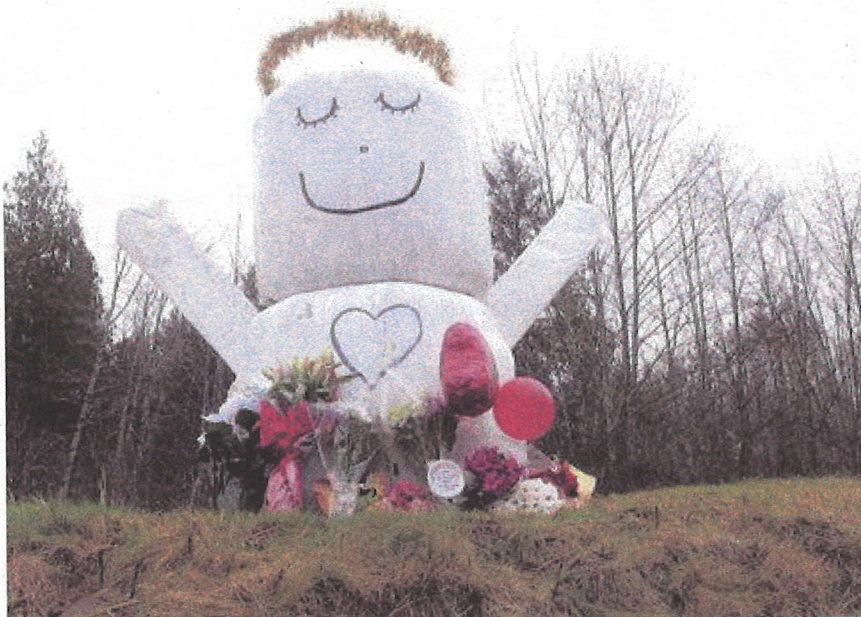


DAILY WORLD FILES / KEVIN HONG Brian Eager in the gym a year ago.

It's easy for students in a small school to make an impression, but Brian Eager was something special, Tyndall said.

"He was very unique. He had a very positive attitude, all the time. ... I'm sure I didn't see everything, but I never saw Brian with a negative attitude," the principal said.

Not even when Brian learned in April of 2006 that he had cancer. Tyndall said the teenager handled the news with a maturity that many adults wouldn't be able to muster.



DAILY WORLD / KATHY QUIGG A tribute to Wishkah resident Brian Eager, 19, who died Dec. 29 of colon cancer stands along the Wishkah Road near the family home.

"He was positive about the cards he was dealt," Tyndall said.

He kept playing basketball after he had surgery and while he was undergoing chemotherapy.

"He was a basketball junkie," Tyndall said.

Coach Joe Fagerstedt said Brian never once complained.

"He would do the same drills, the same conditioning as all the other kids," Fagerstedt told The Daily World last February. "Most humans would be lying in bed

complaining, but Brian is not a normal human."

Brian eventually couldn't play as his illness wore on, but he would come to practice and games as "an honorary coach," Brenda Johnson recalled.

He also kept up his part-time work at the YMCA.

"He'd call ladies to remind them of Jazzercise," Johnson said.

Tyndall said Brian was a reliable tutor and mentor, and did an exceptional job with students who had caused headaches for the staff.

"I'd have Brian tutor or mentor them, and he had this way of getting through to the kids," Tyndall recalled. "He was able to reach them, and sometimes a principal can't do that."

A memorial of flowers and balloons has sprung up in front of a couple of hay bales on the Wishkah Valley Road. The bales have been part of the Eager family tradition for several years, Johnson said. Bob Eager would convert them from a Halloween spider to a Thanksgiving turkey to a Christmas snowman to an Easter bunny. But now, the marshmallow bales have been shaped into an angel, complete with halo.

"That happened after Brian died, and it's the first time they've been an angel," Johnson said.

Brian Eager made the most of his 19 years on Earth, and he will be remembered here for a long, long time.