

## Perry Memorial Hospital Recognize Their Lab Professions



Picture Left to Right Diane James, Jean Holt, Mike Mahoney; Lab Manager and Brenda Avery)

National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week, April 19-25, 2009 is a time to honor the more than 280,000 medical laboratory professionals across the nation who perform and interpret laboratory tests that save lives and keep people healthy. Laboratory technologists, technicians and phlebotomists at Perry Memorial Hospital are among the many unsung heroes of medical healthcare.

Using state-of-the-art technology and instrumentation, laboratory professionals' help to prevent disease by detecting unknown health problems and by aiding in the diagnosis and treatment of existing conditions by giving accurate, timely test results.

"We are proud of the work we do," said Mike Mahoney, Lab Manager. "We have to be painstakingly meticulous in performing our jobs to provide dependable answers to your family physicians."

Doctors rely heavily on lab tests to make diagnoses, thus laboratory professionals are critical components of the health care system. Results of laboratory tests often identify the presence of disease in its earliest stages, when the possibilities of a cure are greatest and when treatment is least costly.

In its most recent survey of laboratory wages and vacancies, American Society of Clinical Pathologist (ASCP) reported that nearly 44% of laboratories report they are currently experiencing difficulties recruiting or hiring medical laboratory personnel. There are several reasons for the lab worker shortage, including rising retirement numbers among laboratory technicians; fewer schools of laboratory technology and the corollary decrease in the number of graduates.

Medical laboratory professionals represent a variety of specialties, including pathologists, medical technologists, clinical laboratory scientists, medical laboratory technicians, phlebotomy technicians, clinical chemists, microbiologists, laboratory managers, and medical educators. These professionals can be found in hospitals, doctors' offices, clinics, research facilities, blood banks, public health centers, the Armed Forces, universities, and industry. Within the laboratory, these highly educated and experienced medical laboratory professionals may work in chemistry, serology, hematology, cytology, microbiology, immunology, coagulation, histology, urinalysis, molecular biology, or the blood bank. Joe Duerr, PMH Hospital Administrator, stated that our laboratory team is among the best in the industry. Medical technology continues to improve with advancement in testing equipment, Duerr reported. I personally have a degree in medical technology and that is how I started out in the health care field, stated Duerr. This background gives me a unique appreciation for good personnel in our laboratory department. If you get the opportunity, let our laboratory staff know you appreciate the work they do for our community.