

THE WRANGLER GAZETTE

STORIES AND LEGENDS OF NEW DANVILLE

June 2023

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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: PUT GOLF IN YOUR BUDGET

It is that time of year for many businesses: budget time. Please consider adding New Danville's special events to your marketing or community support budget. Sponsorship opportunities for our November 6 Play a Round for the Wranglers golf event will soon be posted online. Everyone on our email list will also receive information when the registration site is live.

Our focus for the event is relationships: New Danville with sponsors and participants, participants with each other, and, most importantly, everyone with the Wranglers (clients). The connection between Wranglers and golfers adds a lot to the Wranglers' day, and profoundly touches all who meet them the day of the event. **Play golf; begin a friendship.**

It is a great, gimmick-free golf event that you are sure to enjoy with your friends, clients, potential clients, key staff members, etc. Contact the chair, Ric Millington, at Ric.Millington@NewDanville.org if you'd like to be involved.



SPIRIT COOKERS FEED THE MASSES...OF WRANGLERS



The [Spirit Cookers](#) nonprofit once again served up goodies at New Danville, as they have since 2007. They cooked burgers and links for the Wranglers and staff as a wrap-up to this year's Water Play Day (see back cover).

There is more fun on the horizon, too, as the group is working on plans to have a party. It will be the party of all parties!

Thank you, Spirit Cookers, for all you have done for so many.



NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



Wrangler Tiffani Cristel Blake passed away on May 14. She had been part of the New Danville for about a year. She was known for her forthrightness, hugs and smiles that were infectious. The New Danville family offers its thoughts and prayers for all who are affected by this loss.



Once again, New Danville was a beneficiary of Wine and Food Week in The Woodlands. Thank you [Constance](#) for your years of support. New Danville staff and volunteers share smiles while raising funds at the event.

FUNDRAISING FACTOID: NEW VEHICLES (HOORAY!)...HIGHER FUEL BILLS

It takes a crystal ball to know whether fuel prices are going to increase, though indications suggest that they will. On top of that, thanks to the City of Conroe's 5310 grant program, New Danville will receive a new, accessible 14-passenger van and an accessible minivan. These will be very important additions to our fleet for day program transportation. Can you help with the fuel costs? Donate [here](#). Thank you very much!



Interest is growing in metal detecting everywhere, New Danville included. The Treasure Hunters class has attracted the attention of several Wranglers. Class DSP, Mike, is a metal detectorist and involved in area clubs, one of which is the Montgomery County Artifacts Recovery Club.

"Club members have taken an interest in New Danville," Mike said, "and they are finding ways to help improve the Wranglers' experiences. The club's members recently gave me a variety of cool things that they had found on their searches, such as little toy cars, odd metal pieces, coins and many other things. I spread those out in the areas where our class is going to detect so they can find fun things and learn about how the detectors work. I hope to be able to take the class to other areas after they have learned more about detecting. It's great!"



UPCOMING EVENTS: MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THIS EVENT!



November 6, 2023

[Add to your calendar!](#)

LIVE: TAKE A LOOK AT THIS LAND...IT WILL SOON CHANGE DRAMATICALLY

Before long, this field will disappear.
That's a good thing.

It will become a place of homes, up to 15, for special needs adults to live independently, while growing to their potential in a supportive community. What makes this possible is the project that will be commencing in the not-too-distant future: infrastructure development.

Thanks to a grant from Montgomery County Community Development for more than \$933,000, New Danville will be able to add all the infrastructure needed to accommodate the construction of new homes, including grading, installation of utility loops, etc. As the work is completed, which is expected to take about a year, fundraising efforts will focus on acquiring the funds for the homes.

Woodforest Charitable Foundation committed \$350,000 to the homes in April. The project is part of New Danville's [Vision 2025](#). Contact Dion McInnis at 936-253-5757 to learn how you can be part of this important development.



LEARN: NEW SEMESTER, NEW CLASSES, NEW FUN

A new semester started June 1. It runs through October 31. And run, it does!

New Danville has always prided itself on the variety of classes and programs available to its day program participants (Wranglers). With the tremendous growth in enrollment over the past 12 months, and the addition of several new staff members, it is possible to add many new classes and have several "old favorites" return to the schedule.



Wranglers pick the classes that they

prefer. It is often hard to select a few from among the many!

There are many new classes, including: All that Glitters, Balance and Flex Together, Bible Basics, Clay Creation, Discovery and History in Action. Some of the returning classes include fishing and golf cart training.

And more! For more information about the day program, contact 936-344-6200, or request a tour at tour.newdanville.org.



WORK: SEVERAL NEW DSPS; HERE ARE THREE



Lisa, Mike and Amanda (L-R) are among the several new Direct Support Professionals to join New Danville in the past few months. Their thoughts and insights could fill a book, but a few stand out as representative of almost everyone at New Danville.

