

# THE WRANGLER GAZETTE

## STORIES AND LEGENDS OF NEW DANVILLE

May 2023

Singer, songwriter Rory Feek  
keynotes Spring Thing

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The day before Spring Thing, keynote speaker Rory Feek paid a visit to New Danville. Wranglers greeted him with a signed banner. He enjoyed a tour, followed by the chance to play a few songs for Wranglers and staff. He was the keynote speaker at the event, which also honored the Lynne and Steve Charbonneau family for their ongoing dedication and support New Danville.

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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.



## DEVELOPMENT CORNER: THE JOY OF GIVING...NO BULL

Steers, actually.

When I reached out to our friends at Sterling Infrastructure in search of prospective donors for a miniature cow,



they jumped at the chance to help out. The result is the donation of two miniature steers (see the *Live* section of this month's newsletter) that recently joined the New Danville family. Not only did they know of a donor, they were the donor!

Over the course of months that led to the arrival of our little bovines, we heard several times, "Thank you for asking us to help in this way. We are so excited." Therein lies the magic of giving...that it can bring such joy that being asked to donate is a pleasure and cause for excitement.

Thank you, Joe, Brigitte and the entire team at Sterling Infrastructure. We are glad that you are as excited about making the donation as we are in receiving it.

Please feel free to contact me at [Dion.McInnis@NewDanville.org](mailto:Dion.McInnis@NewDanville.org) or 936-253-5757 or if you would like to learn of the many joy-filled ways you can support the work of New Danville.

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Sterling Infrastructure first engaged with New Danville in April 2021 with a service project. New Danville and the Wranglers, immediately felt like the team members from the company were family. On their recent project, they brought two miniature steers to join the family at New Danville. Photos courtesy of Sterling Infrastructure team members.





## NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Danville's new friends, LGI Homes, spent the day on site to help with several interior painting projects. Thank you very much! The rooms look great now!



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The 2023 Spring Thing made the [news](#)!

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Wranglers were invited to serve as models for the Conroe Noon Lions Club recent fashion show that was part of their lunch meeting activities. The audience and the Wranglers had a great time!

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## FUNDRAISING FACTOID: SOUNDS OF SUMMER

The "sounds of summer" can mean different things to different people. To New Danville folks, the sounds of summer are those of laughter, music and celebration at the annual summer party. You can help make this party one that they'll never forget by contributing to the party fund [here](#). Thank you!



For more insights, check the [article](#) in the local media.

Fashion Show photos courtesy of Connie McNabb DVM, [Photos for a Cause](#).

## GOOD NEWS GOOD TO KNOW

This year's Spring Thing event was an outstanding success on multiple levels thanks to the hard work of so many dedicated volunteers and staff. Amidst it all came outstanding news.



Brittany Sloan, New Danville's board chair, made a surprise announcement after Development Director Dion McInnis completed the invocation before lunch. She announced that she received a text message the evening before the event that stated Woodforest Charitable Foundation was committing \$350,000 to New Danville's *Growing... for Living* campaign in support of [Vision 2025](#). "I believe this is the beginning of their support," she said.

## UPCOMING EVENTS: MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THIS EVENT!



November 6, 2023

## LIVE: TWO NEW YOUNG'UNS JOIN THE FAMILY

*Two new residents joined New Danville this month. They weren't originally excited about being interviewed, but we think they'll get more comfortable soon.*



**New Danville:** Welcome to New Danville, guys. Can you get a bit closer for the interview?

**Levi:** I don't know about that. My mom warned me about talking to strangers.

**ND:** We're not strangers. We're family.

That's okay, you'll get used to us. What is your buddy's name?

**"Buddy":** I'm not afraid of you. My name is Unk, I think. I saw it on a piece of paper.

**ND:** Oh little guy, that's not your name. Your mom hadn't named you yet. Your new family at New Danville is going to. "Unk" is an abbreviation for "Unknown." Our Wranglers are going to pick a name for you.

**Buddy/Unk:** Oh, that's great. I hope they come up with a great name. I heard someone say that if my pal is Levi then I should be Strauss. Then someone laughed about jeans or something. I didn't get the joke, but that's okay. I'm just a kid.

**Levi (moving closer):** Come up with a good name! He's my friend. He and I had a long trip in a trailer to get here. We weren't sure what to make of this place when we arrived, but we're getting used to it and the people are so friendly.

**ND:** You're going to fall in love with everyone here, because they will with you. Take your time. Before too long you'll have wonderful visitors coming to you every day.

Levi and his pal nodded before going back to grazing, growing accustomed to living in a place with many friends who will take care of them and keep them company.

