When bringing a baby into this world, parents should not have to choose between attentive personal care and the latest medical advancements. At Perham Memorial Hospital, newborns and their families can expect both the highest quality and uniquely individualized care.

It is this well-rounded commitment to serving mothers, their babies, and the rest of the family that has brought Richville couple Josh and Jena Nagel to Perham for the birth of their two children. Their daughter Kelsie was born February 22, delivered by Jena’s primary physician Dr. Mark Paulson. Their son Jaden, now five years old, was also born in Perham.

“I liked that I could see my same doctor every time I went to my prenatal appointments and have him there for the delivery,” says Jena. Dr. Paulson went so far as to provide Jena with his schedule so she could make sure to set up her visits during times when he was available.

Three weeks before Kelsie was born, Jena was offered the opportunity to view a 4D ultrasound of her baby. “It was really cool,” she recalls. “You could see her nose, eyes, mouth, and even her jaw moving with the ultrasound.”

Perham Memorial Hospital began offering parents 4D ultrasounds last November. “The advantage is that it gives parents a more detailed picture,” explains PMHH Sonographer Nancy Orthman. “Instead of just the regular flat picture, moms and dads can see details like rounded cheeks on the faces of their babies, and sometimes even a smile. It is possible to watch what their child looks like. “Some moms get really excited,” Orthman reports of the many positive reactions she’s witnessed to the 4D ultrasounds.

At PMHH, providing moms with the latest prenatal advancements is a top priority. While in labor with Kelsie, Jena

Jena Nagle enjoys mother-daughter bonding time with daughter Kelsie, as they ready to go to their home in Richville. Kelsie was born February 22, at Perham Memorial Hospital.
was able to take advantage of some of the labor tools offered in Perham. “This time we walked the halls and I used a birthing ball,” she says of her experience. Having the ability to control the temperature in the room was another helpful feature.

When it came time for her epidural to assist with managing pain, Jena says Dr. Paulson thoroughly explained to her what was going to happen. He even adjusted the dosage based on Jena’s previous epidural experience.

Taking care of dad is as important to hospital staff as is taking care of mom. Josh was provided with meal tickets, allowing him to eat in the hospital. Josh said this meant a lot, because he could remain at his wife’s side and didn’t need to leave the hospital to buy some food. He also appreciated the attention given to him and Jaden to ensure their time with the new family member was as comfortable and as special as can be. “Caring for our whole family was definitely everyone’s focus throughout our stay,” Josh added.

Once Kelsie was born, Jena says she was thankful to be able to spend some time with her baby right away. Kelsie stayed in the room with Josh and Jena both nights they spent at the hospital. Both parents said they were glad to have their newborn with them right after she was born. Nurses checked in with Jena throughout the night to make sure she and Kelsie were doing alright.

It was the detailed attention to care that impressed Jena the most during her hospital stay. Nurses kept making sure her water bottle was full, and she was even offered a late night snack. “The nurses at night were very good at helping me as a first-time breastfeeding mom. They gave me lots of tips and advice,” says Jena.

“Everything went well,” agrees Josh. “Everybody really knew what they were doing.”

Before leaving the hospital, Dr. Paulson met with Josh, Jena, Jaden, and Kelsie and conducted the discharge exam. Josh and Jena were shown videos about shaken baby syndrome and car seat safety. Hospital staff offered to provide a car seat for them if they needed one. As an alternative to the free car seat, mothers are given the option of a plush robe to take home.

After Kelsie’s discharge exam, a certified car seat safety technician went with Josh to his vehicle and made sure the car seat Kelsie would be riding home in was properly secured. This service is especially helpful for first-time parents who may be unfamiliar with proper car seat alignment. From the moment they arrived at the hospital to their discharge and follow-up appointments, Josh and Jena found the Perham Family Birth Place well-prepared and eager to make their experience as positive as possible.

Two weeks after leaving the hospital, Jena brought Kelsie back for her first check-up. The healthy baby girl had already gained a pound. Holding her beautiful daughter in her arms, Jena expressed her appreciation for the quality of care she received so close to home, “If there ever is a problem, I’m thankful that we can go to Perham.”
John & Annie Wardale gift for children, cancer, and memory care

John and Annie Wardale will continue to make a profound impact on the Perham area for years to come, thanks to their generous charitable contributions specified in their will. When Annie passed away last summer, following John’s passing in 2005, PMHH was notified that the couple had gifted a large portion of their estate to the Perham Hospital District Foundation.

The lovable and notoriously frugal couple left approximately $375,000 for the hospital, along with other substantial donations to both the Perham schools and the Perham Area Foundation. One hundred percent of their estate went to the community.

John and Annie specified that they would like the funds donated to the hospital to go toward children, cancer, and memory care. PMHH leadership is currently investigating the best possible way to use the Wardale donation to further enhance these three areas of health care.

The funds will enable the hospital to provide additional services in these areas, above and beyond the foundational offerings. For example, to create a safe environment for residents with memory loss, security is essential. The Wardale donation could be used to help enhance PMHH’s security system.

John, affectionately known around town as “John the Englishman,” and his wife Annie fell in love with the city of Perham after visiting once on vacation. They were both born and raised in England, and were married there in 1951. They resided for a short time in Quebec, Canada, and then moved to Chicago where John worked as a machinist for Caterpillar.

The couple settled in Perham during the ’70s and decided to stay. They lived on Rush Lake for many years, with Annie moving to Perham after John passed away.

Annie had the distinction of serving in the Women’s Royal Air Force in England from 1940 to 1945. Annie lived to be 89 years old, just shy of her goal of 90—an accomplishment that would have earned her a letter from the queen in recognition of her military duty. Those close to her will always remember her love for animals and good sense of humor.

In his younger days, John loved to ride motorcycle and later enjoyed playing darts. Together they enjoyed traveling the world. The couple mostly kept to themselves, but harbored a deep appreciation for the community of Perham and the people who live in this area.

Both John and Annie were blessed with relatively good health, and received their health care locally at PMHH. When discussing where they wanted to leave their money, they decided they wanted to invest it into the Perham community.

“I think they honestly just wanted to give back to the community and saw the hospital as an important part of Perham”
— Dennis Happel

Happel, who assisted the couple with getting their financial affairs in order.

Planned giving provides people with a unique opportunity to give back and leave a legacy that will continue to benefit generations to come. Through their gift, the Wardale’s will touch the lives of many, many people who never knew them but will be the recipients of their generosity.
Construction Progress

Construction is on schedule for the new Perham hospital, with completion expected late this year. The double over-head doors in the top photo provide ambulance access to the emergency center. The canopy to the right of the doors is the walk-in entry for emergency care. The photo to the right shows that the wood ceiling in the atrium is partially complete. Cabinetry is installed in many areas, including therapies shown in the far right photo.

You can keep up with our progress by visiting our website at pmhh.com and our Fan page on Facebook.