Lisa shared that perhaps the biggest surprise she encountered is how much the clients appreciate each other, and among the many ways that appreciation is shown is support. She taught special education at the middle school level for 17 years and recently moved to the area. “I’ve always wanted to work with adults and the opportunity at New Danville was perfect. I love how the Wranglers are there for each other.” Lisa

works with the Wrangler 2s, clients whose challenges require additional assistance.

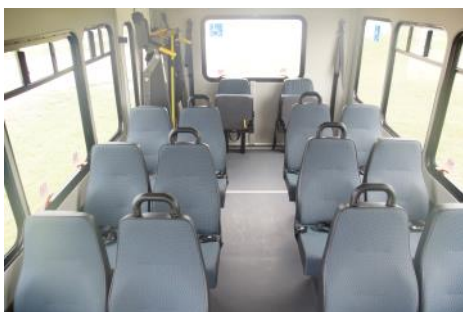
Mike retired from a career role about a year before starting at New Danville. He is also a pastor at a nearby church. It didn’t take him long to notice something outstanding about the Wranglers in the various classes he leads, including history, bible study and metal detecting. “Their joy is contagious. I love to watch them grow, and how much they support and celebrate each other’s growth and accomplishments. They tend to forgive each other easily. It is too bad all of us can’t do that.”

Amanda has been involved with helping New Danville residents in Meadowbrook for eight years, having provided support to Jimmy, the founder’s son, and many more. (see “Wrangler’s Tale” in this issue) She wanted to work at New Danville as a way to continue helping Jimmy, and because she knew the culture and mindset at New Danville. “I’ve always been a caregiver, in my personal and professional life. I am happy to be in an environment where that is appreciated and utilized.”

Future issues of *The Wrangler Gazette* will feature more of the new staff members who have been hired to accommodate New Danville’s enrollment growth.

GROW: A GROWING FLEET

“More clients and more excursions require more transportation options,” according to Randy Smyth, Director of Operations, “and the City of Conroe has again proven itself to be a great friend of New Danville with the recent award of a grant that will enable us to acquire a new, accessible 14-passenger van and minivan. The timing could not be more perfect.”



The grant is funded as part of the FTA Section 5310 program, a federal initiative to help communities enhance mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities. This is not the first time that New Danville has benefited from the program, and, hopefully, will not be the last. The need for transportation continues to grow.

“We have pick up routes from as far north as Huntsville, and as far south as Louetta Road in north Houston,” Randy explained. “Add to that the expanding number of options for our clients to go into

the community or on field trips and we pretty much always have vehicles off site during business hours for one purpose or another.”

(You can help us defray fuel costs for our expanding fleet by donating [here](#). Thank you!)



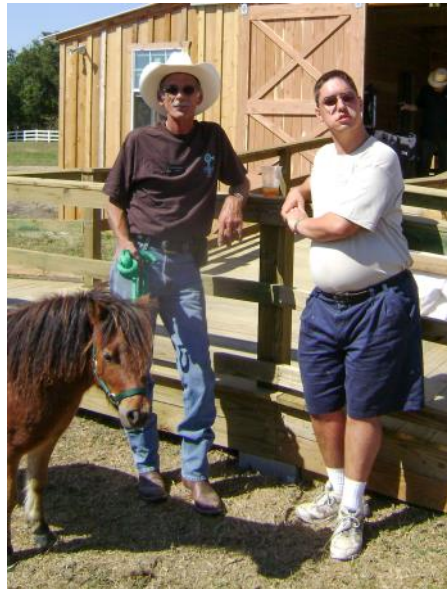
WRANGLER'S TALE: JIMMY, FOR WHOM IT ALL BEGAN

When New Danville was founded, it was to provide a better life for Jimmy, and other adults with special needs. His mother, [Kathy Sanders](#), had a vision and a dream. The rest, as they say, is history.



"I am very proud of her," Jimmy said while recalling the early days of New Danville. His uncle, [John Massey](#) (pictured below with Jimmy in 2007) joined the New Danville adventure early on and still works with the Wranglers (clients), particularly in the animal

therapy program. His song, [Wranglers' Ballad](#), has about 1,800 views and helps to improve people's understanding of what happens at New Danville.



"We had a bad, bad storm," Jimmy said, describing the first few days of the day program that began in October 2007. A month later, he moved into one of the first two small cabins that were constructed. "I lived alone for 15 years," he said.

There was a period when he did not attend New Danville for a few years, but then he and his mom decided it might be time to return. "I was a bit

hesitant," he said, "but it was nice to be welcomed back by everyone. My mom and I are talking about adding another day a week for me." It helps that his longtime support, Amanda, now works full-time at New Danville (see the "Grow" section in this issue).

