



Mayor Graves' Column:
Top Story of the Year – The Strength of Our Community

Recently I was asked what I considered the top stories of the year. Several suggestions were made---Hatten Track/Albert Gallatin Extension, the construction of the River Bridge, the new fire hall on Station Camp Blvd, our greenway grants, and the list goes on. While all of these projects are important, I thought about the top story in my life this year—the birth of our first grandchild!

The birth of our granddaughter is especially important because hers was not an easy journey. Early in the pregnancy, complications were discovered. Thanks to medical breakthroughs and the skill of the healthcare community, surgery was performed while our grandbaby was still in the womb to lessen the impacts of the complications. Our Kaitlyn was born in October at 29 weeks weighing just 2 pounds 13 ounces. Needless to say, she was too tiny to come home and required the skilled care in a neonatal intensive care unit. There was no projected date as to when she would get to come home. After many weeks and treks back and forth to the hospital, Kaitlyn got to come home on Christmas Eve! None of us have ever had a better Christmas present, and I doubt we ever will.

As I have thought about my story, I am reminded of the stories of all of the families in our community called Gallatin. Each and every one of us is influenced by what is happening in our families. At our core, the need to take care of our families is paramount. We seek jobs to earn wages that allow us to provide for our families. We want a low crime environment to make sure our families are safe. We want amenities in our community for the enjoyment of our families. We want to live in a community that allows us to keep as much of our earnings as possible, so we can make sure the needs of our families are met. Families are the fabric of our community, and each family is a thread that makes our community strong.

One has only to look around to see the strength of the fabric of our community. Our population is increasing because we are a desirable place to live. Our existing industrial base is strong and committed not only to their workforce but also to this community. Gallatin enjoys professional and dedicated public safety departments that keep us safe. Our tax rate continues to be under a dollar. Our citizens give back to this community through participation in civic clubs and non-profits. And, our community of faith ministers to those who are in need.

So after considering all of the above, I believe the top story this year is the strength of our community called Gallatin. In spite of a recession that has gone on for several years, Gallatin continues to move forward. Because of the strength of the fabric of our community, we have existed for over 200 years, and I dare say that we will continue to exist long after the next 200.