



# MISSISSIPPI STATE HOSPITAL

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## **For Immediate Release**

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## **SERENDIPITY DRAWS ALMOST 500 VISITORS TO MISSISSIPPI STATE HOSPITAL**

WHITFIELD—Nearly 500 people visited Mississippi State Hospital throughout the day on Thursday, September 6 to see a unique and impressive show of art.

Serendipity, the annual silent auction and show of work created by patients of Mississippi State Hospital and residents of Jaquith Nursing Home, was an unqualified success this year. In addition to the hundreds of visitors, nearly every piece of work on display went home with someone, and some people walked away having won literally dozens of works of art during the silent bidding.

One of those people was Kostas Matheos. She had her eyes on the pottery all evening, and she won many of those ceramic pieces.

“I’m an art therapist, so I’m always looking at what local events are going on, and when I saw this I was definitely interested,” Matheos said.

In its 23rd year, Serendipity has become a draw for visitors from all over the state, and many art enthusiasts return year after year to see what is available. Elizabeth Spence is one visitor who has been coming to Serendipity for around five or six years.

“My mother told me about it, and it’s a lot of fun,” she said. “Somebody said it was the best-kept secret in Mississippi, and it really is. The artists are very talented, and you see the same bidders here year after year.”

Even bidders who come back each year are often surprised by what’s in the show, as Spence said she was herself.

“The artwork seems totally different this year from how it’s been in the past,” Spence said.

She was able to win several pieces to take home with them.

“These are going to go in my library. I’m a librarian, so I’m going to hang these up in my library,” she said.

Her husband Cary was there with her at Serendipity. He said his mother actually volunteered at the hospital when he was a boy and he has good memories of visiting the campus then, but this was his first year to come to the show.

“I love it. I love seeing other artists’ perspective. I’m an artist too, and I enjoy getting to see other artists’ perspective and work,” he said.

He also said now that he’s seen what is offered at Serendipity, he’ll make sure to be back next year.

“I wouldn’t miss it,” he said.

*MSH, a facility of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, was founded in 1855 and facilitates improvement in the quality of life for Mississippians who are in need of mental health, chemical dependency or nursing home services, by rehabilitating to the least restrictive environment, utilizing a range of psychiatric and medical services, which reflect the accepted standard of care and are in compliance with statutory and regulatory guidelines. The hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission.*

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#### **PHOTOS ATTACHED:**

**Serendipity 01 – Winning bidders line up after the close of bidding at 6 p.m. on Thursday, September 6 at the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Serendipity art show and silent auction at Mississippi State Hospital.**

**Serendipity 02 – A potential bidder takes a look at several of the works on display at Serendipity. All of the art in the show was created by patients and residents of Mississippi State Hospital and Jaquith Nursing Home who take art classes through the hospital’s Art Services Program.**