

Baldur receives 5 Blooms in competition

Veteran Park receives special mention award

This year the Communities in Bloom judges were Hugh Skinner of Roblin and Glenda MacPhee of Neepawa and they visited the Baldur area on July 28th. Baldur was entered in the 1-500 population group and they received the top award of 5 Blooms with a total score of 839.5 out of a possible 1000. They have also been invited to compete Nationally in this population group.

The judges General Comments and Suggestions stated:

Approaching Baldur from the west on Highway 23, we got a very good impression of this beautiful community. The attractive sign is followed by the landscaping of Veteran Park and the floral displays in front of business on this street. Our tour through the community proved that the attention to beautification and the development of a healthy and vibrant community extends throughout Baldur and to the surrounding area. Grund Icelandic Lutheran Church is a beautiful and well preserved historical building.

Recreation facilities in the community are generally well kept and are well used by the residents.

It is remarkable that a community of this size has maintained an acute care health care facility as well as a personal care home. Improvements to the water system have contributed to the well being of Baldur's residents.

Baldur's citizens should be proud of their beautiful community. Well done!

TIDINESS

The community of Baldur is very tidy. Although school children do community cleanups it is evident that it has become a natural act of the public to clean up. When neighbors help each other out with mowing or hauling material to the waste management facility everyone wins.

The un-mowed areas in non visible areas needn't be a big concern unless they become very dry and thereby a fire hazard.

Some sidewalk repairs are obvious with future plans to improve the width to the hospital and seniors' residence.

There have been several visible improvements to businesses.

Garbage cans and cigarette bins are available in appropriate areas. Some of the garbage bins are beginning to look a bit worn. Perhaps the older students would consider this as a viable art project sometime in the future. The slam dunk your junk is a great motto!

*113.0 marks of 125.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Baldur has a strong awareness of environmental issues and has been successful with a number of



At the Communities in Bloom awards weekend in Brandon "Veteran Park" in Baldur received the award for "Special Mention".

initiatives to reduce waste and promote effective environmental stewardship. Participation of the school in a number of these initiatives bodes well for the future.

Backyard composting is supported by the CIB committee and the Conservation district but there is no community composting. Baldur should continue to explore this possibility. Recyclables are picked up in Baldur and the waste management facility is quite efficient with garbage being stored in a biotech shed for periodic grinding to reduce volume. The recycling program is coming up against the difficulties in recycling products like cardboard because the lack of market. The recycling grade of the community is C mostly due to the fact that much of the RM is rural and has no pick up. Continue to encourage all citizens to recycle.

The local grocery store has engaged in an initiative to reduce waste by encouraging the use of cloth grocery bags.

Geothermal energy systems have been installed in a number of buildings in the community.

A new water system with reverse osmosis has provided the community with much better quality water at an increased cost. This has encouraged a number of changes to compensate for the higher water rates. Low flush toilets have been installed in several places including Veteran Park. To manage this system the village has trained two people. Water conservation in the landscape has been accomplished with the use of mulch.

Baldur promotes Idle Free Zones.

Bring your own dish/cutlery is a great initiative to reduce waste ... obviously the community is supporting it.

*103.75 marks of 125.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

There is real community spirit in Baldur with everyone working together for greater good of the community. There appears to be good rapport between municipal, business people, not-for-profit groups and residents. This seems to span all age groups.

When neighbors help one

another with things such as yard work and hauling waste to the waste management facility things in small towns get done. Keep up the good work!

The public washrooms at Veteran Park are a testament to what volunteers and a grant can accomplish. Most larger towns are not able to boast such fine facilities.

Be sure to give recognition to your many volunteers.

*111.25 marks of 125.

NATURAL & CULTURAL HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Baldur has come a long way in its development of natural and cultural heritage conservation during the past years. The Grund Church and nearby Glenora remain treasures in their well maintained state. The Friends of St. Mark's have made significant repairs to the church. The museum is back in operation. Grants and endowment funds have provided much needed money. Summer Solstice Days present community celebration and Homecoming 2012 plans are already underway.

Continue the development and maintenance of your museum. It was nice to see labeling happening while we were touring. Be sure your student workers are ready to present information about the museum contents. If the stories are written down it wouldn't take long for new students to become comfortable with the "story telling" aspect that will make the museum come alive.

