

Wellspring

Perham Memorial Hospital



Progressive approach. Personalized care.

Passion for running puts athlete on fast track to recovery

After a sledding accident landed her in the hospital with a fractured ankle last winter, 17-year-old Ashley Palubicki was concerned not just about her recovery, but if she would be able to participate in track her junior year.

A hurdler and middle distance runner for Perham High School's track and field team, Ashley has high hopes for future success in track. Interested in the possibility of participating in track in college, a complete recovery was crucial to the young athlete.

Dr. Sonja Uselman first attended to Ashley in the emergency room when she was brought to Perham Memorial Hospital after her injury. "She took x-rays. Then told me I might need to have surgery, so the x-rays were sent to Fargo for Dr. Nelsen to look at them," explained Ashley.

Dr. Uselman and Dr. Matt Nelsen, an orthopedic surgeon with Orthopedic Associates, then discussed the ankle fracture over the phone, utilizing the hospital's Picture Archiving and Communication Systems (PACS) which allowed the doctors to simultaneously view the x-ray images of Ashley's ankle.

"I decided she needed surgery because the fragment was displaced enough that I felt it would cause her problems in the future if it healed in that position," explained Dr. Nelsen. "Especially with Ashley's interest in track and other sports, it was important that the bone heal correctly."

Ashley knew she wanted to have the surgery so that she would make a full recovery. She went to Fargo to have the surgery, which was the only time she needed to

Once Ashley's ankle was healed to the point where she no longer needed to visit the hospital for therapy, she continued the exercises on her own. It wasn't long before, with teammates along side, Ashley (second from left) was off and running.

travel outside of Perham for treatment.

Although he is based in Fargo, Dr. Nelsen spends three Thursdays of each month at the Perham hospital. This way, Ashley was able to schedule all of her appointments at PMHH, without the burden of traveling to another city.

Within just six weeks of her orthopedic surgery, Ashley was off of crutches and was given a walking boot. At this time, it was decided that she was ready to start physical therapy.

"At first I couldn't really do much; I had to get the motion back in my ankle," Ashley recalls. Dave Dahl, PMHH physical therapist, worked with Ashley, gradually increasing her physical therapy regiment.

In order to help her get her range of motion back, Dahl had Ashley do specific exercises and the therapists manually stretched her ankle. "In the later stages of her rehab we incorporated more strengthening and progressions, from walking to jogging to running on a treadmill," explains Dahl.

Deb Palubicki, Ashley's mother, says how impressed she was with the thorough and individualized physical therapy care that Dahl provided for her daughter. "He knew that Ashley had to be strong enough to go back into track," she said.

"Physical therapy was beneficial to help decrease her swelling after surgery, to help increase her range of motion, and to





strengthen her ankle as well; so that once she was given the OK to begin walking again she could do so without problems of stiffness and weakness," said Dr. Nelsen.

"Physical therapy helped me a lot," Ashley agreed. "I wouldn't have been able to get all of the strength back on my own."

Her physical therapy was also tailored to fit her schedule, so Ashley wouldn't need to miss any school. Two days a week before

school, she went to the hospital for physical therapy.

"Ashley usually went before school at 7:30. That way she didn't have to miss any school," explains Ashley's mom. "I'm very happy that the hospital has good physical therapists right here in town, especially with the price of gas right now. It really is a benefit to have Dr. Nelsen travel to the satellite office to do check-ups."

In March, three months after her accident, Ashley started running on the treadmill for the first time. She began with just five minutes on the treadmill, and gradually built up the amount of time she was running. Then, on April 6, Ashley was given Dr. Nelsen's approval and joined up with her track team for her first practice.

Ashley said it felt great to be back practicing alongside her teammates, with her ankle able to handle the workout. "It was good to get back to my normal life. Being on crutches was hard," she recalls.

Just as Ashley's success during her junior year in track depended on the assistance and support of her team members, the various departments at PMHH worked together to make her recovery a success.

Dr. Nelsen summarizes the collaborative effort that brought about Ashley's recovery, "The radiology department is obviously critical to make the fracture diagnosis. Without good x-rays, the fracture could have been missed. Then it is my job to fix the problem. Physical therapy then takes over and rehabilitates the leg so Ashley can get back to 100%. It is a team effort."

"Physical therapy shortened her recovery and prevented long-term disabilities due to chronic stiffness and weakness, as well as difficulties walking, balancing, and playing sports," said Dahl, who added that Ashley has recovered excellent range of motion and strength.