Jimmy's love of bowling is well known. He also enjoys the Friday social time called The Beat Goes On. One hour of music and dancing after lunch on Friday suits him fine. "I love music," he said, "and I have a Buddy Holly poster in my room!"



"I love the bachelor life," he said, explaining that his parents were on a trip so he was taking care of the house. "I understand that not all people with disabilities can be trusted with that, but I can."

"I love the life I have now," Jimmy says proudly. He is confident and ready for whatever life brings.

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

Lesson 10: Life can hurt

It can, and it will. The opening paragraph of Scott Peck's bestseller, "The Road Less Travelled," states "Life is difficult." And so it is. It is important to have people around you who understand that truth for themselves and for others. At New Danville, our entire staff works to help our Wranglers (clients) through the challenging times as they live, learn, work and grow to their potential. Patience and empathy go a long way in life, for each of us to share and for each of us to give.

Contact Dion McInnis at 936-253-5757 or Dion.McInnis@NewDanville.org to bring the presentation to your group or company.

GUEST VOICES: RIC MILLINGTON, NEW CHAIR OF GOLF EVENT: HE LIVES NEW DANVILLE'S CAUSE EVERY DAY



As the father of an autistic child, I have watched my goals and my motivation change over time. My focus has evolved from “getting through the day” to addressing long-term solutions as my son, Luke, gets older.

Some of my first thoughts were “What is my son’s future going to be like?”, “What opportunities lie ahead for him?”, and “What are the obstacles that we can prepare him for?”. All of these thoughts can be overwhelming and, if not compartmentalized correctly, they can be harmful to a family. One key that I have found is relying on the old saying “it takes a village.”

The saying is so true today in dealing with our beloved population. There are so many benefits from surrounding Luke with trusted friends and family to help on his life's journey. Not only does it help form relationships for Luke, and help with socialization, but I also believe that each relationship gives him another piece of the represented puzzle.

I have always compared parenting as swimming with both of my kids. I have to watch my younger daughter, Hope, in the shallow end, while also watching Luke in the deep end of the pool. While Hope will be able to one day stand in the shallow end of the pool, it's going to be a challenge to keep Luke's head above water. This is where I find places like New Danville such a critical piece, a flotation device that can help keep our kids heads above water. It is by the grace of God we have found ourselves in Montgomery County. We have a community that supports our kids and continues to give them opportunities for continued growth. I'm excited for the opportunity to help with this year's golf tournament and to help build a future for our kids.

GOLF TRIVIA: SMALL TALK TO SHARE AT PLAY A ROUND FOR THE WRANGLERS

- Golf was banned three times in Scotland, the country of the sports’ origin, from 1457 to 1744. The reason? It was believed that the game interfered with military training.
- Tiger Woods’ first hole in one came when he was eight years old! We assume it wasn’t a par 5 hole!
- Speaking of making a hole-in-one, your chances are 12,500 : 1.

(These interesting tidbits are courtesy of Panther Run Golf Club.)

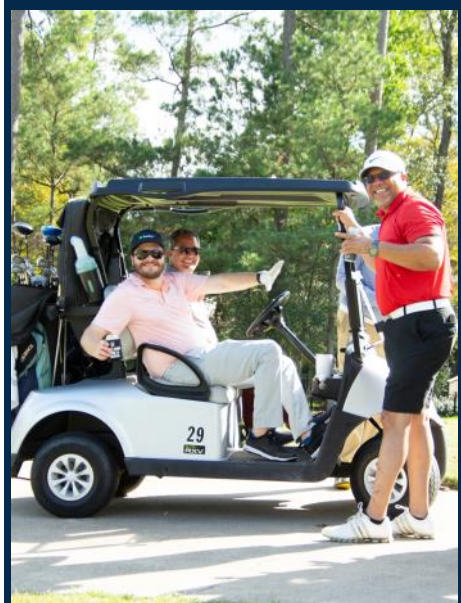
YOU KNOW YOU WANT TO PLAY GOLF IN NOVEMBER!



Enjoy a day of golf with friends, colleagues, clients, potential clients...come for the fun, leave with new friends.



A good time will be had by all!



The Woodlands Country Club — Palmer Course will again be our destination of fun, friendship and supporting New Danville’s work.

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



The New Danville family begins looking forward to the summer Water Play Day party as soon as it gets warm. This summer's early heat made the day even more welcome. As always, thank you to the Legally Authorized Representative Alliance (LARA) for all of their support and participation.



To reach the top of the water slide, he had to climb about eight feet of wet, inflated stairs. It took him about three minutes, but he never gave up, moving ahead to the cheers and encouragement of staff and fellow Wranglers. The goal is always to do what is possible on the path to doing what was once thought impossible. Down the slide he went. As he stepped out of the water at the end of the ride, he smiled the smile of accomplishment and joy. This is New Danville's live, learn, work and grow.

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.