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IT'S TIME AGAIN FOR
SERENDIPITY
PAGE 3

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH
PAGE 4

MSH, DMH & REGION 8 CMHC PILOT JAIL-BASED COMPETENCE RESTORATION SERVICES

BY MIKE CHRISTENSEN



Dr. Thomas Recore, Dr. Amanda Gugliano and Dr. Reb McMichael from Mississippi State Hospital (MSH) Forensic Services and hospital director James Chastain attended a meeting of the Mississippi Association of Community Mental Health Centers on Aug. 9 to share information about two new programs impacting services statewide.

MSH, the Department of Mental Health (DMH) and the Region 8 Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) have partnered in a pilot program to implement jail-based competence restoration services in Hinds and Madison counties.

“Two dedicated Region 8 staff members, who trained with Dr. Recore, are now providing evaluations in the Hinds and Madison detention

centers,” said Emile Craig, Director of Administration for the Region 8 CMHC. “We’ve only been up and running for about a month, but we’ve already gotten very good feedback from both of those detention centers. . . . When we first went to them with this program, they welcomed us with open arms: ‘Yes, we need this.’”

“We’re proud to partner with the Department of Mental Health in this program. We should have impressive outcomes as this gets going.”

Providing jail-based services cuts down on the time individuals have to wait for an initial competence evaluation and can divert individuals from ever having to be admitted to MSH, which has a lengthy waiting list for the 15 beds dedicated for inpatient evaluation, treatment and com-

petency restoration. This is also a cost-efficient program.

In a related initiative, MSH is recruiting licensed psychologists and psychiatrists to participate in a training program, “Community-Based Forensic Screening Evaluations of Competence to Stand Trial”. The first training program is scheduled for Aug. 28-30 at MSH’s Whitfield campus. The program is designed to increase the number of qualified evaluators available to courts to perform competence evaluations.

Both programs are part of an ongoing effort to make forensic services more readily available from community-based providers at the local level.

NEW COMMUNITY INTEGRATION PROGRAM LAUNCHES

BY MIKE CHRISTENSEN

Mississippi State Hospital's restructured Community Integration Program rolled out on July 5, serving approximately 50 individuals from three units in classes tailored to aid them in their transition back into community life.

Patients are introduced to or given refreshers on basic housekeeping skills, money management and a variety of coping mechanisms, such as Pathways to Recovery and Reminiscence Therapy. Clients come from the Female and Male Continued Treatment Units and Forensic Services.

There are morning and afternoon groups, with classes conducted by staff from the CIP and from Behavioral Health Services.

"We're teaching different classes to different groups, based on functioning ability," said Melita Breeden, Program Director.

A larger group session is held at the end of each day with a focus on relaxation and mindfulness.

The "treatment mall" approach was the idea of MSH Director James Chastain; Dr. Joseph Kastner, head of the Behavioral Health Services Department; and Dr. Kirtida Desai.



Community Integration Program Director Melita Breeden.

"The hope is the patients will continue to learn independent living skills and to work toward recovery," Desai said.

"This is a good place to be, to learn and educate yourself on how to live on your own when you're out there," a former patient in the program said.

The program places an increased emphasis on group therapy.

"The patients have been very receptive," Breeden said a few weeks after launch. Things go better and smoother every day."

HAPPY 40TH ANNIVERSARY



MARIE BINGHAM

Marie Bingham knows her way around the campus of Mississippi State Hospital. She knows the buildings inside and out, what's behind every door, all the nooks and crannies.

"I can shut my eyes and go around here just like they were open," she said.

Bingham recently celebrated her 40th anniversary at MSH.

She started in housekeeping as a teenager fresh out of Terry High School and still works in that department. She is now a Client Care Support Supervisor in Environmental Services,

"I just stayed with what I had," said the easy-going Bingham, who has worked at other facilities as a Certified Nursing Assistant as well as other jobs.

Retirement isn't something she has given much thought to, Bingham said: "I like it out here. I like the people, dealing with the patients. I come in and do my work. I'm still enjoying it. I look forward to coming in every day and being on time."

Bingham grew up in Terry and still goes to church there though she now resides in Jack-

son. She is married with two kids and nine grandchildren.

