

THE WRANGLER GAZETTE

STORIES AND LEGENDS OF NEW DANVILLE

August 2023

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Are a
Wrangler’s
Best Friend
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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.

FROM THE CEO



"We are all gifted in unique and important ways. The great privilege and adventure of life is discovering those gifts in all of those around us."

My journey at New Danville began on August 7, 2023. I refer to it as a journey, not a job or a career. It's a journey I plan to learn and grow from every day. During my career, I have been blessed with amazing opportunities: as a teacher of high school and college students, as a trial lawyer arguing some complex cases on big stages, as a CEO of a healthcare company entrusted to care for some of the most vulnerable people throughout Montgomery and Harris County and as the Director of Programs at the Montgomery County Food Bank where my team was charged with getting food into the hands of thousands every month. While these careers seem like such different paths, the unifier is service to others.

From my professional experiences, I've learned over and over again the importance of the people around us. The people we serve, the people we employ, the people in our community who support us and the people who roll up their sleeves and work beside us every day. Without all of those people in our corner, we cannot succeed.

During the past several weeks, I've spent the bulk of my time getting to know the people around me. Every day that I'm on campus, I make it a point to visit the Wranglers. Oh, what impressive people they are! I've met wonderful artists, sculptors, chefs and storytellers. I've seen the biggest smiles I've ever seen, and I've stood in the middle of a room filled with sheer joy and excitement. I've met New Danville's staff. I've seen their hearts on display and witnessed the pride in their faces when accomplishments are achieved. I've met our incredibly supportive Board and the many volunteers who make Jazzy Junque such a success. Every day, I'm so excited not only about the work being done, but the incredible people around me.

While I hope and pray my skills, education and experience will benefit New Danville, I know, without a doubt, that New Danville will benefit me. My privilege, my adventure will be to discover all the gifts of those around me. I am thankful for the opportunity to work in such a special place and be surrounded by such gifted, dedicated and unique people.

DEVELOPMENT CORNER: GOLF SPONSORS STEP UP TO THE TEE

Thanks to early sponsors, we're building momentum toward the 2023 Play a Round for the Wranglers golf event to be held November 6 at The Woodlands Country Club – Palmer Course.

Thank you!

**Howard Hughes Corporation * Mary and Stan Paur
Sloan Law * Friedman Industries
Mike Taylor * Jennie & Mark Moran
Mary & Marty Young *Stoecker Corporation
Vogt Engineering**

For more information about registration and sponsorships, check [here](#).



November 6th, 2023

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



Thank you Conroe Chamber of Commerce for inviting New Danville to sell some of its woodshop projects at the Athena Award luncheon!



Mike Painter became the President and CEO of New Danville on August 7. Here he meets with Wranglers and answers their questions.

Mike's arrival as New Danville's President and CEO also made the [news!](#)



Thanks to the thoughtfulness of our friends at [LGI Homes](#) who nominated New Danville, we will be the beneficiary of the Houston Astros' Share2Care Charity for the September 13 game against the Athletics. New Danville will receive half the proceeds from their raffle that night. We hope you'll be in attendance. Put the game on your calendar! Thank you LGI Homes and the Houston Astros Foundation!

FUNDRAISING FACTOID: WRANGLER 2 SENSORY ZONE WISH LIST

We are creating a sensory zone for our Wrangler 2s, those who need additional assistance and support. The room will provide various pieces of equipment to help them de-escalate, relax, and regulate. For a modestly priced project, the effect for all our Wranglers will be significant, enabling them to live, learn, work and grow, less affected by stress and distraction. Please consider purchasing one of the items listed on our special [Amazon Wish list for](#) this project. You can also make a cash contribution [here](#). (The items pictured are just some of those included in the Wish list.)



LIVE: ROOMIES: LIFE AT MEADOWBROOK

The four guys have been roomies at Meadowbrook, New Danville's independent living community, for a year. Some were new to living here and some had already called Meadowbrook home for a while. They are also growing and learning, like four brothers in one family.

