

# Wellspring



Progressive approach. Personalized care.

## Rehab care close to home helps young athlete get back in the game

Six months after 17-year-old Perham High School basketball player Zach Gabbard collapsed during a game, he's back home and well on his way to making a good recovery.

The day the young Yellow Jacket player fell mid-game is one his parents will never forget. "Ten minutes into the game he took a shot and it was almost like he tripped," explains Zach's father, Steve Gabbard. "He missed the shot, ran down to the other end of the court, said, 'I can't see' and collapsed."

After his collapse, Zach underwent emergency open heart surgery. Three more surgeries would follow. As his condition gradually improved, Zach's parents sought a way to bring their son back to the Perham area so he could be as close to home as possible. In April, Zach moved into the Transitions rehabilitation unit at Perham Memorial Hospital and Home.

During his two-month stay in Transitions, Zach received the intensive physical, occupational, and speech therapy required to help bring his young body back to the same level of functioning he was at prior to his fall and subsequent surgeries.

"Generally, when patients are in Transitions, they are seen one to two times daily, five times per week. As an outpatient, they are normally seen two to three times per week," explains PMHH Physical Therapist Matt Johnson.

Zach's rigorous physical therapy schedule focused on a variety of strengthening activities for his core and lower extremities. "We have also had him work on

many different balance drills, including using the Wii, Biodex, and standing on a Bosu (a large sphere that has been cut in half) and catching/throwing a weighted ball," Johnson reports.

He notes that since starting therapy, Zach has made good progress in lower extremity strength, core strength (abdominals and low back), improved balance and

endurance. He has even been able to initiate jogging for short periods of time.

"At this point, Zach has made great gains in his strength and he continues to make improvements in his endurance and balance. I would anticipate he will get back to normal for strength, endurance and balance," Johnson ventures. Zach's goal of getting back to the basketball court will



**17-year-old Perham High School athlete, Zach Gabbard, shoots hoops in his driveway. Following a collapse during a basketball game this past winter and months in the hospital, Zach received rehab care close to home at PMHH's Transitions. With the help of Transitions' therapy services, he hopes he'll soon be back on the basketball court.**

ultimately need to be approved by his cardiologist.

During Zach's stay in Transitions, Registered Occupational Therapist Laura Neitzke worked with him on occupational therapy activities that both simulated a normal daily routine and were specifically tailored to a young adult. Occupational therapy goals specifically addressed Zach's ability to take care of himself, in addition to regaining arm strength and coordination. Therapy sessions addressed following a recipe to make himself a snack, writing letters to family, or working on hand strength in order to open his pill bottles."

Zach was given daily responsibilities, one of which was to prepare breakfast for himself in the morning. On a couple of occasions, Zach even made a three-course breakfast for his family and friends.

In addition to some of the more practical tasks like working on homework, Zach enjoyed playing games on the Wii and Xbox Kinect. "Once home, Zach was encouraged to continue with therapy," says Neitzke. "It was recommended that he participate in day-to-day activities that one would expect of a 17-year-old—chores, making simple meals, reading, keeping track of appointments and his daily schedule."

Neitzke says she noticed Zach's energy level improve dramatically over his time in Transitions. "He was initially very distractible during any activity, so we made a temporary classroom for Zach out of one of our patient rooms. This offered a quiet place to work. By the time Zach was headed home, he was much more focused and he was teaching me computer skills," she notes.

"It was a pleasure to be a part of such a team experience," Neitzke continues. "Our facility came together to establish a plan that would meet Zach's needs. This was a PMHH, family, and community rehab program. On a personal level, it was a pleasure to work with Zach. I appreciated his sense of humor and the fact that he was always such a gentleman."

For his speech therapy Zach was given voice exercises to practice, in addition to scheduled appointments with PMHH Speech Therapist Kyle Archbold.

"We worked heavily on his dual and divided attention (your ability to balance multiple things at once) and his short-term and long-term memory. We would require Zach to remember certain items after a distraction and/or increasing amounts of time," explains Archbold.

On a more personal note, Archbold adds

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**Physical Therapist Matt Johnson works with Zach to rebuild his strength. Zach received physical, occupational, and speech therapy one to two times daily, five days a week while at Transitions.**

how, "Zach has always been able to maintain a positive outlook throughout therapy. This is vital to a positive outcome from therapy."

This positive outlook is one Zach's parents say they saw mirrored in the Transitions staff at PMHH. "I don't know where to begin," Steve says. "Everyone was so friendly. The staff members are my neighbors—people who care. Every single nurse was very attentive. They kept us, as his parents, informed about all of the observations they noticed about Zach."

After Zach's therapies were done for the day, Steve said he enjoyed picking up his son so they could spend the evenings together. Having the hospital so close to home meant that Zach got to spend time visiting with family and friends, all while receiving the rehabilitative care he required.

Steve said it seemed as if the staff "adopted" Zach, trying to make his days special. One of the above and beyond moments of care that Meridee recalls from Zach's stay in Transitions is the day PMHH CEO Chuck Hofius brought in a door-mounted basketball hoop for Zach's room. Even though he was missing out on the games and practices with his teammates, kind gestures like this helped bring Zach joy during the recovery process.

It's been two months now since Zach returned home. He's still working hard to get back to normal, receiving outpatient assistance from the same physical, occupational, and speech therapy specialists at PMHH.

