Livingston Will Again Claim Pine Tree Capital Status

DENHAM SPRINGS — Livingston Parish will again proclaim itself the "pine tree capital of the world" Saturday.

Activities of the day-long Louisiana Pine Tree Festival include a downtown parade, an afternoon of woodman sports including tobacco spitting, wood chopping contests during political candidates to show their "strength," and pageants on young beauty queens of all ages.

Events get under way at 10 a.m. with the parade featuring two bands, floats, sheriff's posse and convertibles carrying some 20 candidates for the title of Louisiana Pine Tree Queen.

The parade will wind up at Glover's Pond on Hatcher Lane to start festivities there at 11 a.m. with the naming of King Lumberjack. Lunch booths operated by the Denham Springs Jaycees will be serving.

Highlight of the early afternoon will be a coon on a log exhibition by the Blood River Woodsmen Association.

The log chopping contests offer standing invitations to political candidates to show their prowess with the axe.

Tobacco spitting contests will be downwind with no limit on quid size and chewing time.

The spotlight shifts at 2 p.m. to the Denham Springs High School gym for the selection of King Pine Petite and Pine Petite Queen from among some 35 candidates under three years of age.

Some 20 girls of ages 6-12 have already qualified as contestants for the title of Louisiana Magnolia Queen in judging immediately after the toddler group.

At 5 p.m. more contestants for the title of Miss Louisiana Pine Tree will be entertained at a buffet at the American Legion Home. During the buffet the girls will be judged on poise, personality and intelligence.

The climax of the festival will begin at 8 p.m. in the high school gym when the senior contestants will compete in evening gowns.

The Magnolia Queen will be crowned Saturday night prior to the crowning of the Louisiana Pine Queen. Also one girl will be chosen to represent Livingston Parish at the Yambliefestival in Opelousas.

Miss Louisiana Pine Tree Queen will go to Washington, D.C., for the Mardi Gras ball.

This is the third year for the Pine Tree Festival.