic shows attendees how to create art and objects using lasers, he explained. “I like that we can make different

designs as the laser cuts. We wear special glasses and are very careful. I just finished a Jesus fish,” he said.

Sarah enjoys Family Feud. “I get some of the questions right, but some I don’t.” Asked whether she jumps up and down when she wins, she smiled and said, “No, I’m pretty quiet, but I really like the game. And the television show, too.”

Oleg is taking the new Treasure Hunting class that involves using metal detectors. “I like being active, walking the grounds at New Danville and the socializing,” he said. “We learn about different types of metals – brass, copper, iron and gold...well, if we ever get gold!”

Nicole Martinez, program coordinator, is always on the lookout for new classes that teach new skills or satisfy curiosities. The trio was happy to offer suggestions.

Jake: “Archery would be great!” Sarah: “Japanese culture, then and now.” Oleg: “Machines and how they work.”

There is never a dull moment at New Danville. Perhaps that is one of the reasons that Jake said, “New Danville is like heaven on earth.”

WORK: BRINGING SOLUTIONS, SERVING THE MISSION



Randy Smyth started working with New Danville as a part-time, morning bus driver to kill time while looking for a new job since he was part of a reduction in force with the company he had been with for more than 30 years. That was almost eight years ago. The journey from driving to serving as Director of Operations. “Funny things happen when you fall in love with the work, the mission and all the people, particularly those you serve,” he said.

He discovered New Danville, like a lot of people do: Jazzy Junque, the upscale, home décor resale store in Outlets in Conroe shopping center. He walked his dog in the center, met some of the team at the store, donated some furniture and he was hooked. The morning driver job opportunity seemed to be a perfect solution.

Within a year, Randy was named the Facilities Manager. He quickly proved he was part WD-40 and part duct tape, able to make operations and processes work more smoothly, and able to hold things together, especially if a difficulty arises. “I didn’t expect to get back into management, but I was drawn into it. I think I said ‘Isn’t there a better way to do such and such’ a few too many times,” he said with a smile.

“My time in the corporate world was so different, but lessons learned there and my own DIY (do it yourself) mentality came in handy here,” he said. “I like that on any given day I might be developing reports, fixing IT issues, operating a tractor or gearing up for a special event. There is no ‘normal’ day, and that is great.”

“I never wake up thinking ‘I don’t want to go to work today.’ Never. I wished more people knew about New Danville, but I am sure they will with all the great things that are coming.”

GROW: PALLET BIZ IS BOOMING

Any business associated with the energy industry is prone to ebbs and flows of activity. The New Danville “Pallet Team” knows this very well as it was established in Charbonneau Industry’s [“Pallets to Partners”](#) program in which New Danville’s team assembles pallets for the [company](#). The company has decades of experience in the energy industry.

“We estimate that we’ve assembled about 7,000 pallets for Charbonneau,” said Bryan Gill, the Program Manager at New Danville. “And business is booming. Our team is going strong and we will be adding one or two more Wranglers (New Danville clients) to the team soon.”

Anthony Juneau, Direct Support Professional, oversees the hard-working crew. “The Wranglers love to be busy and productive,” he said. Wranglers who could hear his comments over the sound of power drills nodded in agreement.

Eva Aguirre, New Danville President and CEO, has significant experience in job programs for special needs adults. “Thanks to Charbonneau Industries’ support, we have been able to expand our ability to assemble pallets. Last November we had the dedication of the Charbonneau Family Building, which they had constructed at New Danville as a facility dedicated to pallet making. We had been working in our woodshop class area. We have plenty of space in the new building

and are open to other type of work or services we could offer to area businesses, such as light assembly/packaging, mail sort, fulfillment, and similar roles. We would also love to see opportunities on employment sites for clients wanting a community-based job. Employment opportunities for our clients, and all special needs adults, is a key issue for us.”

Interested in matching your business’ needs with New Danville capabilities? Contact Eva Aguirre at 936-344-0077.



WRANGLER'S TALE: LOOKING BACK TO THE BEGINNING

Most everyone has gone to their parents or grandparents with a request: "Tell me about the old days." Sometimes those old days were not terribly long ago, but they seem so because of all the changes. We can all relate because we have been the asker and the answerer at some time or another. For New Danville, the old days, when the dayhab program began, was 15 years ago. Three Wranglers agreed to share their perspectives of the "old days." (L-R) Brooke, Kenny and John have seen it all, in terms of New Danville's growth.

When the day program began in October 2007, less-than-desired timing played a role in the start and the memories of the beginning. The barn and cabin that were supposed to be completed, were not, and the bad weather that no one wanted chose to appear on "Opening Day." The combination of timing challenges created fertile ground for memories.



Brooke said, "The rain was horrible. All we had was the tent and porta-potty. I didn't come back for a few days, until the weather got better." Kenny enjoyed the rain and looked forward to returning. For John, his memories were more about the people he met, including some who are still his good friends to this day.



Despite the limited facilities at the beginning, and the growth seen in the many buildings on campus, the three kept returning to the people who made such an impact on them. They recall the three early direct support professionals – [John](#), [James](#) and [Sherry](#) – and the founder, Kathy. Sherry retired in 2021, while John and James are still at New Danville.