Her sister recommended MSH to Bingham when she finished at Terry High.

"I felt comfortable here from the day I started," she said.

Bingham initially lived in a campus dormitory. On one of her first days, before she had gotten a check, she had no lunch to eat. A group of older women saw her sitting alone and invited her over.

"They said, 'When we eat, you eat,'" she recalled. "They took me in like that. It was like a family here."

Bingham said she has made many friends over the years as she trekked from building to building.

IT'S TIME AGAIN FOR SERENDIPITY – SEPT. 7

BY MIKE CHRISTENSEN

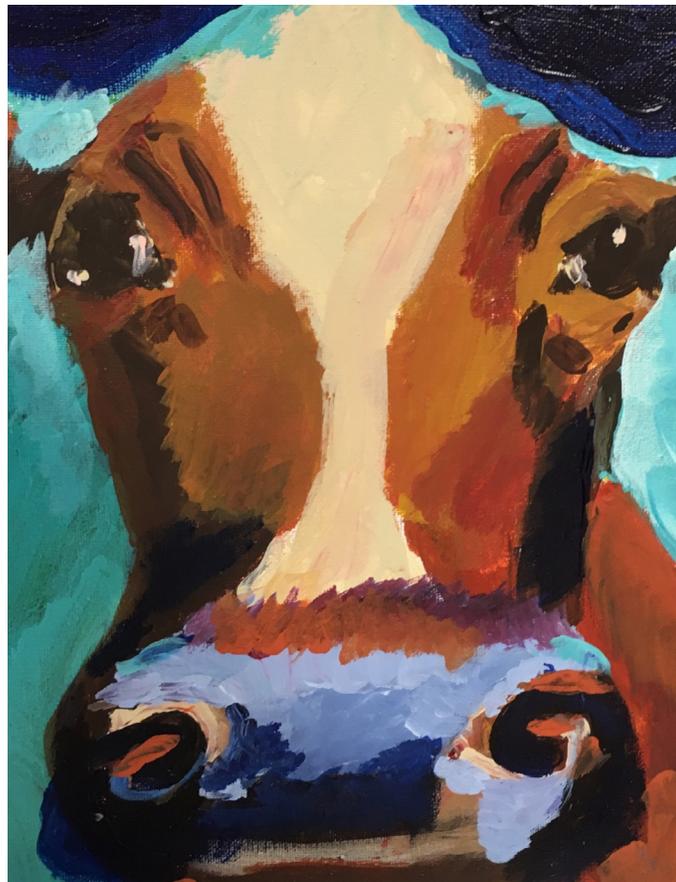
Schools are back in session, football season is under way and there is a hint – perhaps – of fall in the air. When the calendar flips to September at Mississippi State Hospital, that also means Serendipity is coming.

MSH will host the 28th annual Serendipity art show and silent auction on Thursday, Sept. 7. All of the work in this unique show is created by MSH patients and Jaquith Nursing Home residents who are taking part in the hospital's Art Services program.

This year's show will open at 11:30 a.m. and close at 6 p.m. in the Building 71 Conference Center on the MSH campus. Visitors are welcome, and several hundred typically attend the show over the course of the day.

Last year's show attracted more than 300 attendees, and all 239 works on display were sold.

The pieces on display and up for auction will include paintings in various mediums, crayon batik, pencil drawings and ceramics. Bidders in the silent auction write their name, number and



bid down next to a piece in which they are interested. Serious bidders who attend Serendipity every year have learned to be there at closing time to ensure they have the highest bid on the artwork they want.

Works in crayon batik haven't been in the show

for several years, and there will be a large number of more acrylic paintings this year.

"We have a lot of different pieces -- every year we have something different," said MSH Art Services Director Evelyn Carpenter, who started Serendipity.

The work displayed in the show is created by individuals from across the hospital's services, including adults and children. For many, it is an important part of the therapeutic process as it gives them a chance to express themselves through their artwork.

Carpenter said participation in the art program remains strong. "They enjoy it so much," she said. The artists look forward to Serendipity each year and take a sense of pride in producing work for the show, Carpenter said. Artwork from every participant in the art program is included in the show. Last year, 96 patients and residents took part.

