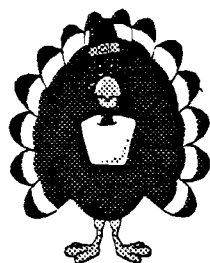


*First  
impressions*



Boscobel, WI

*by Prescott, WI*  
May, 1992

1. *What were **my** impressions before visiting the community: what did I expect, etc.*

I did not expect a warm welcome from the town. I had someone from Minnesota call to request information on Boscobel in January and never responded so I did not feel the Chamber was very active.

Expected the town to be much smaller, more confined.

Expected less variety and a smaller shopping area.

2. *Approaching the community, what do you notice **first**?*

Lovely park approaching from the North, sign that offered to launch boat free, park appeared clean and well kept. Driving into town we were not aware of the downtown business **district** which is located **3** blocks off the Highway 61 that we came into town on.

3. *As you drive around town your comments on:*

**A. APPEARANCE**

1. Downtown

Friendly, clean, unique, lovely **main** street park donated by local Jaycees. We especially loved the banners about wild turkey hunting, which we were told were recently new to the downtown area.

*Also* some trees recently planted that have accessible wiring running close so they can have lighting on the trees. Good signage, **easy** to find stores, stores that were occupied showed pride of ownership.

3. *As you drive around town your comments on:*

**A. APPEARANCE** (cont'd.)

**2. Residential**

Lots and lots of rummage sales (we hit the best day to see Boscobel **as** this was their annual city-wide rummage sale day and the annual Wild Turkey days). Homes appeared well kept, neat, clean.

**3. Industrial Park**

Great sign with landscaping, not well defined, hard to tell where Industrial Park began and residential began. Seemed sad to be removing such a beautiful grove of cedar trees for an industrial park. Seemed to have easy access for trucking. Sign **was** very inviting for new business: talked about financing packages and telephone number. We were envious **as** you have a spec building, we'd love to have one, how did you get it?

**4. Parks**

Well kept, not well advertised, saw an interesting vertical log cabin in one park that we would have liked to know more about. Could use more playground equipment, picnic tables, etc.

**5. Schools**

Did not actually see the school; however, picked up a flyer that talked about the schools and were told Boscobel has an excellent school system.

**6. Other**

Noticed there were not a lot of homes for sale nor new construction.

## B. PROPER SIGNING

### 1. Welcome to the City

Good signage from the north but excellent from the South; i.e., historical marker, large sign indicating downtown district also.

### 2. Streets

Clean, downtown streets appeared to be barricaded however later we learned there was a walk/race that morning and the streets were barricaded for that. How sad we noticed no spectators to cheer on the participants.

### 3. Directions to hospital/parks etc.

Hospital well marked, didn't notice any park signs. Had to ask to find the tourist information and then found the library and city hall closed and inaccessible to get information.

Didn't see any bed & breakfast places, thought a home by the hospital would be accommodating for that.

### 4. Storefront signs

Well marked, well kept, would like to see a uniform theme with signs, would give the shopping community a sense of togetherness.

### 5. City Hall. police. etc.

City hall locked on Saturday, however the front door was open and we did wander in to the lower level, saw a sign that said police department was locked up too. Toilets appeared to be open but no signage to notify us of public restrooms. Is this the police department?

### 6. Billboards. advertising etc.

Unique Boscobel billboard on South side of town. We felt the highway area should be 'shouting' about the downtown area to capture tourist attention. Would be easy to drive by.

#### 4. *Visitor/community information*

##### A. **City /Village Hall**

###### 1. Is there a street map?

Picked up a map, only one we found, that had rummage sales marked on it. Would like to see a better quality one. Felt City Hall should be better marked; wold have missed it if it weren't for the tourist info sign.

###### 2. Community brochure/directory

Searched for a brochure about your Chamber members and businesses but were unable to locate. Found different brochures in different places; i.e. cafe had school & hospital & brochure map. Murley's Men's Store had a brochure on the community development and places to see 'within an hour of Boscobel.'

###### 3. Community profile (including business and industrial opportunities)

Very inviting community to move to, or visit. I plan to make a trip back another day, took a county road to cut back to Highway 35 to get to the river drive **as soon as possible** (Cty E) and it had some of the most spectacular views I have seen anywhere in Wisconsin. It certainly is a well kept secret.

###### 4. Recommendations on places to stay/eat/visit ..etc.

Everyone we talked to encouraged us to stay for the evening events (Turkey call & and owl hooting contest).

###### 5. Contact people and addresses listed if I want more info,

Mr. Murley from the Murley Men's Store surely was **Mr.** Boscobel. He took us **all** in and talked excitedly about the area, things you've accomplished in the past, the flags on the light poles, the wreaths, the trees that have just been planted with wiring close so the trees can be decorated.

Not to pass up an opportunity, he asked if any of us were interested in opening a women's clothing store **as** that was a need, also that he was looking for \$5,000 to do some additional remodeling for further improvements for the downtown and about a **Mr. Nice** who **was** a retired gentleman who was so helpful in Writing grants for Boscobel Industrial Park, etc. He spoke about \$1,000,000 for the hospital and \$1,000,000 for the industrial park and how proud he was of the recently built spec building in the industrial park. *All* up and down the streets, if we had questions someone couldn't answer, they suggested we go talk to Mr. Murley.

A woman who was guarding the intersection during the walk was also very helpful to us. During breaks in the walk/race foot traffic she would talk about Boscobel and the enthusiasm she had carried through. She recently closed a dress shop there and wanted badly to find someone who would take over the old hotel and re-open it. Seemed to have very good connections in town.

## B. CHAMBER OFFICE

### 1. Easy to locate

Unable to locate the chamber office, mostly people told us there wasn't one, however we could never get **Mr. Murley** to admit to that. Whenever we talked about the Chamber he referred us to Laurie the Chamber secretary who could take care of us.

