

# FORT MYERS FLORIDA WEEKLY®

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## Donations mirror economy at Naples Wine Festival

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Event raises \$5 million for kids, down from \$14 million last year

F. Scott Fitzgerald got it wrong. The very rich, it seems, aren't that different from you and me.

When times are tough, even those possessing extraordinary wealth spend less, although let's be honest and admit that spending less is something of a relative term. Exhibit A in this regard is last weekend's ninth annual Naples Winter Wine Festival, which, according to the event's Web site, is ranked among the top 10 arts and entertainment events for wealthy Americans.

The highlight of the festival was Saturday's auction, which splayed across the verdant, sun-dappled lawns of The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort in Naples. Guests, who paid \$20,000 a couple to be a part of the three-day event, placed bids on an array of extravagant items, ranging from rare, vintage wines to vacations aboard lavish yachts to spectacular sports cars.

Just one year removed from raising more than \$14 million for children's charities, this year's festival

SEE WINE FEST, A10 ►



PHOTO COURTESY NAPLES WINTER WINE FESTIVAL  
Dave Copham, a trustee of the Southwest Florida Wine & Food Fest, celebrates a winning bid at the Naples Winter Wine Festival.



JIM MCLAUGHLIN / FLORIDA WEEKLY

The new main entrance of Gulf Coast Hospital with direct access off Daniels Parkway.

## a new hospital opens ...

**I**N A MOMENT OF MEDICAL choreography worthy of Balanchine, hospital officials are about to shift 200 critically ill patients into the future of medical care, moving them 4.6 miles across Fort Myers to the new, \$285 million Gulf Coast Medical Center.

That transportation ballet, on March 8, will begin when special-care teams at the old Southwest Florida Regional Medical Center ease patients onto stretchers for the elevator ride to the street, locking the doors behind them forever.

Lift teams will move the patients into 22 ambulances assembled from EMT squads all over the region. A battalion of police will stand by to escort them to the new hospital, described by one official as "the crown jewel" of the sprawling Lee Memorial Health System, the largest public health system in Florida.

"Our move plan is a hallmark," says Doug Luckett, chief administrative officer of the new hospital. "We're going to use it as a mock disaster drill. We'll get patients embedded in the new beds, then get the rigs back on the road and keep the pace going."

Officials tout Gulf Coast Medical Center, located at the intersection of

{ ... an evolving health system struggles }



The view of the new atrium from a second-floor patient's room.

Daniels and Metro Parkways, as peerless in efficiency and technology among hospitals the southwest coast.

None dispute that it will offer patients an unprecedented level of care and comfort, as well as record-keeping efficiency. But how the new hospital will save money for consumers — the troubled heart of the nation's health care dilemma — is more difficult to demonstrate.

SEE HOSPITAL, A8 & 9 ►

BY ROGER WILLIAMS & EVAN WILLIAMS

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## INSIDE



### 'Alone Together'

It's what happens when the kids fly the nest. The play opens at Florida Rep on Friday, Feb. 13. **C1** ►



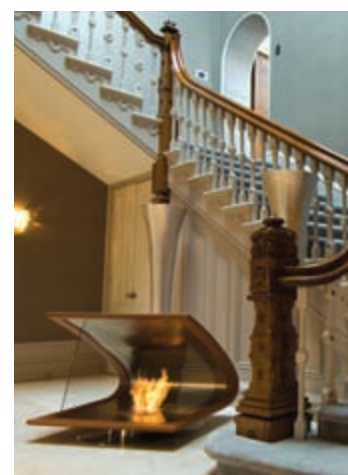
### Sanibel celebration

See who was out and about in Lee County society. **C34, 36 & 37** ►



### Museum-quality

Just like any business, area museums have to regroup in order to survive. **B1** ►



### Burning with ambience

Fireplaces are surprisingly popular in Southwest Florida. **E1** ►

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