Now that the walking tour brochure is available carry on the development with signage at each site. Be sure to make the nature walking trail well known with adequate signage. There are hints such as the map at the picnic shelter but it is a bit obscure.

With all the people stopping in Veteran Park it might be nice to include an information board about some of the things that can be found in Baldur ... walking trail, heritage tour, museum, special events, birding areas, farmers market days, and so on.

We wish you well in your preparations for your 2012 homecoming.

*102.75 marks of 125.

TREE/URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT

Tree planting has been a part of the life of the Baldur community for many years. The result is an attractively treed community. The variety that has been planted is notable. A lot of trees have been planted in the last few years. Recently deer have been causing damage to young trees. Some suggestions of trees that are less attractive to deer are Japanese tree lilac, hackberry, Manitoba maple, basswood, and linden. Spruce are usually less susceptible to damage than cedar or pine but we did note damage on spruce in some parts of the town. Some along Veteran Park are quite damaged. Install guards around smaller trees (plastic drain tile split along its length works well) or mulch around trees to eliminate the need for mowing close to the trunks. Increasing the use of mulch will also conserve water.

A number of trees were noted that were poorly pruned. Try organizing a pruning workshop to teach interested citizens and civic employees proper pruning techniques.

The work to identify heritage trees is commendable. Perhaps it could be combined with a more general tree inventory that would help in the planning of maintenance.

Baldur has accessed grants in the recent past for tree planting. This has had a very positive impact on the community.

*96.00 marks of 125.

LANDSCAPED AREAS

Baldur has a variety of landscaped areas throughout the town. The sports fields, school grounds, Veteran Park and other areas are well laid out and well maintained. Residential areas are attractive.

The area along Highway 23, the main thoroughfare, is attractively landscaped and has become a meeting area. The Veteran Park is a real asset to your community. It's use for farmer's markets and grass hockey tournaments ensures that people will use and appreciate it. It will be exciting to watch that area developed to completion.

Students and teachers are to be commended for their efforts in the design and planting of their beds.

Residents of Baldur have made efforts to improve their properties through landscaping.

*103.50 marks of 125.

FLORAL DISPLAYS

Flowers planted at the base of the entrance signs of Baldur are a big hint of things to come. The entire town has lots and lots of beautiful floral displays in both private and public areas. The credit union, Baldur Trading, LoBoys stand out but all businesses seem to be participating in some way. The school has taken an active role in beautifying their school grounds and the park. The recreation/Campground area has beautiful flowers showcasing the sign. There

are many beautiful floral displays in residential areas as well.

Along the main street petunia baskets and planters are very showy and several are very unique and say something about Baldur ... such as the seed drill representing the farming base as well as the old car signifying a personal or business focus at Lo Boys. And where else but Baldur would you find floral plantings at the waste management facility!

Petunias put on a reliable show regardless of the weather but do require regular watering which Baldur Flower Committee is obviously committed to carrying out. Dividing up the watering schedule seems to be working well but it might be a good idea to begin looking at other options. Some youth who are interested in horticulture might be ready to put in some of their volunteer hours.

The flower committee and school have increased the diversity of flowers at Veteran Park. Well done!

*108.50 marks of 125.

TURF & GROUND COVER

Turf areas in Baldur are well groomed. Regals ball club and town are to be complimented for their excellent maintenance of Argyle Park.

Residential lawns in Baldur are generally well maintained. Turf areas have not been watered ... conserving water for more important uses.

We wish to encourage experimentation with native grasses and wild flowers and with alternative ground covers such as thyme, goutweed, hardy daylilies, paxistema, and bergenia.

*100.75 marks of 125.

SPECIAL MENTION AWARD

Veteran Park received the award for "Special Mention" this year. They commented on this by saying:

"Veteran Park is a reclaimed area of what was the former railroad. The community has worked hard to acquire and develop this area which is directly across from local businesses.

It has become a community meeting place, picnic area for travelers and is also used for weekly farmers' markets and suppers. The newly built public washroom is a bonus and nicely built to mimic a railroad station. The cenotaph holds center place. A nearby area is used for grass hockey competitions.

There are nicely landscaped areas bursting with bloom, including very colorful planters and baskets, implements such as a seed drill planter which ties into local economic base, some older established trees as well as lots of newly planted trees of good variety.

There are an increasing number of travelers stopping to use this facility and no doubt they in turn will check out the businesses and museums across the street.

This is truly a Park to be proud of.