This fall, Zach will return to Perham High School for his senior year. When asked where he would like to be a year from now, the young athlete answers without a hint of hesitation: "playing basketball."

# Nature sculpture in Healing Garden will honor contributors to new hospital

Each day at Perham Memorial Hospital, touching stories unfold in the lives of individuals, families, and community. Humble appreciation is extended for the role we play in each experience.

The Together – Building for the Future capital campaign has helped to make possible the new hospital, anticipated to be open in early January 2012. Generous community gifts given to the campaign and the Perham Hospital District provide continuation and expansion of quality care close to home for family, friends, and community members. Contributors to the campaign have a profound and important supportive role in each patient care experience.

Those who extend a generous hand to the capital campaign will be acknowledged by this commissioned sculpture by Perham native and local artist, Mike Pettit. Featured in the Healing Garden, visitors will be able to view the names of all who helped to create the new, state-of-the-art medical facility and the beginning of a new chapter in the story of the Perham hospital. As in the design of the new hospital, this render-

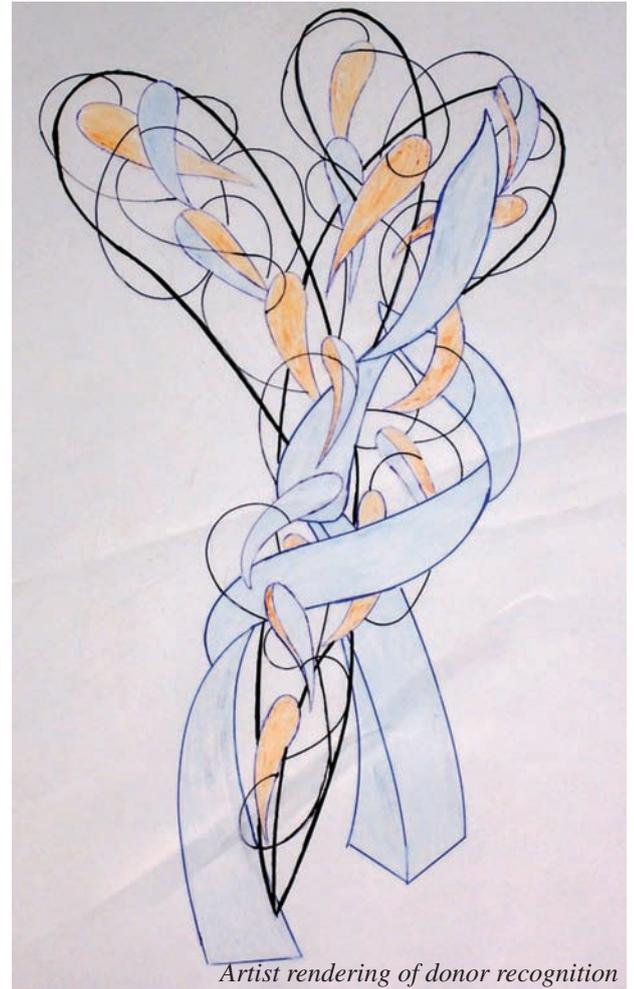
ing of the donor sculpture depicts natural elements unique to the area with numerous minnows swimming among the lake's reed habitat.

Donations and pledges received by October 1, 2011, will be acknowledged on a plaque near the sculpture. For giving opportunities, visit our website at pmhh.com and click on Make a Donation or mail your gift today to:

Perham Hospital Foundation  
665 3rd St. SW  
Perham, MN 56573

Donations to the Perham Hospital District are tax deductible.

**"The Golden Shiner Minnow is the inspiration for the copper and stainless steel elements in my sculpture. The symbolism should be obvious as a tribute to the members of our community that came together and shown, by going beyond the average. These named individuals deserve the tribute of a dedication sculpture."**  
- Mike Pettit



Artist rendering of donor recognition

## Healthcare careers scholarship recipients



**Lauran Bach**

New York Mills, will attend Gustavus Adolphus College or Minnesota State Mankato to pursue psychology.



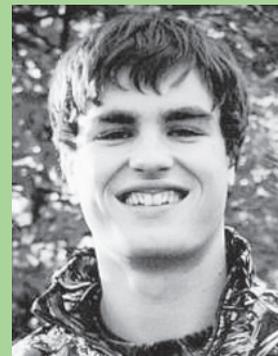
**Maggie Carlson**

New York Mills, attends the College of St. Scholastica in the pre-med program.



**Anna Wagenmann**

Dent, is enrolled in the RN program at Minot State University.



**Tyler Studer**

Perham, is pursuing pre-med/cardiology at Northwestern College.



**Whitney Carow**

Perham, will attend the College of St. Scholastica in the pre-optometry program.

Perham Memorial  
Hospital and Home



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# JUST FOR WOMEN

Save the date

**October 18 • 5 - 8 p.m.**

**New Creation Church, Perham**



*Just for Women*, is a free health event featuring today's women's health issues and hot topics. Experts on a variety of topics will provide education, screenings, and information geared to women's unique health needs. The evening will culminate with comedian Holly Henson, a cancer survivor who is living proof humor is very healing. Holly brings delicious levity to topics ranging from too late beauty tips to the latest headline news. A light meal will be served.

