

# The Voice



*Sharing the story of historic Danevang -- past, present, and future.*

FALL / WINTER 2023



Lunch tickets (\$15 adults; \$5 child's hot dog lunch) and 50/50 raffle tickets available on the Museum's website:

**[danevangtx.org](http://danevangtx.org)**

or call 979-578-0808 during Museum business hours (T-F, 1-4 p.m.). Limited tickets available at the door.

## SATURDAY OCTOBER 21

*11 a.m. – 3 p.m.  
Danevang, Texas  
153 County Road 426  
77432*

Join us to celebrate traditional life in a small agricultural community founded by Danish immigrants. Enjoy a country lunch (handmade Danish meatballs, farm-style sides and desserts) ... live music ... silent auction ... Scandinavian dancers ... children's games ... 50-50 raffle.

### *Support the Museum by donating an item for auction*

Without your support, efforts to preserve Danevang's heritage wouldn't exist -- we value your interest, your participation, and we exist because of your donations. Here's another chance to help: do you have an item that could be auctioned at the 2nd Annual Harvest Festival? We'll provide a donation receipt for your taxes. Ideas include gift certificates for meals or services; framed art or photographs; quilts; gift baskets. Email [kathijensen2@gmail.com](mailto:kathijensen2@gmail.com) or call the Museum at 979-578-0808.

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## President's Report

### Michael Hansen



I hope you have been surviving this extraordinarily hot, dry Texas summer. It has been challenging even for us native Texans. Just think if you were visiting from a cool, rainy summer in Denmark. Well, I was fortunate to have some precious

relatives do just that. It was quite a change from highs in the mid 70s to 105 degrees. We spent a great deal of time in my backyard pool in our effort to beat the heat.

It just so happened that while they were visiting, we hosted a lunch at the Museum. This gave us the opportunity to test the authenticity of some of our Danish Country Lunch items. We received five sets of thumbs up especially for our Frikadiller (Danish meatballs) and cucumber salad. If our Frikadiller did not meet her high standards, my cousin Heidi would have kindly, but honestly, told me so. Her two teenage sons (Mathias and Kristian) showed their approval by eating 12 and 11 meatballs respectively (although I'm not sure how young Kristian was able to consume that many). Heidi's husband Brian and daughter Kamille also gave their approval. Heidi also added some authenticity to the lunch tour by leading the opening Danish Table Prayer in Danish. We typically have one of our volunteers lead the prayer in Danish, but it is always nice when it is done by a native Danish speaker. Heidi also did us a great favor by bringing two authentic Denmark flags donated by VM FLAG & STÆNGER.

If you are a part of an organization looking for a fun day-trip venue, we would love to host your group for a lunch tour – includes a visit to the church, time to explore our Museum and Pioneer House, and of course, our much-praised Danish Country Lunch.

Speaking of a fun time, I hope you are planning to join us on Saturday, October 21 for the 2nd Annual **Danevang Harvest Festival**. This is our main fundraising event. Enjoy some wonderful live music while eating our Danish Country Lunch and bid on some cool items in our silent auction. You can also support us by entering our 50%-50% raffle whereby three winners will divide half of the proceeds and the Museum will receive the other half. You don't have to be present to be a 50-50 winner. We hope to see you there.



*El Campo Mayor Chris Barbee (who is married to Carol Hansen Barbee) enjoyed lunch at the Museum with Michael (and Carol's) Danish relatives: Brian, Kristian, Mathias, Heidi, and Kamille.*

#### Tickets and Tips

Purchasing lunch tickets helps us better estimate food needs and makes your check-in faster. You can advance purchase lunch and raffle tickets online (click on the link from our website [danevangtx.org](http://danevangtx.org)) but there are credit card fees (approx. 3%). Our ticket vendor will also ask you to provide a tip and to pad your donation. Although we do not discourage either, we know some of you would prefer not to pay these additional fees. You can send a check to the Museum (please mail at least one week in advance) to cover your lunch tickets and/or purchase raffle tickets. If you do purchase online, you can minimize your fees as you check out:

- When prompted "Would you like to make an additional donation?", select "No."