Everything was new in the "old days," but there were more new things to come, including buildings for classes, homes for independent living, variety of classes and programs, and much more. The three Wranglers agreed that the best thing about New Danville's growth and changes over the years is the people: "More Wranglers means more friends."



"We've seen a lot of people," Kenny said, as he mentioned various Wranglers and staff members who have come and gone. John and Brooke nodded, affirming and remembering the many names Kenny recalled

Fifteen years is a long time, but they all agreed that they have never been bored with the variety of classes and programs. They have too many friends to be bored.

It is people who made New Danville unique from the outset, and it is people who have kept it that way...and always will.



GUEST VOICES

Founder Kathy Sanders....the rest of the story

October 2007: New Danville opened with the start of its day program. Founder, Kathy Sanders, recently shared stories and insights “from the beginning” at this, the 15th anniversary.

“The learning curve was pretty much vertical,” Kathy said as she explained all the processes that led from the concept of starting a facility for special needs adults to its opening and operations. “I learned from my own experiences with my son that special needs adults want to build a life. We tried to create a place where clients could live, learn, work and grow...the elements of an independent life.”

She shared that a naming contest was held in about 2008 to create the dba name of New Danville. The founding organization is Texas New Community Alliance. There has been a lot of growth since the incorporation in 2005 to today.

“We had the concept in 2004, the land in 2005 and we bought a Suburban in 2006 to haul our first three miniature horses and three original clients. A board member let us keep the animals on his property. We didn’t have a barn for them so we kept them at his place.” As luck would have it, the vehicle played a very important role on opening day.

“For various reasons, construction was behind schedule,” Kathy shared. “We were supposed to open in August 2007. That became September. Parents had high hopes and they were getting anxious so we committed to October. The barn and cabin were still under construction when we opened. The first day was a torrential rain. The three original Wranglers and team members stayed in the Suburban that was parked in the not-yet-finished barn to stay dry. It was quite a start.” The barn was finished soon thereafter, and the cabin shortly after that. Those completions allowed for life at New Danville to begin.

Kathy explained that a fundraiser with DesignTech homes provided the seed money to build two cottages, the cabin, barn and infrastructure. With those facilities, more activities became the norm and word got around in the community. More clients came and enjoyed the rural feel that included hay rides, BBQ events and classes. Kathy drove the Suburban to pick up clients as far south as The Woodlands.

“I hired Sherry Franklin after a couple of weeks to help out. She said it was an answer to prayer. She was certainly an answer to our prayers, too. She began as a driver.” (Ed. Note: Sherry, aka [“The Pallet Lady.”](#) retired in 2021.) [John Massey](#), Kathy’s brother, was there on day one, and [James Scott](#) joined the team about six months later; John and James still serve as Direct Support Professionals.

Everyone involved had a lot to learn about everything from animal care to Medicaid differentiators, and everything in between. “I’m a project starter,” Kathy said. “I like to launch programs and projects. I had to learn a lot about the ins and outs of creating and running a nonprofit for special needs adults. I soon found out that most parents had no idea, either, of all the intricacies related to care for their loved ones. I quickly moved from student to teacher.” About that learning curve...

“We made it, though. I remember the New Year’s Eve fireworks that we had onsite on December 31, 2007. There were many reasons to celebrate. New Danville was a reality.”

To see what the future holds for New Danville, check out our [Vision 2025 / Growing...for Living](#) initiative.

“We made it, though.

*I remember the New Year’s
Eve fireworks that we had
onsite on December 31,
2007. There were many
reasons to celebrate.*

New Danville was a reality.”

LIVE, LEARN, WORK AND GROW: LIFE AND TIMES AT NEW DANVILLE



It is with a sad heart that we share that one of our long-time Wranglers recently passed away. Sandra Muery passed away after complications from surgery. Her ever-present smile, sense of joy and exuberance for life and living will remain as examples for all of us.

This image comes from our original music video, *Wranglers' Ballad*, which shares with the world what happens at New Danville and the heart with which it happens. Sandra was a perfect example of what we aspire to bring to New Danville every day.



Say hello to newcomers Greg and Dharma (L-R) as they get to know each other while relaxing in their pool.

IMPORTANT LINKS

- [Wranglers' Ballad](#): The original music video that shares what happens at New Danville and the heart with which all is done.
- [Make a donation](#): You are what makes all these stories possible.
- [Volunteer](#): Bring your talents to the service of Wranglers.
- [Request a tour](#): Learn about New Danville by seeing.
- [Jazzy Junque](#) resale store: A great place to shop that benefits New Danville Inventory changes almost every day.

We are pleased to introduce *Live, Learn, Work and Grow: Wisdom from Under the Windmill*, an inspiring, motivational, immediately usable presentation by Dion McInnis, development director. Bring this to your organization, association, business or group; everyone's life can be better with the 15 nuggets of wisdom for living discovered at New Danville. Contact Dion at Dion.McInnis@NewDanville.org to book the presentation for your event.

New Danville is a 501(C)(3) nonprofit rural community in Willis, TX for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. New Danville provides our clients an opportunity to live enriched and purposeful lives; we proudly call them Wranglers.