

RiverOaks Health Campus becomes Daniel Boone's frontier

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Danny Russel, playing Daniel Boone, wrapped up his presentation to RiverOaks residents by grabbing his rifle and running in a half-crouch toward the door.

"It's time to go hunting! Follow me," he said, heading out of the beautifully carpeted room that had been, for a half hour, his makeshift trading post, where the character of Daniel Boone told stories of Boone's life.

"Are we supposed to follow him?" asked one resident from a wheelchair.

Another person craned their neck to look through
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Danny Russel, historical impressionist, came to River Oaks Nov. 21 to entertain and teach residents.

Janice Barniak photo

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the blinds and out into the parking lot where, in character, the man was hunting through the cars until, presumably, he took off in the vehicle (or horse) with which he

arrived.

"I think he's gone," said a resident looking at another person, who nodded.

The man who called himself Daniel Boone had greeted his audience as though they were settlers coming through on their way out west, ready

to buy supplies and hear his tales of living in the wild.

He talked about growing up a Quaker, wandering away from home and catching small pox, and chasing a full grown bear through the woods.

"By the time they found me, I had it skinned and

cooked up for breakfast... how can you be angry at me when you've got bear bacon?" he asked.

He talked about his preference for regular caps over raccoon skin ones, and what it was like to have his daughters abducted by native Americans. He taught words in

Shawnee and talked fondly of his wife, Rebecca.

"It's like my wife says, behind every successful man is a woman—rolling her eyes," he quipped.

He turned serious, talking about the children Boone lost, including one killed and tortured by native Americans, including

an attacker Boone knew personally.

"Quakers believe there's a spark of God in every person," he said.

Russel is a historical impersonator out of Indianapolis with 30 years of experience. He also specializes in playing a role as Abraham Lincoln.