

The Faces of Urban Forestry



Joyce Haslip
Community Organizer, Oktoberfest



Olive Branch,
Mississippi

Local Merchants Like “The Pines”

In her job coordinating her community’s annual Oktoberfest, Joyce Haslip observes some 80 to 100 artisans and food merchants take up residence in the pine-shaded portion of a city park every year. “The Pines” is an older section of the park that contains large loblollies maintained by the city.

“Our merchants keep coming back,” says Joyce. “The Pines” Pathways wind through the area so the thousands of visitors that show up for the one-day event can wander past the art and craft booths and enjoy entertainment for children and adults alike.

“Some merchants don’t even put up tents thanks to the shade,” Joyce adds. “It can be warm in the South during the first week in October, but it’s always comfortable in the shade of ‘The Pines.’”

Oktoberfest has been an attraction for over 34 years and has seen the community grow from a population of 6,000 people 15 years ago to its 35,000 today. Despite the growth, city officials have committed themselves to maintaining the trees. Joyce makes sure of it. “If the city messes up, they hear from me,” she laughs.

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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