"I would say we're very, very satisfied with the care she received," reflects Ashley's mother. "Dr. Nelsen did a very good job. He did an excellent job on the surgery and Dr. Uselman was very, very, very thorough."

With a hopeful future in athletics, Ashley is thankful to have her injury behind her and the open road ahead of her.

Hospital expands therapy services to New York Mills

In an effort to make services even more convenient for patients, Perham Memorial Hospital and Home has started offering physical and occupational therapy at the hospital's satellite office located in the MeritCare New York Mills clinic.

According to Dave Dahl, physical therapist, the New York Mills office has served a number of people with orthopedic problems. Individuals with neck, shoulder, and

back pain have all benefited from the expanded services at the clinic.

"I've been there for several months now," said Dahl, adding how he's seen patients with a variety of physical therapy needs. "People appreciate having services closer to where they live. When you're not feeling your best, any extra travel just makes things more difficult."



Charitable Giving

Hospital the beneficiary of community philanthropists' legacy

Those of you who have lived in this area for a long time; have no doubt heard stories about George and Irene Walter, or many can recall your own personal experiences with them. Their charity work and ability to get others to pitch in was unrivaled.

Of this hard working duo, Irene died from cancer on July 31, 2007, at the age of 79. Five months later, George was diagnosed with malignant mesothelioma (a rare form of lung cancer) and died on January 25, 2008, at 88 years of age. Just as they lived lives of active charity, so too, this role continues after their passing. Their estate planning has allowed them to continue making an impact on this community.

George and Irene farmed in Corliss Township and raised two daughters. Lorraine Brune lives near Larimore, N.D., while their second daughter, Patty Walter, lives near Detroit Lakes with her daughter, Denielle "Deni" Danielson – the only grandchild for George and Irene.

Both George and Irene came from humble beginnings and chose to live a life of austerity. As their

daughter Patty shared, "They believed in just the basics of life. They felt their needs were met, and if anything, did without, so they could share with those who may need help."

When George and Irene got involved, local fundraising projects would take on a sense of urgency as George, with his booming and commanding voice, would fervently work the phone to get more hands and hearts involved. George was not afraid to gently challenge others to "do more" when it came to fundraising events. As his family teased, "It was hard to say 'no' to George."

This was especially the case when the Butler Holy Cross church burned down in 1999. George and Irene were raised in a time when church denominations often divided communities; yet they understood how the strength of community blossomed with unified efforts. Therefore, George and Irene helped organize a benefit for the Butler Catholic Church with area Protestant churches getting involved for the good of all. Their daughters recalled a telling statement from George, "We're all in this community together – let's help each other out."

George's obituary provided further insight with the quote from Alexander Pope: "In faith and hope the world will disagree, but all mankind's concern is charity."

George was the public face of the team, with leadership roles on local, county, and

state levels. He was especially endeared to the progress of the Perham Hospital and served on the Perham Hospital Board, St. James Board, and the State Health Board. He was the first governing board chairperson for the Perham Hospital District and served on the board for many years. He also was very active on the Board of St. James Manor since its inception and served in that role even through his illness.

The significant donation of \$100,000 given by George and Irene to the Perham Memorial Hospital and Home will be used to help build our new hospital and develop a patient and family centered model of care.

George and Irene lived a life that displayed a deep understanding of community philanthropy and compassion. Perham Memorial Hospital and Home is humbled and honored to be a recipient of the Walter's generosity. Their spirit of community pride and ownership truly lives on.

