

FORT MYERS FLORIDA WEEKLY®

YOUR NEWS AND ENTERTAINMENT SOURCE

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"We aren't trying to save just one life, we're trying to save many: the parents who love this child, the future generations — an entire history — that this child might represent."

— Nancy Scribner, 21-year NICU nurse

PRECIOUS MIRACLES



The elite corps of nurses on the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit help make them happen

BY ROGER WILLIAMS

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Level 3 is not a floor. It's a condition.

People in Level 3 lie in clear plastic cocoons, not necessarily unconscious but unable to respond.

They're wizened, shriveled, sometimes shrunken to the size of a Coke can. That description falls short, however, because they're not really shrunken. Instead, they're as big as they've ever been — shrunken only from their potential, not from some larger reality.

They appear as old as the hills, too: tiny and bald, so fragile and feathery, so lined and leathery, that even mortality seems to lie light beside them. But it's always near, asserting its presence in 10 or so electronic beeps and alarms that indicate vital functions, or their failure.

Nothing about these people is normal. Their wide-open hands would span the circumference of a quarter. Their hearts are roughly the size of a pea. Their sexual organs, exposed in unselfconscious nakedness when they lie unswaddled, are smaller than a fingernail clipping. To say their veins and

SEE NICU, A8 & 9 ►



PHOTOS BY JIM MCLAUGHLIN / FLORIDA WEEKLY AND LEE MEMORIAL HEALTH SYSTEM

INSIDE



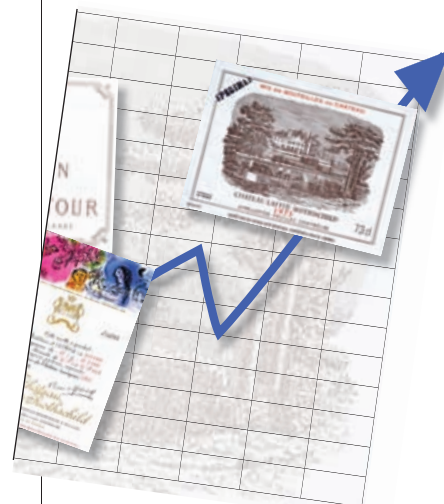
BRAVO! Ballet

Stephen Hanna is taking time off from his hit Broadway musical "Billy Elliot" to perform in Fort Myers. **C1** ►



Soup Kitchen fundraiser

And other society events in Lee County. **C27, 28 & 30** ►



Wine futures

Forget the rollercoaster stock market, why not invest in a nice Mouton Rothschild. **B1** ►



Easter is for pets too

An Easter Pet Event is on tap for Saturday, April 4, at Lee County Animal Services. **A30** ►

Local educator, restaurateur raise cash for clean water

BY EVAN WILLIAMS

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A Lee County educator and restaurateur are selling water this week to help raise money and awareness of the 900 million children worldwide who are dying for lack of access to the clean, bacteria-free liquid.

Bill Stejskal, dean of students at Bishop Verot High School, sold bottles of water to his students on Tuesday, continuing the

ripple effect of a nationwide campaign spearheaded by the non-profit children's organization UNICEF.



Dubbed The Tap Project, it started as a pro-bono advertising campaign to bring clean water to children in impoverished parts of New York City in 2006, during World Water Week, that runs through March 28.

After UNICEF picked it up, New York restaurants gave customers the option of donating \$1 for the glass of tap water that comes with their meal.

In the last two years, the campaign spread across the United States, garnering the support of advertising agencies, celebrity chefs and about 2,300 of restaurants in 44 states. The money goes to aid children in countries Laos, Iraq or Nicaragua.

"This is going to countries that virtually

SEE WATER, A10 ►

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