

The Faces of Urban Forestry



Beverly White
Retired from
restaurant industry



Trees Bring People Together After a Natural Disaster

When Hurricane Ike struck Galveston Island in 2008, resident Beverly White says, “It devastated us. When the old oaks were gone, I felt like I had lost my friends.”

Despite a physical disability, Beverly decided to ask people to help her replant the neighborhood. “They said, ‘If broken down Beverly can plant, we can too,’” she says, with a laugh. And more than 60 local people responded, including students from Texas A&M University.

In cooperation with the Galveston Island Tree Conservancy and the Texas Forest Service, 100 live oaks, pecans, Texas ebony and other species were planted in the devastated street’s right-of-way.

As a result, Old Seawall Neighborwoods, a volunteer tree planting group, was born, connecting neighbors in an area many felt had been neglected prior to the storm. Residents who hardly knew each other prior to the disaster have now joined together as a cohesive and supportive group. “I have 52 people on my email list,” says Beverly. “We are still planting trees, but members of the group often ask for help with other things, too. The trees helped us become a tight-knit group.”

“The trees helped us become a tight-knit group.”
— Beverly White



The Faces of Urban Forestry

A joint project of U.S. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry, the National Association of State Foresters, and the Arbor Day Foundation. For more information visit arborday.org/faces