*Levi and his pal are miniature steers, donated by Sterling Infrastructure.*

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## LEARN: WORKSHOPS ARE PART OF LEARNING

New Danville's Wranglers (clients) get to choose the classes they want from a variety of offerings that change three times per year. Classes allow them to learn skills, satisfy curiosities, socialize and gain a greater sense of independence. The learning isn't limited to formal classes, though. Workshops are becoming part of the varied options available to Wranglers.

Recently, a group of participants learned how to make jewelry, just in time for Mother's Day. Diana Egley (on the right in center photo; board member, mom of Wrangler and resident, Robert) conducted the session. "The Wranglers did a great job. It is a triple win, they got to make something special, learn something new and show someone special how much they're loved. That's a good day in anyone's book!"

If you are interested in sharing your talents and interests with the Wranglers, please contact Program Specialist, Melissa Varney at [Melissa.Varney@NewDanville.org](mailto:Melissa.Varney@NewDanville.org).





## WORK: TEXAS MUTUAL UPDATE: JOBS, JOBS, JOBS

Interview day. Butterflies in the stomach. Excited about opportunity, but a bit nervous, too. Maybe it is for the first job, or a new job in an untried role. Interview days are big days, for everyone...including Wranglers.

Thanks to the Texas Mutual grant (referenced in a previous issue of [The Wrangler Gazette](#)), current job functions have been able to add Wranglers to various teams, like custodial and production functions. One of the great benefits, is the addition of new jobs. According to Program Specialist, Melissa Varney, "Some Wranglers have never had a job and are excited about the chance of having one. I like that we are able to create jobs on-site, which makes it easier for us to help the Wranglers grow in their work. It is also comforting to them, that they are in familiar surroundings while also earning a paycheck. We are able to offer a variety of hours options, too, ranging from just a few hours per week to up to ten hours."

Among the new jobs will be the flag team, responsible for proper raising and lowering of the flags, as well as roles in sanitation, gardening, and additional positions in animal care and production (items sold on the online [store](#)).



## GROW: IMANI MAKES A MOVE

Next month will be Imani's first anniversary at New Danville. She didn't waste any time proving herself as a direct support professional and catching the attention of New Danville leadership. She started a new role as administrative coordinator.

A teacher before arriving at New Danville, Imani brings a love of helping people learn and grow. She assumed the new role at a time of great change and she is looking forward to making the gears of change move more smoothly. "We have the new state changes, and we're starting a new



semester in June," she said, "but this gives me a great chance to do what I'm looking forward to in the job. I want to help reduce use of paper and

increase use of online forms for all the things we need to track. Doing that will enable us to become more efficient, organized and orderly."

Director of Operations, Randy Smyth, praised Imani's influence. "She has already been a big help in helping us smooth out processes for attendance tracking, billing and much more. She is just what we needed in that role at this time."

Imani said she will consider success being able to have billing information in real time and having all forms being digital. "If I make that happen, I'll feel like I've contributed a lot."

## THERE ARE MANY WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT NEW DANVILLE

Many types of contributions benefit the work of New Danville:

- ◆ **Amazon Wishlist:** As long as you're shopping....can you add one of the items from our [wishlist](#)? Thank you!
- ◆ **General donations:** You can donate easily [here](#).
- ◆ **Sponsorships:** We are currently seeking sponsors for our premier fund-raising event, Spring Thing.
- ◆ **Required Minimum Distributions** from retirement accounts (for those over 72 years of age).
- ◆ **Donor-advised Funds.**

## WRANGLER'S TALE: SETH, THE SHOW STEALER



Seth has been at New Danville for a few years and his time here has shown many great milestones of progress. Along the way he has moved from nonverbal to show stealer.

Last year, several Wranglers performed a version of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (minus four), a production of board member Diana Egley. Diana said, "He is funny and willing to do whatever is asked of him, which is exactly what is needed in the kind of play productions we create for the Wranglers."

Seth enjoyed being in the show. He drew a lot of attention and applause as he helped as a narrator with Diana's husband, Glen. Seth became a bit of a show stealer!

Direct Support Professional Trish Woods (pictured with Seth in the photo) is a beneficiary of Seth's

generous and caring heart. "Every morning I get a hug from Seth. It starts my day out right. He gives great hugs because they are so genuine. And every day, without fail, he gives me an oatmeal cookie. He is very thoughtful."

Trish describes one of Seth's most significant accomplishments. At one time he was nonverbal, she said, but his counselor got a pad for him that helped Seth communicate with specialized apps. "Now he loves to talk. And he can write a few words to help get his message across if his speech is not understandable. The point is that he likes to share and continues to improve in doing so."