(Pictured: rear, L-R: Robert and Adam; front, L-R: Justin and Colt). What is it like to live independently with others? Their insights shed light on the various aspects of living with others who become friends and then like family.

Robert lived with his parents before coming to Meadowbrook. "We live with a 'yours, mine and ours' convention' that leads to understanding and respect. Respect follows the convention. The conditions at home affect behavior in the day program."



Adam agrees that mutual respect is key. "I have been independent since I was 20," he said. "Living here, I am growing as an adult, learning to communicate and socialize. It is great to live in peace and harmony."

Justin lived with his grandparents before moving to Meadowbrook. He has been here almost a decade. "They are like brothers. No one can get along all the time; we have learned about each other and how to get along. Our home has positive vibes."

Colt lived with his parents before moving here, but has also spent time in a group home. "It is better here with more independence. We have learned to respect each other's differences. This guys are like brothers. We laugh together a lot."

Sounds like home sweet home for these four Wranglers.

LEARN: "DIAMONDS" ARE A WRANGLER'S BEST FRIEND

Imagine a paint-by-number canvas or card, except, instead of using the appropriate paint color for each number, you used a shiny little "diamond." Welcome to the new class, "Diamond Painting." It is a hit.

"The Wranglers love it," said Program Specialist Melissa Varney, "and I believe some are already planning on creating something for the Montgomery County Fair and Rodeo's arts and crafts competition. Our Wranglers usually do a great job garnering prizes in the competition, and with 'Diamond Painting,' I imagine there will be even more!"



With steady hands and good vision, Wranglers place the "diamonds" in the appropriate places on the sticky material. According to Direct Support Professional, Lili Flores, the stones are secured in place when the project is completed by rolling what is basically a rolling pin over the work. "They come out really nice," she said.

WORK: FAMILY CONNECTIONS INSPIRE JOINING THE TEAM

Angel (left) and Marianne (right) recently joined New Danville as Direct Support Professionals. Though both were familiar with New Danville because of family connections here, they also met with many surprises.



Angel followed her sister, [Amanda](#), to New Danville. Both are new here. Because of Amanda's previous work with some of the Wranglers, Angel knew about working with special needs adults. "I'm a natural caregiver," she said. "When Amanda told me about the job opening, I said, 'Absolutely!' And here I am! I feel like I learn at work every day. New Danville has a family feel, which I like a lot. Even though I had been around some of my sister's clients, I discovered so much energy, positivity and acceptance with, and among, the Wranglers. I love coming to work every day."

would be perfect. It is. I've never had as much fun in a job as I do here. I work with the Wrangler 2s (those with higher level of need) and they impress and inspire me every day. I am constantly surprised at the extent of the day program and all that it offers."

Marianne's sister-in-law, [Michelle](#), is a resident at New Danville. She, too, had experience with those with special needs, but coming here provided surprises. "I worked with special needs children for many years. When I decided to get back into the workforce, I saw this opportunity and thought it



GROW: PUMPKIN PATCH, PART DEUX

Pumpkins work for Thanksgiving, too!

In the last issue of The Wrangler Gazette, readers learned about the plans for a pumpkin patch. One raised garden has several pumpkins plants that are growing nicely, but many more plants were needed to make a "patch." Seedlings awaited in the greenhouse.

Thanks to [Berkeley Services](#) and their donation of wonderful garden soil, the Wranglers have now planted a pumpkin patch! The company is a commercial landscaping service business in the area and their quick action helped get the seedlings in the ground before the window for planting in time for the holidays closed.

Direct Support Professional James Scott said, "We might be a bit late for Halloween pumpkins, but there is always Thanksgiving and pumpkin pie!"



