
TxDOT's four goals: Maintain a safe system, address congestion, connect Texas communities, and be a Best-in-Class state agency

For Immediate Release

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Jerry Holt Named Gene Phillips Hospitality Award Winner

(AUSTIN)—Longtime tourism industry pro Jerry Holt of Traders Village was named the 2014 recipient of the *Gene Phillips Hospitality Award* from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), at ceremonies held last night in South Padre Island as part of the annual Texas Travel Counselors Conference.

Highly respected among his tourism colleagues and peers, Holt is renowned for his professionalism and volunteering his time and most any state tourism function or cause. He has no less than 40 years of experience in Texas tourism, including his current role in sales, tourism and promotions at Traders Village in Grand Prairie, TX, considered the largest weekly flea market, shopping and vendor marketplace of its kind in the U.S., and which attracts thousands of people every weekend to its DFW-Metroplex location alone.

Prior to his current position, he served as vice president of the Amarillo Convention and Visitor Council for some 18 years, where he oversaw, managed and was involved in most all tourism initiatives, visitor programs and outreach, marketing and numerous other responsibilities on behalf of the legendary Panhandle city. Before that, he worked for 20 years with the Six Flags Corporation in sales and marketing, after beginning his career there as a seasonal ride operator while he was still in high school.

Throughout his career, Holt has been a regular fixture on committees and boards for the Texas Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus, Texas Tourism Industry Association, Panhandle Days in Austin, the Texas Panhandle Heritage Foundation, the Tourism Advisory Council for the Office of the Governor Economic Development and Tourism, and many others.

“Throughout his distinguished career, Jerry Holt has been the kind of worker who represents the best of the Texas tourism industry,” said Margo Richards, Director of the Travel Information Division at TxDOT. “He remains a consummate ambassador for the state and is a perfect fit for the Gene Phillips award.”

The award recognizes Holt's career-long contributions, involvement in legislation, and work that specifically impacts Texas' \$65.7 billion travel and tourism industry.

The *Gene Phillips Hospitality Award* is named in honor of the late Gene Phillips, who managed Aquarena Springs in San Marcos and was an influential, driving force in the emerging tourism industry during the 1970s. Each year the award is presented by TxDOT Travel Information Division staff and recognizes one person for his or her outstanding lifetime accomplishments within the Texas travel and tourism industry.

The award was presented during the 59th annual Texas Travel Counselors Conference, a yearly meeting of Texas travel professionals and representatives of TxDOT's Travel Information Division, the Texas Travel Industry Association, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the American Automobile Association (AAA), and city information centers.

For media inquiries, contact TxDOT Media Relations at MediaRelations@txdot.gov or (512) 463-8700.

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Texas Department of Transportation

The Texas Department of Transportation is responsible for maintaining 80,000 miles of road and for supporting aviation, rail, and public transportation across the state. TxDOT and its 11,000 employees are committed to working with others to provide safe and reliable transportation solutions for Texas by maintaining a safe system, addressing congestion, connecting Texas communities, and being a Best in Class state agency. Find out more at www.txdot.gov
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