ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL RETARDATION

Outlook

4th quarter FY 08

Alabama Artist Frank Calloway's Work Hits the National Stage

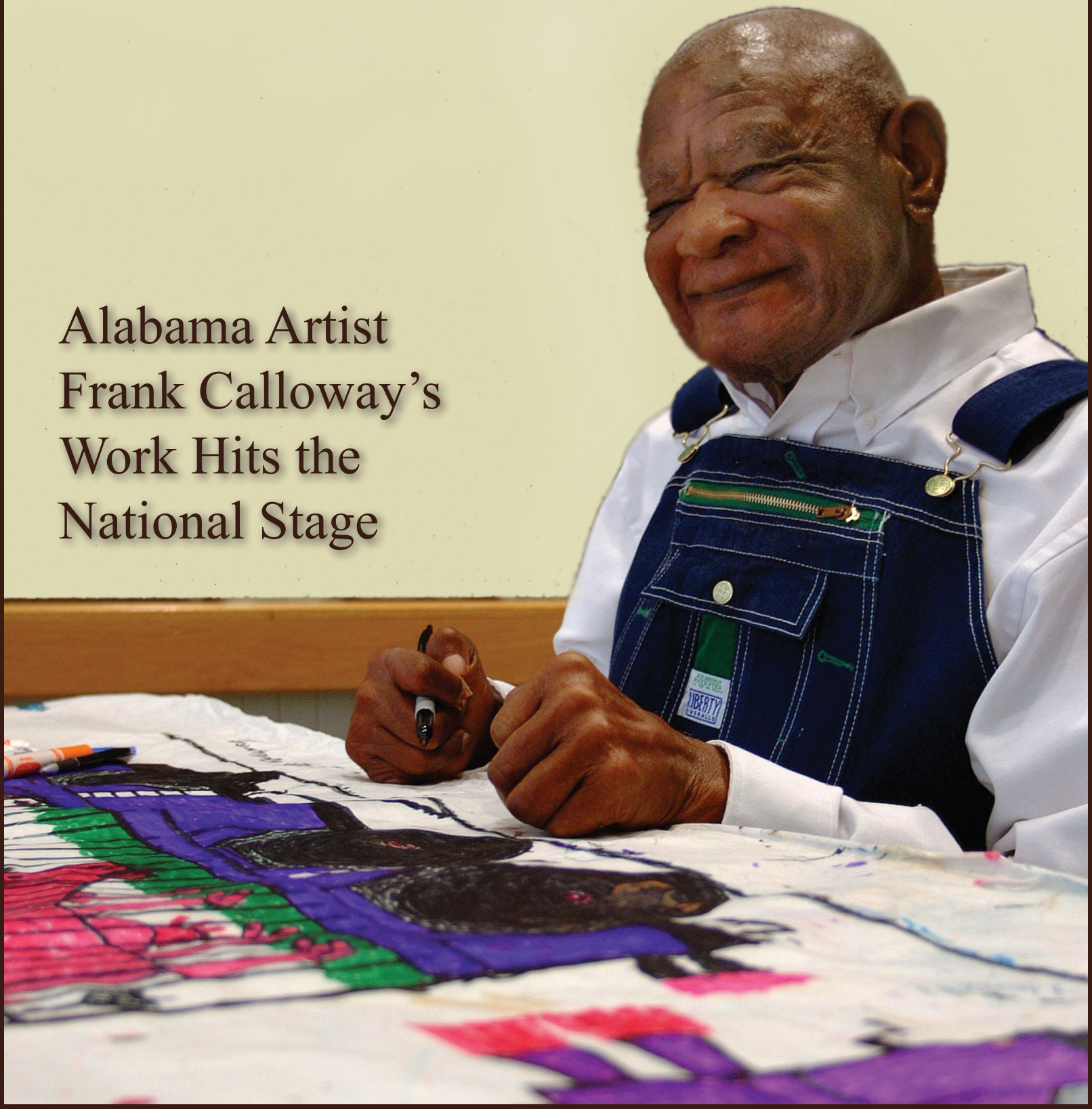


TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEPARTMENT NEWS

Historical Committee Releases First Official Report 3

Two Perspectives ... One Meeting 4

What is the Rainy Day Amendment? 4

SUCCESS STORY

Nation Discovers Local Artist 5-6

DEPARTMENT INITIATIVES

Consumer Artists Display Abilities and Share their Stories 7

State of the State Combined Campaign 7

COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

"Prevent It!" Ties Fun and Education Together 8

CONFERENCES

NASMHPD Legal Conference 9

Alabamians Attend National SABE Conference 9

NATIONAL NEWS

Efforts During National Suicide Prevention Awareness Week 10

What Americans *Really* Think About Substance Abuse 10

Outlook is a quarterly newsletter of the Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation. It contains articles and information about department initiatives, community mental health services, individual success stories, and relevant national topics.