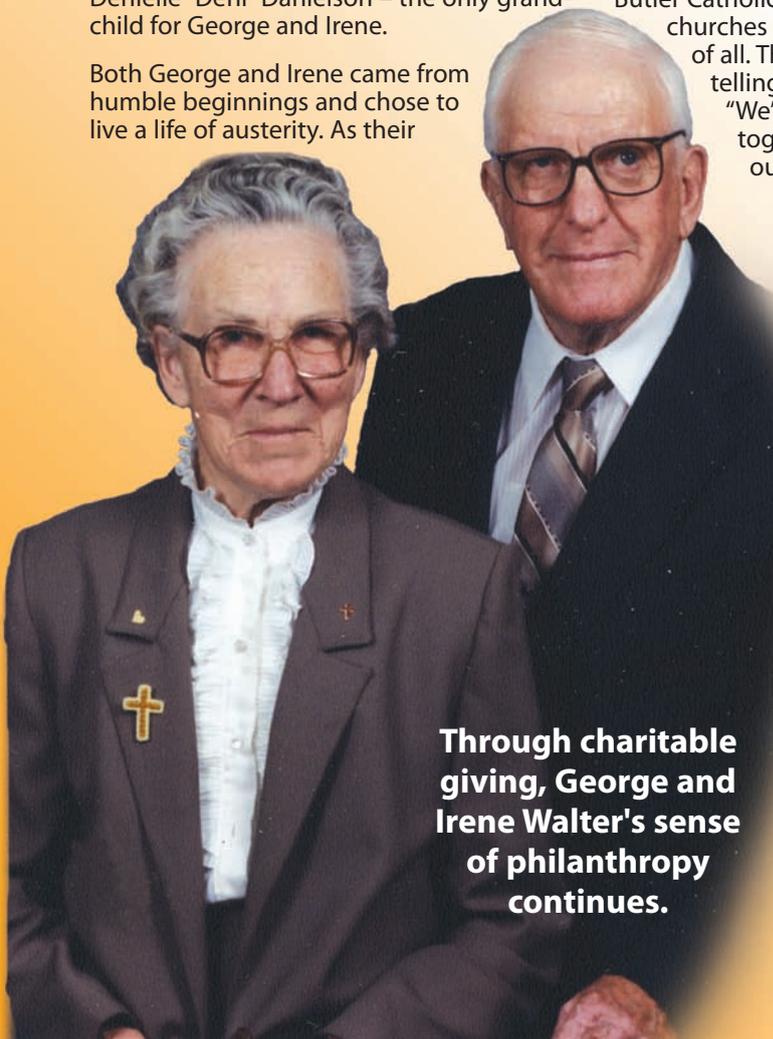
You can leave your own legacy

Ordinary people are leaving extraordinary legacies to Perham Memorial Hospital and Home. You can, too. There are a number of ways to give, including

- cash gifts
- gifts of stocks, bonds
- gifts of appreciated property
- charitable lead trusts
- memorial gifts

We recommend donors considering gifts discuss these options with their estate planner, attorney, or financial consultant.

When making a gift to the Perham Hospital District Foundation, you have left a legacy that will have a lasting effect in the lives of others.



Through charitable giving, George and Irene Walter's sense of philanthropy continues.

Play it safe with medications

If your household is like most, you've got rows of medications – some even expired – lined up in a medicine cabinet or along a shelf in a kitchen cabinet. While these medications are designed to help you, improper use and storage can make these drugs dangerous.

"Medication safety isn't something you should only think about when you're in the hospital," says Amy Vogt, RPh., Perham Hospital pharmacist. "There are plenty of steps you can take while at home to improve safety with your prescription and nonprescription drugs."

To help people understand their medications and to make sure they are being used properly, Medication Therapy Management (MTM), is a new service available at PMHH.

MTM is much more than just a quick review of your medications – it's a partnership with the pharmacist. A pharmacist will sit down

with you, go over any concerns you may have, review your medical chart and lab results, and consult with your physician in order to improve your treatment plan. MTM is designed to help you save money, avoid drug complications, improve drug knowledge, organize your medications, and feel better.

Maybe you're not getting the results from the medication as you expected or perhaps you have an elderly parent or relative who is confused by a complicated list of medications; this individualized attention helps to ensure understanding of medication use and avoid ineffective or potentially dangerous drug-related therapy.

For more information on how you or a loved one can benefit from MTM, insurance coverage, or to make an appointment with a pharmacist, please call Amy at (218) 346-4550.



Dr. Elwood Martin



Dr. Elwood Martin, Surgeon, is the newest member of the PMHH medical staff. The arrival of Dr. Martin brings the number of medical providers at Perham Hospital to 12.

Dr. Martin received his medical degree and bachelor's degree in biochemistry from the Ohio State University College of Medicine, Columbus. He completed his residency in general surgery at Riverside Methodist Hospital, also in Columbus.

"Dr. Martin is an excellent addition to our community on both a professional and personal level," said Dr. Rand Stolee, Perham Hospital surgeon. "He has already begun doing surgeries through the laparoscope that were previously done through larger incisions including colon surgery, appendectomies, and surgeries for reflux. He brings a level of expertise in these areas that bring the latest surgical techniques to Perham."

As a general surgeon, Dr. Martin specializes in the surgical treatment of a wide range of diseases and conditions. He has special interest in advanced laparoscopic surgery, breast surgery, colon surgery, and endocrine surgery.

