



Tom Thompson

# LAB ART: Artists Add Local Color to CVM Laboratory

By Bob Ratliff

As a member of the Art in Public Places Committee of the Starkville Area Arts Council, Arch Pitts helps get the work of local artists displayed in area businesses and public buildings. However, he and other Starkville artists recently found a new and slightly different venue for their work.

“Jo Anne Luke with the Mississippi Veterinary Research and Diagnostic Laboratory System in Pearl called last summer to see if I would be interested in displaying some of my work in the new lab,” Pitts said. “She had seen a story about me in the Farm Bureau’s magazine, *Mississippi Farm Country*, and thought my work would fit well at the lab.”

The subjects for many of Pitts’ paintings include old barns, rural churches, country stores, livestock and other subjects related to Mississippi’s rural heritage.

“These are subjects our clients and staff can relate to,” said Luke, who is the executive assistant to the director of the Pearl lab.

The art also fills a need at the lab.

“When we moved into the new facility in 2006, there was no money budgeted for pictures and other decoration,” said Dr. Lanny Pace, professor of veterinary pathology at MSU and executive director of the Mississippi Veterinary Research and Diagnostic Laboratory System. “Having the artists hang their paintings here helps make the building more attractive to visitors and a better environment in which to work.”

To supply the lab with artwork, Pitts has enlisted the help of other Starkville artists, including Betty Jane Chatham, Fay Fisher and Dylan Karges. The paintings, which hang in hallways and offices as well as the lab’s public waiting area, are changed about every six months. Some of the paintings are for sale, but others have a value that is not monetary.

“Most of my work is not for sale, and even when I put a price on a piece, it’s usually too high,” Pitts said. “I paint things I’m interested in, so they are hard to give up.”



Fay Fisher



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Dr. Gabriel Senties-Cue is one of four veterinarians on staff at the Poultry Diagnostic Laboratory.

## PEARL LAB PROVIDES SERVICE TO STATE POULTRY INDUSTRY

Photo and Story by Bob Ratliff

Housed within the 42,000-square-foot diagnostic facility in Pearl are the Mississippi Veterinary Research and Diagnostic Lab and the Poultry Research and Diagnostic Lab (PRDL), two of the four laboratories in the Mississippi Veterinary Research and Diagnostic Laboratory System.

The PRDL provides a full range of diagnostic and other services to Mississippi’s poultry industry.

“We are equipped to perform a variety of services, including serology, virology, bacteriology and histopathology,” said Dr. Danny Magee, director of the PRDL. “We also perform necropsies, which are the animal equivalent of autopsies, to help determine if there are any health problems in a flock.”

The facility’s support for Mississippi’s poultry producers is not limited to just what goes on in the lab.

“We go on site to help producers and processors identify and correct health-related problems in any stage of the production scheme,” Magee said.

The staff of the poultry lab includes three veterinarians at Pearl and one based at MSU. One of the veterinarians at Pearl is Dr. Gabriel Senties-Cue.

“Dr. Senties-Cue has an extensive background in poultry medicine and is a native of Mexico, a combination that makes him a valuable resource for the Mississippi poultry industry,” Magee said. “With his Spanish language skills, Dr. Senties-Cue is able to provide a unique service by translating poultry health procedures for the many Hispanic workers in the poultry industry.”