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
DMHMR
Mental Health & Mental Retardation

Lifting Life's Possibilities

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Alabama mental health service delivery system to "Lift Life's Possibilities" by ensuring that the mental illness, mental retardation and substance abuse recovery needs of the state's citizen's are addressed in a manner that is maximally effective and efficient, while promoting the individual's quality of life, human worth, and dignity.

Letter from the *Commissioner*

When we look at the tumultuous economy and the swirling array of international events we can become disconcerted and discouraged about the future. We have seen hard times in the past and made it through them, and we will do it again. Cycles of prosperity and innovation in government services are followed by times of "holding on" to the gains that have been made. We serve in a field where the job is never done and where there is never enough to go around. Yet, we are making progress. The stories in this month's *Outlook* are stories of hope, stories of action, and stories of progress.

From a planning prospective I am particularly proud of the outcome of our joint meeting (featured in this edition) of the Management Steering Committee and our Advisory Board of Trustees. Both of these groups are composed of a broad array of professionals and family/consumer advocates. To my knowledge we met in joint session for the first time in the department's history. The exchange between the groups was valuable and informative.

Another powerful story was told recently at our State Combined Campaign meeting at the central office. An individual told of an incident where her son had an overdose of drugs and almost died. He went into treatment and is now in recovery. With tears in her eyes she reiterated the importance of every employee and the part they play in either supporting services or in providing hands-on care. The State Combined Campaign provides much needed funding for so many critical services across the state. I am not surprised that employees in our department participate in giving … they do that every day.

Although we have a dedicated work force, they need the tools to do the job they are called on to do. Amendment One will be on the ballot on November 4th. I cannot tell you how to vote. Personally, I think that passing the amendment is a wise step to prevent mid-year cuts in vital services in education and in mental health. Be informed and vote your conscience. Whatever the outcome, we will do our best to "lift life's possibilities" for those we serve.

John M. Houston

Historical Committee Releases First Official Report

In the last issue of *Outlook*, a brief update on the department's historical committee was given as well as a statement that more news would be forthcoming as the committee continued its work. As of September, the committee had completed eight work sessions over a period of five months and unveiled its first official report to the Commissioner regarding the "Bryce Hospital Preservation Project."

In the report the committee introduces the mission statement for their work that is threefold: "(1) to ensure Bryce Hospital's preservation in order that it might continue to stand in perpetuity as a symbolic tribute honoring the humanity of patients, families, and caregivers who have lived and endured the Bryce Hospital experience; (2) to bring national recognition to Bryce Hospital for its historically significant architectural and cultural contributions to issues and social movements that have swept the nation; and (3) to ensure Bryce Hospital's future role as a valuable resource to the nation, state, and local community.

In order to carry out this mission the committee has devised a number of goals and objectives and has already lined up recommendations for many of these. Some of those goals, objectives, and recommendations are as follows:

GOAL #1: *TO PRESERVE AND/OR RESTORE THE SIGNIFICANT CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES OF THE BRYCE HOSPITAL CAMPUS.*

Objective #1: to identify the structures, sites, and objects on the Bryce Hospital Campus representing the highest priority for preservation and/or restoration.

RECOMMENDATION: the Historical Committee recommends that the following structures, sites, and objects constitute Priority List #1:

(1) Main building: it is recommended that the exterior façade be preserved, especially the Kirkbride footprint. It is also recommended that a small but representative portion of the interior be reserved for possible restoration such that the actual reality of Bryce Hospital during its prime can be appreciated.

