

HOPE & GRACE

The wonders of science lead to the miracle of birth

Beth McCleery knew something was wrong fairly soon after getting married.

She and her husband, Eric, a software trainer, had begun trying to conceive right away after their 2004 wedding.

But by the end of 2005, they were still waiting. Not an inordinately long time for relatively young, relative newlyweds. It was more an instinct than anything else that told Beth McCleery that there was a reason they were still waiting.

"I just had a feeling. I had a feeling that something wasn't right. We both wanted children immediately, as soon as we could after we got married. When that wasn't happening, I panicked," she said.

The couple's hopes and dreams finally came true through patience, tenacity, science and the generosity of a local physician.

On April 7, they became the parents of Grace-Ann Elizabeth.

"She's a doll," said her mother, a fifth-grade teacher. "She's ours. She's perfect."

Two years ago, when the Jennings couple realized a pregnancy was not in their future, they sought the help of fertility specialist Dr. John Storment of the Fertility and Women's Health Center.

The problem was a blockage in Beth McCleery's fallopian tubes.

At first, they tried some simpler measures to become pregnant. Nothing was working.

"There were things that should

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Three-year-old Owen Dugas holds his cousin Grace-Ann under the watchful supervision of her parents, Eric and Beth McCleery.



Beth and Eric McCleery have not been able to keep their eyes off of their little Grace-Ann since her birth on April 7.

"There were things that should have worked. There were unexplained reasons we weren't getting pregnant."

— Eric McCleery

Story by Judy Bastien • photos by Denny Culbert