- When prompted "Get Bonus Entries at a Discount," you can click on "Custom Bonus Entries" and you can type 0 in the box.

- When prompted "Help Lower Our Fundraising Expenses by Leaving a Tip," you can slide the scale to 5% (lowest on scale) or click on "Custom Tip Amount" which allows entering a specific tip amount including zero.

- Full Lunch = \$15

- Child's Hot Dog Combo (1 hot dog, bag of chips, tea/water, dessert) = \$5

#### Raffle Tickets:

- \$10 = 10 entries
- \$20 = 25 entries
- \$50 = 75 entries
- \$100 = 200 entries

1st place is 25% of total sales; 2nd is 15%; 3rd is 10%

# A Museum Love Story

by Laurie Petersen Martin

The Danish Heritage Museum has been home to many an important event over the years, but one of its most unusual moments happened on August 11, 2004. On that evening, **John King** of Del City, Oklahoma, proposed to **Angela Martin**, granddaughter of **Lawrence** and **Gloria Petersen** of Danevang, and daughter of **Jimmy** and **Laurie Petersen Martin**, then living in Germany.

You might ask, "Why in the world would two twentysomethings get engaged in a museum in a town where they had never lived?" The idea grew out of Angela's love for her Danish heritage, her grandparents (Lawrence and Gloria Petersen), and the little town of Danevang, Texas. Though Angela grew up in Germany, her family came to visit Mr. and Mrs. Petersen every summer. Those visits were marked by long hours in the pool, Sonic drinks, backyard fireworks, and stories about the history of the Petersen family and the settlement of Danevang.

It didn't take long into their dating relationship for John to realize how important the Danish Heritage Museum was to Angela. You might think pro-



(left) The little black box on the Museum display wall held the engagement ring.



(above) She said YES!

posing at the Museum was a natural conclusion, but the problem was, John wasn't living in Danevang. In fact, John wasn't living in Texas or even the United States. He was serving as a youth minister at a local church in Frankfurt, Germany. It was going to take a village to make this proposal happen!

Early in the summer of 2004, John emailed Lawrence Petersen early to ask for permission to use the Museum for the special occasion. Lawrence went above and beyond, looping in Gloria and their daughter, Laurie (Angela's mother), to help John design an 'exhibit' that matched the rest of the Museum. They also worked with John to get both of their families there for the big moment. And most importantly, they kept it all a secret from Angela.

Fast forward to August 11. After flying in from Germany, John, along with Angela and their families, went to dinner in El Campo. After finishing up at Greek Brothers, John and Angela started back toward Danevang. Instead of turning down the road to the Petersen house, however, they kept driving and pulled into the Museum's parking lot. When Angela asked John what they were doing, he responded that he wanted to see the Danish Museum she always talked about. Angela went along, and the couple walked

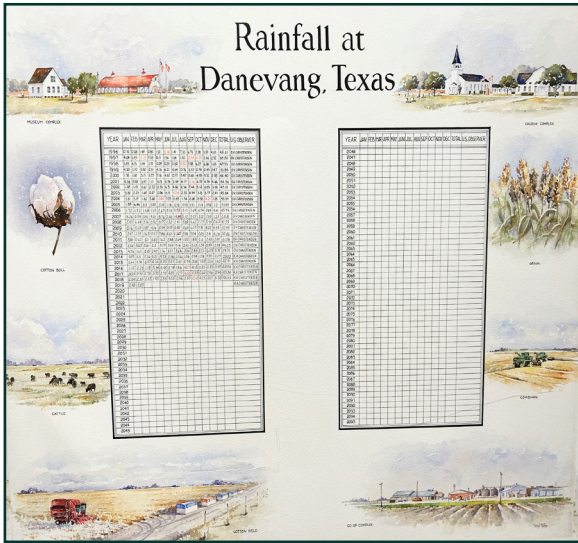


*Proud grandparents and Danevang residents Gloria and Lawrence Petersen were instrumental in helping John propose to their granddaughter at the Museum. Both were longtime supporters of the DHPS; Lawrence passed away in 2005, and Gloria now lives in El Campo. The Petersen's two daughters (Pamela Pope and Laurie Martin) both serve on the DHPS Board of Directors.*