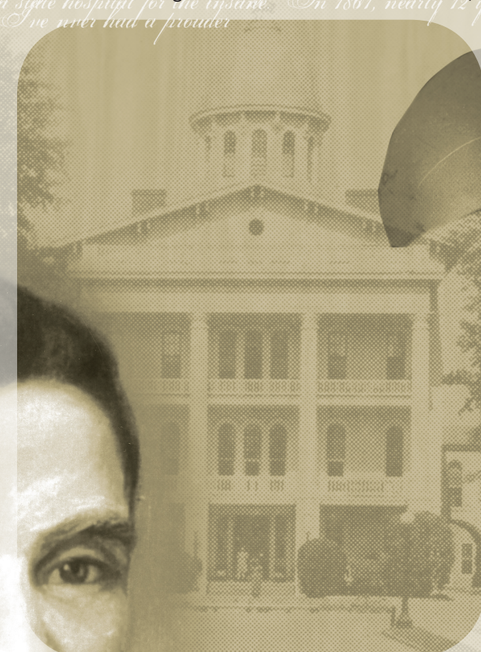
(2) Grand approach from Campus Drive: including the Bryce gravesites and surrounding greenspace on the avenue's west side, the mansion (Superintendent's Residence), surrounding greenspace on the avenue's east side, and the fountain in front of the main building.

(3) All Bryce Hospital cemeteries: It is important to note that the Cemetery Preservation Subcommittee is currently discussing a cemetery preservation plan.

GOAL #2: *TO ENSURE THAT BRYCE HOSPITAL IS RECOGNIZED FOR ITS ARCHITECTURAL AND CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH PHILOSOPHY, POLICY, AND PRACTICE.*

Objective #1: to revise Bryce Hospital's current level of significance designation on the National Register of Historic Places from "state" to "national."

RECOMMENDATION: the Historical Committee has already recommended submission of an application for this purpose and the Commissioner has supported this recommendation. On August 12, the department submitted the application to the Alabama Historical Commission and it will be reviewed by the Alabama National Register Review Board on October 30, 2008.



The committee goes on to note that predictably, no recommendations are yet available regarding several important issues, e.g., a national mental health museum, public education, fundraising, etc. As recommendations regarding these topics crystallize, they will be incorporated into future interim reports for submission to the Commissioner. It is important to regard these interim reports as living documents subject to change as new information is acquired and as the Historical Committee's collective view is shaped by its experience and future deliberations. ❖

Two Perspectives... ONE MEETING

The Commissioner recently presided over the first ever joint meeting between the department's Advisory Board of Trustees and the department Management Steering Committee.

Issues such as the department's budget, new services and challenges facing the system were openly discussed between the Board and Management Steering Committee. Perhaps the highlight of the meeting was a presentation from consumers that represented their peers served by all three of the department's service divisions. They shared powerful stories about the impact of services offered by the department to the public. These stories put a human touch on the services that these groups so often discuss, but do not usually get to see the benefits of.

After the meeting members of both groups noted that they were happy that the two groups met jointly. One member of the group said that he had never attended a more informative meeting. Plans for another joint meeting of these two groups are already being made for sometime in the near future. ❖

What is the Rainy Day Amendment?

When you go to vote on November 4, the first amendment you will see is called the Rainy Day Amendment. This amendment is important for a couple of reasons. First, there is currently no Rainy Day Fund to protect entities funded from the state General Fund. The department as well as various other social service agencies are heavily funded via the state General Fund Budget. The first amendment on the ballot calls for the establishment of a Rainy Day Fund for the purpose of protecting the state General Fund if revenues should fall short of projections.

Second, although there is a Rainy Day Fund for the Education Budget, it currently does not protect all entities that receive funds via the Education Budget. Currently, only teacher salaries, K-12, and Higher Education are protected. There are many other unprotected entities currently funded by the Education Budget which provide educational services but are not directly under the auspices of K-12 or Higher Education. A "Yes" vote in November will call for monies to be set aside to protect all educating serving entities funding by the Education Budget.

Some may ask how this Rainy Day Amendment will be funded. The answer is that the funds will come from a small share of the $3.3 billion Alabama (Oil and Gas) Trust Fund. Any transfers from the Alabama Trust Fund to the Rainy Day Accounts will be required to be returned to the Alabama Trust Fund within ten years for the General Fund Account and within six years for the Education Trust Fund Account.

