As 4-year-old Stephen Murray stared at the fish tank in his dad Brett's office in Brighton for Sundance Energy, his mother, Josie Murray, had an epiphany.

It had only been a few days since Brett and Josie and their sons Stephen, Mathew, 2, and Daniel, 10 months, had attended grave-side services for their infant son and brother, Baby Ethan, who was born and died Jan. 29, 2009.

"It was a normal pregnancy," said Josie. "I was 20 weeks pregnant and everything had been normal up to that point. At six weeks, there had been a heartbeat. But at 20 weeks, I went in for a regular check-up and they told me they couldn't find a heartbeat."

Murray was rushed to the hospital in Brighton, where the doctors again tried to find a heartbeat and could not. At this point, they decided to induce labor. After 12 hours, Josie delivered Baby Ethan, who weighed only 2.3 ounces.

Though they currently reside in Brighton, the Murrays chose to bury Baby Ethan in Brett's hometown of Holyoke, where his parents Scott and Sharon Murray still live. "We're in Holyoke all the time," said Josie, "so we decided to have the funeral service there."

Even though the Murrays insisted they did not need financial help to pay for the funeral or hospital bills, Josie said they still received many donations from friends and community members. Rather than taking the money, Brett and Josie felt it could be put to better use by doing something good in Ethan's memory. But what?

The answer came to Josie when she and her sons visited Brett's office a few days later. "I looked over and saw my oldest glued to the fish tank and it just popped into my head: That's the right thing to do!"

The Murrays are big fans of aquariums. Besides having one of their own at home, the family often visits Downtown Aquarium since moving to Brighton. "Kids love fish," said Josie. "I think they find them really calming and it takes their minds off things they may be stressed about."

Now Josie knew she wanted to use the money to donate an aquarium, but who should get it? "This is all about the children," she said, "so honestly, my first thought was Dragon's Wagon. But then Chris Gerk brought up the hospital."

Gerk knew about the Murrays' desire to donate their memorial funds, and after finding out about Josie's aquarium idea, she thought the new Melissa Memorial Hospital might be the perfect place. After seeing the new hospital building and talking with administrator John Ayoub about it, the Murrays agreed.

In a few months, patients at Family Practice of Holyoke will be able to enjoy the view of a nice, new aquarium as they sit in the waiting area. The clinic, rather than hospital lobby, was chosen as the site for the aquarium by the Murrays because it is more likely to be seen and enjoyed by children there as they wait to see the doctor.

A memorial fund has been set up at First Pioneer National Bank for those who wish to donate to the project.

The Murrays are still busy making plans for the aquarium. The tank itself is being donated by Brett's company, Sundance Energy, but finding a tank is probably the easiest step in the process.

"Maintenance is a big consideration," said Josie. "We don't want to just give the hospital a fish tank and say, 'here you go!'"

Recently, the Murrays have been in touch with Tricia Michael, owner of Creature Features pet shop. They are currently working with her to come up with the right size and type of tank. Michael has also volunteered to maintain the tank in the future, so it is not the hospital's responsibility. The maintenance expenses will come from the memorial fund.

“We’re really going to take our time planning it,” said Josie. “We don’t want it to be just a fish tank; we want it to be a piece of art.”

Because of school schedules, the family expects to wait until at least the end of May to install the tank. “This will give us time to find the right fish and make sure the water’s perfect before we have to transfer them down there,” said Josie, who added it can take weeks to get the water prepared just right for the fish.

“The aquarium will really be a part of us, but it is also something for the community. We want it to be something the community will be proud of,” said Josie.

However, the Murrays don’t plan to stop with the aquarium. “We have some other ideas of things we can do for kids who are inpatients at the hospital to make their stay more pleasant. We want to do that under the memorial fund as well.”

“I think it’s great they are able to take a personal tragedy and turn it into something positive,” said Ayoub of the donation. “We are certainly delighted, and are grateful to them for their generosity.”