"Seeing their work framed and displayed is such a big motivator for our artists," Carpenter said. "That's what it's all about to me."

MSH's art instructors are Carpenter, Ron Lindsey and Ceci Whitehurst.

HAPPY 40TH ANNIVERSARY



JEAN JOHNSON

On June 21, 1977, Jean Johnson arrived at Mississippi State Hospital as a social worker in Female Receiving. Fresh out of college, it was her first real job.

But Johnson, now a Social Work Supervisor V based in Female Receiving, has never really considered what she does to be a "job."

"It's turned into a calling ... more like an avocation," said Johnson, recently honored on the occasion of her 40th anniversary at MSH. "I like working here. I like it very much. This has been a great experience – and still is."

Johnson was born in Vicksburg and now lives in Richland. She went to high school in Hattiesburg, then attended the University of Mississippi, where she received a bachelor's degree in sociology/social work. She earned a master's degree in social work at Southern Mississippi. She got some work experience during her college years at Ellisville State School and in the psych unit at the VA Medical Center in Jackson. She jumped at the chance to interview for a position at MSH.

"I decided this would be a good place to work," Johnson said. "You can see more here. You can understand the depth of mental illness and the treatment involved. To me, it's a better experience here."

She started at a time when the patient population was much larger than it is today, and the caseload for a social worker was heavy. Johnson's first assignment was on the old Female Receiving building, and she has worked on six other buildings all told.

She has been a supervisor since 1988.

Johnson has seen a lot of changes over the years. Among the most significant, she says, were the advent of Haldol Decanoate as a treatment option and the creation of a separate unit for children and adolescents. She also heralded the Department of Mental Health's decision to embrace trauma as a causal factor in mental illness.

Johnson says she has not set a retirement date. "I've thought about retiring," she said, "but I'm not ready to quit today." When your job is also an avocation, leaving it can be tough.

CONGRATULATIONS JULY EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



Direct Care
Barbara Thomas,
JNH, B-34, A Shift

Barbara Thomas has been named Mississippi State Hospital's July Employee of the Month for Direct Care.

Thomas, a Rolling Fork native who now lives in Jackson, is a CNA Shift Supervisor on Madison Inn, Building 34. A Rolling Fork High School and Southern Technical College graduate, Thomas has worked at MSH since 1990.

Thomas is described as "a jewel" in the nomination form: "She is one of a kind. When she is at work, both the residents she is assigned and the staff she works with know it is going to be a good day. Ms. Thomas' ability to work well with others is one of her greatest attributes.

"Another great attribute is her ability to lead by example. ... She may not say much, but the level of her work, the dedication (shown) in her work and the pride she takes from taking care of those who can't care for themselves speaks to her character."



Clinical Service
Kimberly George,
IPS, B-201, A Shift

Kimberly George has been named Mississippi State Hospital's July Employee of the Month for Clinical Service.

George, who lives in Jackson, is a Registered Nurse in Inpatient Services, working on Building 201, Ward 2. A Hillcrest Christian School and Hinds Community College graduate, George has worked at MSH for five years.

"Kim George is the epitome of Mississippi State Hospital core values," said Laura Johnson, who nominated George. "Kim displays an interest in all patients and staff, treating everyone fairly and respectfully.

"Kim is unflappable, consistently calm even in the midst of chaos. Kim's can-do attitude and diligence are a winning combination. I feel that Kim's genuine caring personality is an encouragement to others."



Support Services
Eddie Ephform,
Transportation, B-35, A Shift

Eddie Ephform has been named Mississippi State Hospital's July Employee of the Month for Support Services.

Ephform, a Crystal Springs resident, is a Driver in the Transportation Department. An Army veteran who lived for a time in California, Ephform has worked at MSH for five years.

"Eddie is the perfect example of an individual that embodies all the MSH core values," said Franklin D. Moore, who made the nomination. "When Eddie interacts with patients and residents one can tell they really care for Eddie simply by the way they talk to him or how they ask about him when they don't see him for a while. (This is especially true of) the residents that he transports to dialysis three days a week. ...

"Everyone that he interacts with, be it patients or staff, he keeps an upbeat, humorous, positive attitude. One can't help but to like him."