



EDITORIAL: Building success, a step at a time

The really good news? We're just getting started.

THERE ARE THOSE who will hear about Beloit's top ranking for the "America in Bloom" competition and look for something negative - just "putting lipstick on a pig."

After all, Beloit still has lots of problems. There are too many rundown houses. Too many failing kids in school. Not enough stores to shop. Not enough good jobs to go around. We're too old. We're too poor.

Blah-blah-blah-blah-blah.

The hometown audience is sometimes the toughest to convince, when outsiders can come into a community and see the improvements right away. Beloit is blooming?

Oh, yes.

THE REALLY GOOD NEWS is that the community is just getting started. The improvements of the past decade or so have just built a foundation upon which to build.

But it's a solid foundation, and that's what is evident in recognition from the "Bloom" organization. One can see where Beloit has been, and one can see where Beloit is going.

City Manager Larry Arft is fond of talking about things like "curb appeal," and how Beloit "shows." Part of the improvement comes from major projects such as the Beloit Inn, Heritage View, the ABC Supply complex, the Regal-Beloit addition and the Beloit College science building project. Public amenities and infrastructure projects - from Riverside Park to the Gateway Business Park to new streets and curbs - add to the overall picture of a community on the rise.

But much of the improvement can be traced to a surge of public pride, as citizens join the effort to clean up and spruce up. A community that takes pride in itself and how it looks, is a better place to live and work and raise families.

BELOIT DESERVED the "Bloom" recognition, and we applaud all those who had a part in the city's presentation. The award didn't just float in on a breeze. Good people saw an opportunity to help Beloit shine, and made it happen.

For many years local people worried about the city's reputation around Wisconsin,

around the region, around the nation. Some looked for ways to “spin” the story, as if the message was the problem.

Others decided to roll up their sleeves and go to work, to produce real results that could be seen, felt and touched. These visionaries deserve the credit for bringing not only new amenities to town, but more importantly a new attitude.

A couple of sports analogies seem in order. Mike Ditka once said it's not just about winning and losing, but what you overcome to get there. Beloit understands that.

And every team knows failure breeds failure and success breeds success. Beloit is succeeding, and this is a story that has just begun. So we invite citizens to jump aboard this bandwagon. There's room for everybody.