Dr. Martin and his wife, Bethanne, have four children. In his spare time, Dr. Martin enjoys golf, fishing, water sports, and spending time with his family.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Martin, call MeritCare Perham at (218) 347-1200 or MeritCare New York Mills at (218) 385-1800.



A project of this nature creates enthusiasm in the community and also many questions. We will try to answer those questions here.

Why is a new hospital needed?

The current hospital will be 50 years old next year. It was built for a much different patient population than we see today. For example, in 1959, a new mom stayed more than a week after delivering a baby. Today, it is one to two days.

There was very little technology in patient rooms 50 years ago. Now, our rooms are much too small for all of the technology required to be a state-of-the-art hospital. We still have double rooms with shared bathrooms that are not the accepted standard for today's care. The design of the current hospital creates significant noise and privacy concerns. The layout is very inefficient and sometimes can compromise the care we want to provide. As an example, our patients are concerned when they come to the emergency room and no one is there to meet them because the emergency entrance is not visible from the nurses' station.

A second operating room is needed to accommodate the arrival of Dr. Elwood Martin, who joined the PMHH medical staff this past July. Along with the need for additional surgery space, the large growth in outpatient services – physical and occupational therapy, chiropractic, and massage – we are in desperate need of more space for these services. Clinic exam rooms are very small and there is a need for more rooms as a result of all the new physicians we have added.

The most significant issues with the hospital are those that cannot be seen. Most of the plumbing, heating, and other infrastructure is original and needs to be replaced. The air handling does not meet today's building codes for hospitals.

Why don't you add on and remodel the existing building?

The mechanical issues are so significant it would take millions of dollars to bring the current building to code. Because of this, there is only a 10 percent cost difference between building all new and adding on to our existing facility.

Phasing of a remodeling project would be nearly impossible with the layout of our current building and the mechanical issues mentioned earlier. All departments need to be fully operational and capable of caring for people every day. Finally, an addition/remodel would take three years to complete versus a year and a half for a new facility. We worry greatly whether all our patients would stay with us for that length of time.

How will the new hospital be paid for?

Like any business, the cost will primarily be paid through revenues received from the business. In our case, this includes hospital stays, surgeries, lab procedures, x-rays, therapies, etc. In addition, growth in these areas and the addition of new services is also necessary to afford a new hospital.

As a Critical Access Hospital (CAH) – a rural hospital with 25 beds or less – our emergency services are deemed critical to the area we serve. Medicare reimburses differently for CAH designation than traditional hospitals. Because of this, about 40 percent of the new hospital will be paid through enhanced Medicare reimbursement.

Will my taxes be affected with a new hospital?

After a flat tax levy for 17 years, the PMHH Board of Trustees increased the levy in 2006, in part, to prepare for the new

hospital. The levy will not have to increase further to support a new hospital.

The hospital district currently taxes at a percentage of the net tax capacity of the district, which is similar to a mill rate. If your property value goes up, your tax may go up as well, however, it will be unrelated to the new hospital.

Why can't the new hospital be built on the same site as the current one?

To fit on our existing campus, it would require the purchase and removal of six to eight neighboring houses and the closing of a street. At that point, any future expansion would require the purchase of more houses in our neighborhood. We believe being land locked to that degree would not be beneficial for the future of healthcare in our community.

Does this need to go to a public vote?

No, there is no requirement that building projects for hospitals go to a public vote. The only time Hospital Districts need a public vote is if they issue general obligation bonds. That will not be required as part of this project.

Over the coming months, we will host public meetings throughout the hospital district to provide an opportunity to share our plans and give you an opportunity to ask questions that may not have been addressed here. The schedule for these meetings will be posted in area newspapers. In the meantime, please feel free to give us a call at (218) 346-4500 with your questions.

You're cordially invited to

Blue On Blue

An enchanted evening of
Dining and Dancing

Saturday, November 22 * Mulligan's at Perham Lakeside

Social - 6 p.m. * Dinner with program - 7:30 p.m.
Choice of sour cream crusted Alaskan halibut or charbroiled filet mignon

Dance to the sounds of the *Northern Stars* band
from 9 p.m. to midnight.

Black Tie Optional

Tickets are \$100 per person and available by contacting
Perham Memorial Hospital at (218) 346-4500 or information@pmhh.com

Proceeds to benefit the Perham Hospital District Foundation

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