

IFEA/Zambelli Fireworks Volunteer of the Year Nomination 2013

Individual Submitting Nomination:

Gayle Hall, CFEE
Director of Festivals and Events
Grapevine Convention & Visitors Bureau
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Nomination Information:

Dennis Roberts
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Nomination Questions:

Depth of Involvement

Dennis Roberts has been a resident of Grapevine, Texas over 50 years. He divides his time between family, golfing and volunteering in the community since his retirement from owning and operating Dennis Electric. Dennis started in the electrical business in the mid 50's after serving in the United States Navy.

Dennis has made a huge contribution to the success of all of Grapevine's festivals and events since they began. As a take charge kind of person, he has always volunteered to do whatever is needed to make something happen. There was no electrical problem too big or no problem too large to solve for Dennis. He always finds a way to work through a variety of challenges in a positive and dedicated manner. His expertise in the electrical trade and the staff that he would provide from his business always solved any challenges that came up. And then, he would take care of setting up and running the all needed electrical service. At the conclusion of our events, Dennis and his team would take down electrical for our events and put into storage.

Dennis has served on the Advisory Board for the City of Grapevine Electrical Board for more than twenty years. He was selected in 2011 to serve on the Grapevine Convention & Visitors Bureau Advisory Board and continues to serve on it today.

Specific examples

Since Grapevine's first festival in 1985, Dennis has been a valued member of the team for every festival, serving as the Electrical Operations Chair. Dennis's contributions to the festivals reach back to our first planning meeting in 1985. Dennis took on the job of making sure all the festival vendors had electrical service. Dennis and his team monitor all activity during set up, the festival weekend and during tear down at the conclusion of the event. Dennis and his team give approximately 1,500 hours of volunteer time for our Grapevine festivals. They come in early and wire tents with lights. They hook all festival vendors up for electricity, monitor all electrical during the weekend of the event and take it all down and put it back into storage. Even on one-day special events, Dennis takes on the duty of making sure we have no electrical problems during the smaller events by doing the work himself.

Significant enthusiasm, organization assistance and specific expertise

Dennis has been a committed volunteer to Grapevine's festival for more than 29 years. His dedication, along with his technical electrical expertise, has allowed our festivals team to rely on him on many occasions through the years. By serving as the Electrical Operations Chair, Dennis has allowed the festivals team staff to concentrate on other aspects of the festival. By his many years of service, he has proven his commitment and reliability during Grapevine's events.

He has shown a tremendous commitment to our vendors, as well as our staff and volunteers. His responsiveness to the needs and requests of our vendors has proven to be an indispensable element of the success of each festival. His cheerful and pleasant demeanor has also made him an asset and an extension of our staff.

When the city decided to investigate what it would take and what it would cost to put electrical down the middle of our Main Street for festivals, they called on Dennis's expertise to help design the most cost effective way to accomplish this task. With his support and help, we were one of the first festivals in the country to install electrical and water in the ground in the middle of our Main Street in the heart of the Historic District. This made our festivals smoother and cleaner by doing away with cord covers on the street. For a wheelchair bound person or a stroller, this provides smooth access. And for most festival patrons, this benefit means a lessened likelihood of tripping over a cord or cord cover.

Initiative and Leadership

By assuming the role of the Electrical Operations Chair, Dennis took a major role in the technical aspect of each of Grapevine's festivals. This is a key role because for our food vendors, our live entertainment acts and many other elements of the festival as having a constant electrical supply is a necessary element to conduct festival business.

Dennis's goal has always been to service each and every customer, as if they were a customer of his own business and to do so in a timely and efficient manner. By operating the Electrical Operations team in this manner, he has been able to demonstrate how important these vendors are to our festival and to create the most positive experience for vendors, staff and attendees. During the time of his ownership of Dennis Electric, he provided staff to work our festivals at no cost to the festival to make sure everything went smooth and worked properly. He involved his family and got them to volunteer for the festival in other areas. When he sold Dennis Electric, he made sure the man buying the company would continue to support the festivals as Dennis had.

To this day, Dennis Electric is a supporting sponsor of our major festivals and Dennis is still the volunteer chair of Electrical Operations.

Dependability

For more than 29 years, Dennis has proven to be one of the most dependable Grapevine festival volunteers. His tireless efforts to enhance the experience for vendors and attendees by providing reliable, prompt and friendly service have been an example to all who work with him and see him throughout each festival. By putting in countless hours and incredible levels of quality and service for Grapevine, Dennis is a true star among our team of leadership volunteers.

Positive Attitude

Dennis is one of the most positive and upbeat volunteers. He has been a resident of Grapevine for more than 50 years and his commitment to his family, his community and Grapevine's festival is contagious. By contributing so many hours over more than 29 years, Dennis has had a wonderful impact on the growth of our community and the positive reputation that Grapevine's festivals enjoy throughout the local area, the region and the nation.

How has Dennis made a difference to Grapevine's festivals?

Grapevine has been fortunate to have a wonderful group of volunteers who serve our community at each of festival. Dennis is an inspiration to all those around him. By exemplifying the qualities of dedication, perseverance, humor, friendship and commitment, Dennis has helped create a culture of service to all those who serve the city of Grapevine. This culture of service extends beyond our festivals and extends to many aspects of our community. Dennis has set a high standard for those who come after him and we applaud and thank Dennis for his many years of service. For all of these reasons and many more, Grapevine believes Dennis Roberts should be the IFEA/Zambelli Fireworks Volunteer of the Year.