*continued on page 4*



# Shirley Bram updates Danevang rainfall chart



YEAR	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
1994	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
1995	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
1996	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
1997	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
1998	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
1999	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2000	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2001	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2002	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2003	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2004	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2005	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2006	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2007	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2008	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2009	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2010	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2011	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2012	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2013	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2014	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2015	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2016	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2017	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2018	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2019	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2020	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2021	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2022	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2023	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2024	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2025	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2026	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2027	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2028	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2029	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0
2030	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0



**Shirley Bram** put her calligraphy skills to work recently to update rainfall amounts on the Museum’s display rain chart. **Kenny Christensen** collects the data. The late **Virgil Harton** (a native of Danevang) designed and illustrated the rainfall charts.

## LOVE STORY, from p. 3

up to the door of Museum and found it (shockingly!) unlocked.

After walking through most of the Museum, they came up to a new exhibit. The sign read, “The engagement ring given by John Michael King to Angela Renee Martin on August 11, 2004.” Just above it was a shelf holding a little black box. Inside the box was a diamond ring. John picked up the box, and, with Angela looking on in shock, got down on his knee and asked her to marry him. Angela said “Yes!”, and the rest is history ... or maybe we should say heritage?

*Angela and John King with their children -- Gloria (8), Andrew (11), and James (13).*



## Letters Home From Sine Nygaard, a Danevang Pioneer

*Jensine (Sine) Nygaard's letters narrating their lives in America were compiled by Hans Borge Nygaard and published by Funen Times Publishing in Odense, Denmark in 1948 as the book Nygaard Slægten fra Ulbølle (The Nygaard Family from Ulbølle). This translation was done by their great grandson Brian Martin. Hans Nygaard died in 1935 and Sine in 1948; both are buried in Danevang. Three of their descendants are on the Museum's board -- grandson Harold Christensen, and great granddaughters Cynthia Thyssen Priesmeyer and Cheryl Donnally Lucas. This is the next-to-last installment of Sine's letters.*

*{Editor's note: Hans' foot had been severed in a wagon accident in November}.* It was after the New Year when we were finally allowed to come home (the children were invited out to a neighbor's for Christmas Eve). How nice it was to come home! I can still see in my mind Hans resting in his bed, which was set in the living room, and enjoying a cigar. The wound was not healed yet, but the doctor had taught me to take care of it. Hans had got a pair of crutches and started to walk around with them.

Uffe spent the winter at Askov Højskole; it was difficult for him as for all of them at home to know how things were going. He was engaged to Helga Jakobsen. They came in the summer, and Helga stayed with us that summer and helped Hans to hold the Danish children's school. Pastor Madsen had died, and Hans was therefore asked to prepare candidates for confirmation, which he undertook. He had received a wooden leg, which he was using very well.

In the spring, Pastor S. D. Rodholm came from Des Moines and confirmed the children, and on the same occasion, Uffe and Helga held their wedding. Uffe had led the young men's gymnastics in the winter, so the congregation wanted to make the wedding party for them, which of course we gladly agreed to. The party after the wedding was in the Forsamlingshus.

We had some lovely days with Pastor Rodholm, who lived with us, and on Sunday morning we stood outside the door and sang. "Look, now the sun rises from the sea!" On May 22, it was our wedding anniversary; our friends gathered in our home to wish us luck and bring us some gifts.

