



International Festivals & Events Association

**JoAnn Andera, CFEE
1998 IFEA Hall of Fame Inductee
Texas Folklife Festival**



Texas Folklife Director JoAnn Andera, CFEE, has worked her way up in the events industry from multilingual festival guide to multi-cultural festival expert. Her strong commitment to folk culture and ethnic events has been widely recognized. She has presented annual festival and event management seminars at Texas A&M University and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and was invited by the U.S. State Department to speak at a cultural seminar in Bogotá, Columbia.

Andera began her career in 1970 as a guide for the Institute of Texas Cultures, and when the Texas Folklife Festival began in 1972, her volunteer role included performing and cooking Lebanese dishes. JoAnn worked in many administrative capacities until her appointment in 1981 as Director of the Texas Folklife Festival, which provides ethnic groups the opportunity to display and preserve their cultural heritage and draws 10,000 volunteers and 70,000 visitors each August.

Andera has received top honors from the Texas Festivals & Events Association, and was elected IFEA Chair in 1994-1995. Over the years, she has seen many changes in the events industry – from “uncounted and ignored to a prized career choice and a powerhouse of influence - the level of professionalism and caliber of individuals is remarkable.”

Andera feels her contribution to the field was “to raise the level of consciousness that we were seeking help, mentoring and assistance, and that IFEA was the organization that held the key for us. Many have worked to create an organization that is outstanding and a leader in its field.”