

## Resort hotels

While San Antonio's downtown hotels have helped the city attract more conventions, so have some of its resorts at the southern edge of the Hill Country.

In 2010, the JW Marriott Hill Country Resort & Spa is set to open its 1,003-room hotel north of Loop 1604 off of U.S. Highway 281. General Manager Arthur Coulombe is quite familiar with the Marriott brand and with San Antonio's convention business.

"The demand for San Antonio is deep," Coulombe explains. "People come to San Antonio and fall in love with it and that's what I did 30 years ago."

Coulombe was part of the group that opened the Marriott Riverwalk. When he had a chance to move to San Antonio 13 years ago to run the Marriott Riverwalk and Rivercenter hotels, he took it.

Then he became the "guy on the ground" for Marriott when plans were launched for the JW Marriott. Coulombe recalls an early meeting attended by design professionals and engineers.

"We need to get this right," he remembers telling them. "It's about authenticity. We want future guests to feel what San Antonio and the Hill Country is all about."

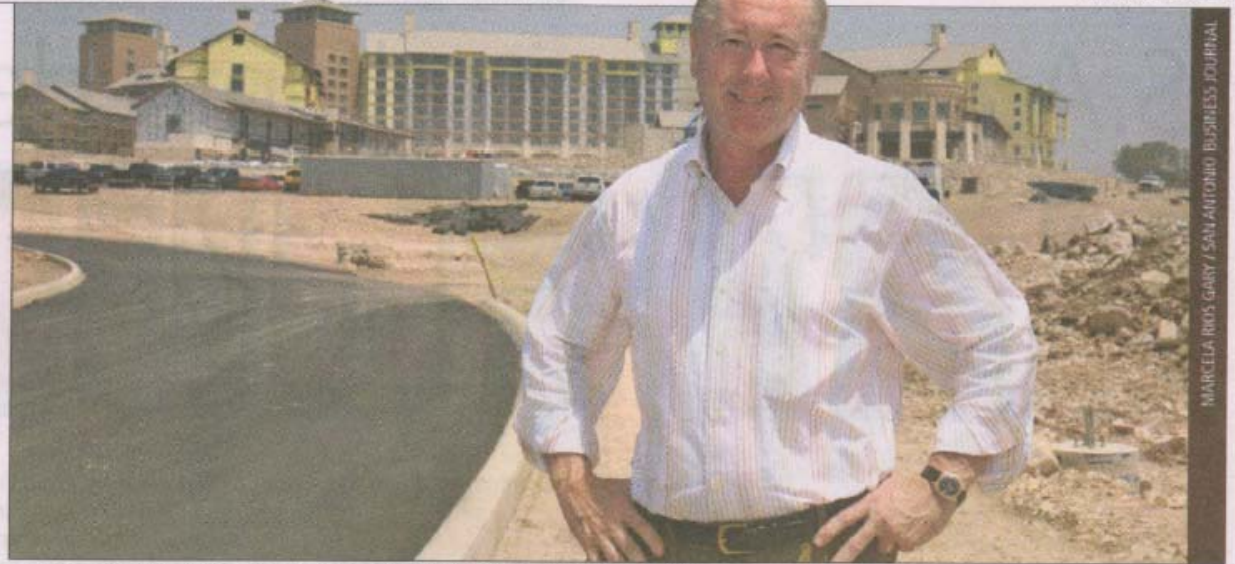
The project includes a TPG golf course. And more than 700 acres of land in the area has been set aside for ecological preservation. As the project nears completion, Coulombe says he is pleased with the results. Not only is the convention business growing, but the leisure travel interest in San Antonio is expanding. More travelers from parts of the country that didn't previously seek out San Antonio are putting it on their destination lists. And the JW Marriott is giving them one more reason.

"We clearly will open what will be one of the finest resorts in the nation," he says.

In addition to the new Marriott, 10 other lodging facilities outside the downtown area, including the 224-room Drury Inn on Interstate 10 and Loop 1604, have been under construction in 2009.

## FROM THE ALAMO TO THE CAPITOL

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Arthur Coulombe is general manager of the new JW Marriott Hill Country Resort & Spa.

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