Our dear little Ingeborg had not been healthy all summer. In July, she suffered typhoid fever and died



on August 3rd. Hans was the chairman of the congregation back then. After a congregation meeting, one of the Board came in to talk about the meeting, and among other things, he said that some of them should gather at the cemetery to mow the grass. I thought "it will be for Ingeborg's funeral." Then Ingeborg asked me, "Mother, who is to be buried?" Another day while she was sick, I started to cry, and Ingeborg asked me why. After all, I couldn't say it was because she was going to die, so I said, "You know, it's not so long ago that Mormor died." Then she sat up in bed, folded her hands and said, "Let's pray to our Lord," and then she recited her baptismal covenant. She was such a sweet and gracious little girl – the other children called her "Little Mother." She put up a fierce struggle; right up to the end, she wanted us to hold her hand. It was in 1912 that she died.

### *Moving to Mississippi and back again to Texas*

Hans had corresponded a bit with Consul Soegaard in New Orleans, whose brother had been his comrade during his soldier days. Soegaard had some land in Mississippi, and the station was named after him. There were two Danish families out there, and he wanted some more to move there. Hans went out there to look at a place for sale, liked it and bought it. It was a good new house we moved into, and Uffe and Helga moved there and lived in another house. One of the families who lived there was a Rafn family, and the first Christmas we all held together. On Easter day a little later, Hans baptized Uffe and Helga's little girl; it was a very solemn moment.

*to be concluded in the next newsletter*

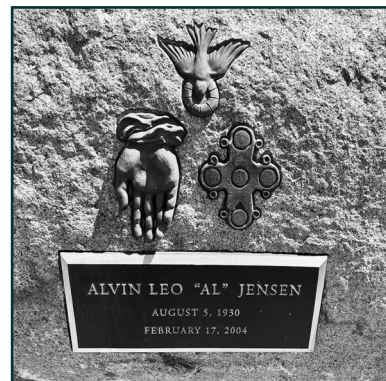
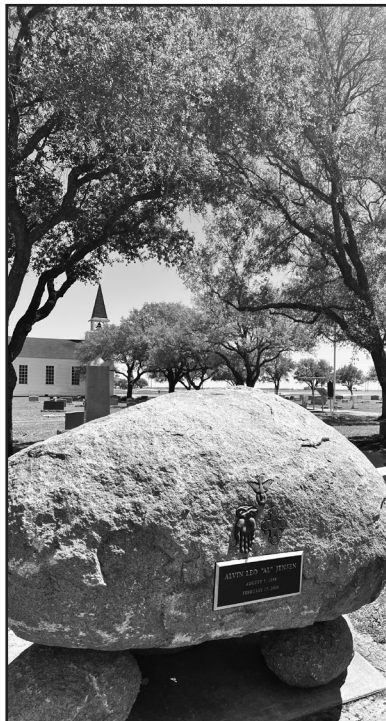


## Danevang Lutheran Cemetery

The Danevang Lutheran Cemetery includes 5+ acres of land between the Danevang Lutheran Church and the DHPS Museum. Established in 1895, the cemetery is the final resting place for some 666 people. It is owned by the Church, but since 2012 has been governed by an independent nonprofit organization, the **Danevang Historical Association**. Currently, the Board consists of President **Dean Hansen**, Treasurer **Ralph Petersen**, Secretary **Laurie Petersen Martin**, and **Patty Jensen**, who served as Secretary of the cemetery for many years. Patty retired from her position but remains on the Board.

Purchasing a lot in the cemetery, which includes 8 spaces, requires either membership in the Danevang Lutheran Church, or having family either buried in or planning to be buried in the cemetery. Lots may be reserved for \$200 with an \$800 burial fee per individual. Contact **Laurie Martin** at 979-534-4447.