### 2. Comments on info available (street map, brochures, community profile etc.

The brochure he gave us when we asked for a Chamber brochure was the Community development one with Mr. Nice's name on it,

### 3. Recommendations on places to stay/eat/visit etc.

Everyone recommended BOTH the Unique Cafe and the Waltz Inn, saying they both had home cooking and the best pies ANYWHERE. No one would recommend one over the other. Forgot to ask about places to stay **as** we hadn't planned to stay overnight.

4. How prepared/helpful were they.

Everyone was helpful, courteous, friendly and kind. Two separate instances, people who we had talked to earlier, saw us later and waved in recognition. The gentleman from the Standard station was very helpful when we first came in to town, he later drove by downtown and waved to us. The woman who was guarding the intersection came into the restaurant where we were having lunch and asked if we were doing OK. We thought that ~~was~~ being very friendly.

Most everyone had verbal information for us, but handout literature left something to be desired.

C. **Info from general community** (service station/motel/bars/restaurants/shop employees etc.).

1. How knowledgeable were they

Very knowledgeable, enthusiastic, friendly and helpful, excited about sharing information about their community.

2. Did they refer you to someone else who could help?

Yes, mostly **Mr. Murley** - "**Mr. Boscobel**"

3. Other comments

3. Other comments

A woman who happened to be in **Mr. Murley's** men's store talked about a community program to be held that night about rural Wisconsin. I asked if it was also being held at the Boscobel bowling & rec area where we were referred for the turkey & owl contests. She stated it wasn't, that it was something entirely different that just happened to be held on the same evening.

Someone had interviewed rural people, had written a book and now someone had turned that into theater and music. She had seen it once and was happy she would be able to see it again, however she had no information about it and I could never find any brochures about town that talked of it. I got the impression she was heartsick it was held on the same night **as** the turkey call celebration and wondered how a small community that struggles so hard to find entertainment to get people involved, could end up with two special events on the same night, without any communication.

## 5. General

### A. Do residents know their community/history/events/directions/etc.

Yes, told us how old the town was, were uncertain how the town got its name (were several stories). One was particularly amusing about a farmer who had two cows, one Boss and the other Belle, so when he called them, it sounded like Boss-cow-belle. Cute, eh? It got me to buy my first "cow" t-shirt.

Everyone knew the history about the hotel and the Gideon bible.

### B. Services...variety of retail...lodging facilities...

Wide selection of duplicate merchandise or variety-type items, I wonder how they all survive in such a little town of less than 3,000 population. I felt I could conceivably shop for almost anything I needed on a daily basis.

### C. Are there public restrooms?

Yes, found some in the City **HALL** while looking for tourist information. However, the were not signed properly that we were able to see.

### D. Payphones...are they working phone books intact.

Yes, phone company right on **Main** Street and payphone outside their door.

E. Industrial Dark...does it look active and attractive.

Was not active the day we were there (Saturday) but appeared inviting.  
Nice sign **as** commented earlier.

F. What does the community TASTE like? (Specialty restaurants/bakeries/etc.)

Wonderful home cooked food, homemade pie that **was** great, didn't notice a bakery nor the smell of one, if there is one, does not appear to have an ethnic restaurant.

G. What does the community SMELL like?

Small town country air, clean, fresh. It **was** a perfect spring day.

H. Were the people you met friendly and helpful?

Very helpful, talkative, friendly.

**WHAT WILL YOU REMEMBER ABOUT THIS COMMUNITY  
SIX MONTHS FROM NOW?**

"Mr. Boscobel," Mr. Murley.

The banana cream pie.

The friendliness of the community.

6. Doing it right!

A. List the 5 most positive things you observed about the community.

Enthusiastic about the community.

Clean.

Down home charm.

Wide variety of shops.

Very inviting from the south side of town.

B. Describe **ONE** idea that you will steal for use in your own business/community and describe the steps you will take to implement it **WITHIN THE NEXT 72 HOURS!**

Flags.

Community garage sale. I will talk to the Chamber about these two things and look at Prescott Daze as a good week-end to hold rummage sale.

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:**

A late thought suggestion I had was to consider more benches on main street downtown. I noticed there were several sitting facing a side street in the city hall courthouse. They seemed uninviting, and I would have enjoyed using them on Main Street while others in my party were shopping.

Hype the downtown area on Highway 61 to catch the tourist trade. More signage pointing to the downtown area. Make the north entrance **as** inviting **as** the south side.

Better indicator of where to find tourist information. **T**y to find someplace that is open on weekends and when tourists are most likely to be there. Have a more condensed booklet of Boscobel rather than fragmented pieces of print scattered throughout town.

Consider a rack that would be weatherproof at the Jaycee Park or a rack similar to the one in the Waltz Inn available to the public, that would have local information **as** well **as** the entire county or the 'uplands' books I was able to pickup there. Maybe Mr. Murley would be receptive to having a complete rack in his store since he did such a fine job of welcoming us.

Do some upkeep on the Hotel before it deteriorates too badly. Keep pushing to get someone to buy and restore it. I read in the local paper on the way home that someone is threatening to tear it down and sell it brick by brick to the Gideons, how sad that would be. We were told that Wisconsin has only three international sights and one of them is the Gideon Hotel, surely you won't let it be torn down and sold like that. Seems so sad. It would add charm to the downtown area. Let me know when it's renovated so I can come down and stay overnight.

I feel you can be especially proud of your community. It really was a fun place to visit and I hope when you come to visit us, you will want to come back for another visit later on.

We all want to come back and visit again. I think that's quite a compliment for only spending three hours in your town.

Sally J. West  
Dwight Kimber  
Bob Johnson