WRANGLER'S TALE: LIVING THE SOCIAL LIFE

Our Social Club has grown in numbers, and we have traveled near and far exploring many different venues in Texas and Louisiana! From The Golden Nugget Casino, Encounter Weekend, Cotton Gin Festival, boating events with the Sailing Angels Organization, Naval Museum, and Big Rivers Waterpark and Adventures just to name a few. These events continue to give our Wranglers the opportunity to explore new places and visit old stomping grounds while socializing with their friends.

They have grown in the past couple of years learning how to cash out with success as to where before it was a challenge. Communication has been an area of growth for several of our Wranglers. Our more quiet, reserved individuals now talk amongst their peers and join in the laughter of jokes they share with one another! New friendships have formed, and friendship circles have grown.

Some of our Wranglers enjoy getting to share ideas of where we get to go explore in future events. After our visit to the Naval Museum, they all agreed it would be fun to visit more historical places and learn about that part of the history surrounding that community. It is humbling to be a part of these events with our Wranglers and see the happiness that our outings bring to their lives daily.

A highlight for our year that stands out to our Social Club Group is getting to meet the hip-hop artist Hulvey at the Encounter Weekend Event. They got to talk one-on-one with him, even get some selfies with him, as well as a group photo with all of us! The concert we attended was phenomenal and everyone had a blast. Here's to more exciting, new places to explore with everyone!!



"It is at times the small steps, not the giant leaps, that bring about the most lasting change."

-Queen Elizabeth II

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.

GUEST VOICES: TEXAS SPECIAL CHILDREN'S PROJECT: OUR SPECIAL FRIENDS

David Hanshaw shared the story of his work and how his organization came to be.

I have a great niece who has Down syndrome, and as a college student volunteer, I saw many families with special needs children of all ages. I knew then that helping would be a part of my life. I moved to Texas 30 years ago and within a few years it was time to formalize my desire to help the special needs community.

I founded [Texas Special Children's Project](#) (TSCP) along with my friend Billy Hill, in 2001 as a way to serve the special needs community. We, and a couple of friends, would volunteer to help out organizations and it became clear pretty fast that we were called to this work. We both had jobs. I sold my business in 2007, retired and organized our efforts into a nonprofit that received official status in 2009.

Word of mouth moves quickly, and organizations were calling us to set up dances, parties and such. One thing led to another and now we have operations in four cities – Longview, where our office is, Lufkin, Texarkana and Kingwood. We operate on donations, like all nonprofits, and much of my time is working to secure funds for the events and programs we offer. I had a stroke in 2020, which slowed me down, but the work is too important to even consider stopping. We have a great board and volunteers who make our efforts to help and



bring job possible. Hopefully, we will someday get national exposure so we can do more.



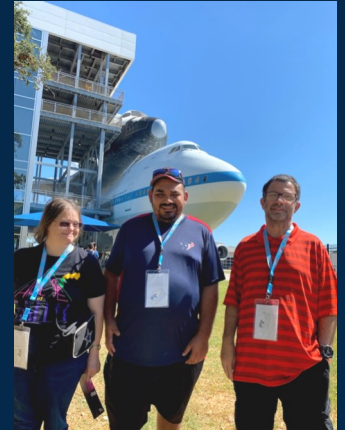
During the pandemic, our field trips and programs had to stop, but we began getting calls from individuals and families who needed help getting food. That became our main function during those years.

We love supporting the Wranglers of New Danville. As much joy as we bring to them with our field trips and Christmas party, they give hundreds of times as much to us. We loved having them on our recent NASA trip and are already looking forward to our Christmas party at New Danville.

Editor's note: Earlier this month, TSCP hosted a trip to NASA for Wranglers and other special needs adults from their other service areas. See the back cover for photos of the great day they made possible.



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



Thanks to Texas Special Children's Project, an organization that has a long and generous history with New Danville, Wranglers were able to converge on NASA-Johnson Space Center for a great day of discovery and fun. See more about the group on page 7 of this newsletter.