*The most unusual grave in the cemetery is that of **Alvin (Al) Jensen**. It is a *kæmpehøj*, the Danish word for an old Viking burial mound. A large boulder weighing almost 7.5 tons sits atop three smaller ones. Jensen, CEO of the construction company which built the Astrodome in Houston and the Tower of the Americas in San Antonio, was instrumental in establishing the Danish Heritage Museum. His family members continue to be valued supporters, including daughter **Bridget Jensen Howard** who serves on the DHPS Board.*



**MEMORIAL DONATIONS**

*Honoring ELVIN BERNDT – Suzan Berndt, Sarah & Mark Hajovsky, Gerald & Myrna Christensen, Jimmie L. & Carole Harton, Harlo & Rhonda Atchetee, Gilbert & Maria Delgado, Carolyn Michell, Paul & Bobbie Brodsgaard, Joyce Jasinski, Kristine Lewis, Dorman Michelsen, Patricia Hortenstine, Pamela Hansen-Henton, Jim W. & Jennifer Harton, Cerny Brothers*

*Honoring ANNETTE WALDMAN and MYRTLE WALDMAN – Beverly Burmeier*

*GENERAL DONATIONS – Paul & Pamela Pope, Dorothy Waldman*

*GRANT – Wharton County Electric*

**Obituary****Joy Marentze Andersen-Rodriguez**

08/29/46 - 07/17/23



Born in El Campo on August 29, 1946, to the late Adolph Mads Andersen and Mary Louise Calderon Andersen, Joy's vibrant spirit touched the lives of all who knew her. She graduated from El Campo High School in 1964 and earned bachelor's and master's degrees in political science from Southwest Texas State (now Texas State). She devoted over 30 years to teaching in the Eagle Pass School District and also shared her knowledge part-time at Sul Ross State University. One of her proudest accomplishments was leading a thriving Mock Trial program, where her students competed statewide. She organized fundraisers to take her teams to Washington DC, instilling in them a deep appreciation for our nation's history and political system. Her passion for education and unwavering dedication to her students were awe-inspiring.

Joy's free spirit, humor and infectious enthusiasm drew people to her. Her children, nieces, and nephews idolized her, as well as many others who were fortunate enough to cross her path. Joy had an adventurous side too, with a love for rodeos, horses, and ranching. She fearlessly piloted airplanes after mastering flying lessons. A true rock and roll enthusiast, Joy managed a record store in Houston during the '70s, earning her free records and concert tickets – a dream come true for any music lover. Her diverse talents knew no bounds; she professionally managed a Spanish rock band called Zaro, assisting them in producing their first record and filming music videos.

Upon retirement, Joy settled in the Austin area, cherishing moments spent with her children, Tanya and Danny as well as grandchildren, Dillon and Hunter. She loved attending her grandson Dillon's rodeos and football games throughout high school and shared countless weekends watching college and NFL football with Hunter. One of her greatest joys was experiencing live events and concerts with her family, especially her son Danny, creating unforgettable memories together. A natural conversationalist, Joy's best friend and confidante was her baby sister Jean, with whom she laughed and reminisced late into many a night. Joy's life was a tapestry of love, laughter, strength and cherished connections. She loved animals, and was an avid cat lover and owned several horses throughout her life.

Joy was preceded in death by her parents, Aunt Marentze, Uncle Wilbur Webb, her daughter Tanya O'Neal Zella, and former husbands Carlton Early O'Neal and Dan Rodriguez. She leaves behind her adoring son Danny Rodriguez, cherished grandsons Dillon and Hunter Zella, son-in-law Randy Zella, and beloved siblings Jane Andersen Clipson, Judy Andersen Tines, Jean Andersen, and Andy Andersen, along with numerous nieces and nephews.



The Danish Heritage Preservation Society  
P.O. Box 368  
Danevang, Texas 77432

979-578-0808



*Jackson Dromgoole* painted the Danish flag and won 3rd in the youth division of the El Campo Art Association's 63rd annual show. Jackson, who is 7 and lives in Garwood, donated his prize winner to the Museum. It will be a featured item in the Harvest Festival auction on October 21.

### The Danish Heritage Preservation Society

Museum Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 1- 4 p.m.  
*call 979-578-0808 for appointment*  
Closed Sundays, Mondays, and holidays

E-mail: [danishmuseum4@gmail.com](mailto:danishmuseum4@gmail.com)

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