He is particularly excited about his upcoming birthday, a date that he shares with another New Danville staff member. You can be sure that for any birthday party he'll have, Seth will be the life of it.

## LIVE, LEARN, WORK, GROW: WISDOM FROM UNDER THE WINDMILL, A PRESENTATION ON LIFE LESSONS LEARNED FROM WRANGLERS

### Lesson 2: Animals Can Make You Happy

The multiple animals that call New Danville home are a gift and blessing to our Wranglers. Miniature donkeys, miniature horses, a pony, miniature steers, chickens, goats and a duck comprise the animal friends that give and get much love and attention. Some of the Wranglers who live in New Danville's residential community, Meadowbrook, have pets, too. There is much attention to animals, pets and otherwise, because they add so much to life. Whether the animal is a pet that sits on your lap or a magnificent wild animal in flight, animals make people happy.

The first five tips are:

1. You don't have to be perfect.
2. Animals can make you happy.
3. Exercise...outside if you can.
4. A wave and a smile fixes almost anything.
5. Find your voice.



Contact Dion McInnis at 936-253-5757 or [Dion.McInnis@NewDanville.org](mailto:Dion.McInnis@NewDanville.org) to bring the presentation to your group or company.



## GUEST VOICES : KRIS NORDSTROM MCBRIDE, PRESIDENT OF 5 O'CLOCK PHLOCK PARROT HEAD CLUB

The 5 O'Clock Phlock Parrot Head Club is part of an international organization, Parrot Heads in Paradise. Clubs were originally "just" Jimmy Buffet Fan Clubs, but we are now so much more.

Our motto is "Party With A Purpose." We have a grand time, enjoy life, and give back to the community. We donate food and toiletries to The Community Assistance Center, make craft packets for the kids at Texas Children's Hospital and adopt a family at Christmas through Faith Fighting Cancer. We have a dynamic team for the annual Alzheimer's Walk in The Woodlands and we support animal rescue through SPCA\*PETS\*SNAP of Montgomery County.

Several of us have friends and family who are Wranglers. We've seen firsthand the importance of New Danville and the programs and services available. But we have seen more. We have witnessed the joy on the faces of folks going about their daily routines, proud of their independence and accomplishments; we have seen so much creativity and talent in the beautiful artwork. At the Spring Thing Market, Wranglers proudly showed off their beautiful works of wood, explaining in great detail how things were made and their part in the projects. We listened intently to stories about the pallet work. We bought lovely cards and watched new ones being created right in front of us.

Our group is drawn to New Danville because there we have found a wonderful group of people who are enjoying their lives too, finding joy in their daily activities, making friends, and ...wait for it.....loving music and dancing, just like us. I mean - The [Wranglers Ballad!](#) How cool is that?

We raise money for our charities through raffles. When we raffled a beautiful wooden box made at New Danville and filled with all sorts of yummy foods from ND's store, we had one of the largest raffles ever. Members opened their pockets not just because of the goodies (although that certainly didn't hurt!) but because of how much New Danville means to this community.

Our financial resources are limited, but our energy and desire to volunteer and help is boundless. Each year, we are actively seeking new ways to support New Danville, whether through the purchase of a new piece of equipment, or hosting a dance party. Soon we're hoping some of our folks will begin volunteering at [Jazzy Junque](#), too. We want to be an active and important Community Partner. The smiles we see are infectious. We smile more too, when our "Purpose" for the "Party" is one that is so important and makes us a small part of the world of such special people. Live-Learn-Work-Grow, that's a great motto to live by, too.



## THE PHLOCK, OUT AND ABOUT



The Alzheimer's Association benefits from the Phlock's participation in their walk fundraiser.



The board enjoys a Christmas party.



The Phlock members assist the Honor Café with a service project.

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



Thank you for  
an outstanding  
Spring Thing  
2023!



Photos courtesy of DWC Photography.

Spring Thing, New Danville's premier fund-raising event, was a great success. Attendees enjoyed the company of new and longtime friends, were entertained and inspired by the keynote speaker, Rory Feeks, and learned of New Danville's exciting future: [Vision 2025](#). We're already looking forward to 2024!

## 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.
- [Vision 2025](#): Vision 2025 and the campaign to fund it is called *Growing...for Living: A Collaborative Campaign to Grow Life Experiences for Adults with IDD* are our future. Find a virtual flyover and the campaign storybook by clicking the link. The year 2025 is our 20th anniversary.

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.