The Rainy Day Amendment is a bipartisan, long-term, no new taxes solution that will bring stability to the budgets for education and state services, including those services for individuals with mental illness, intellectual disabilities, and substance addiction. We hope you will consider voting "Yes" for the Rainy Day Amendment on November 4. ❖

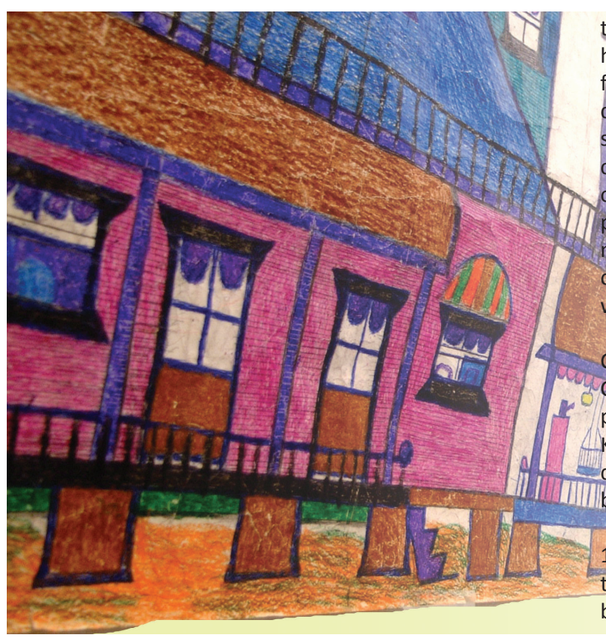
Frank Calloway:

Nation Discovers Local Artist

While many involved with the state mental health system have known about artist Frank Calloway for quite some time, thousands of people across the country are now familiar with his work. Calloway's art was featured in the exhibition "The Marriage of Art, Science & Philosophy" that recently opened at the American Visionary Art Museum in Baltimore, Maryland. Calloway has been a resident of one of several Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (DMH/MR) facilities since 1952. Currently, he resides at the Alice Kidd Nursing Home on the historic Bryce Hospital campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Calloway is an incredible man in many respects. He is kind and gentle in nature, has a great smile, and dresses impeccably. Typically he loves to wear his new tennis shoes, blue overalls, and a cotton dress shirt. He has his own room at Alice Kidd and is a celebrity among his fellow residents and staff. Over the past few years his celebrity status has deservedly increased due to a unique talent that he possesses. Frank Calloway has become quite famous as a folk artist.

All day he sits or stands at a table and draws incredible pieces of art on long rolls of butcher paper. He draws farm scenes, street cars, wagons and houses, images that are part of his memory. The images have vibrant colors



that stem from Calloway's artistic flare and the medium he most frequently uses, crayons. Ten, twenty, and thirty foot murals of red horses, purple mules, and delightfully dressed passengers in their wagons are typical of his scenes. Using a ballpoint pen, crayons, and an elaborately contrived numbering system Calloway creates pieces of art that are absolutely unique to his style. Often his pieces will contain a table of numbers that depict how many bricks he will use in the construction of a building or how many spokes he needs for a series of mule-drawn wagons.

Over the years, the Alabama DMH/MR has featured Calloway's work in its annual Consumer Art Exhibit. Calloway and his work were on the cover of the state phone book in 2002, and he was a featured artist at the Kentuck exhibit in Northport, Alabama in 2007. It was during this exhibit that a psychiatrist spotted his work and brought it to the attention of the Baltimore museum.

When the American Visionary Art Museum opened in 1995, founder and director Rebecca Hoffberger sought to provide a new kind of institution for Baltimore and beyond. It has since received numerous awards and is appreciated as one of the premier museums in the world. It was recently named number by Travel + Leisure on their "10 places to see before you're 10" list.

Visionary art is different from folk art. The essential difference between the two, though both may at times use similar materials and methods, is that visionary artists do not listen to anyone else's traditions. They invent their own. One of the reasons Hoffberger chose Calloway's work was because of "his intuitive grasp of math and the colorful execution of his living memories."

After Hoffberger flew to Tuscaloosa to meet Calloway, she was also impressed with the department as well. After a visit with "Mr. Frank" she stated that she had never seen the level of conscious care in any mental health facility provided by the staff at Alice Kidd for Calloway. However, one must also recognize that many of the employees have worked with Mr. Calloway their entire career. "They are in essence, like his family," said department Commissioner John Houston.

After being chosen to have his art included in the exhibit, the next thing Calloway knew he was on an airplane for the first time, leaving Alabama for the first time, and going to the opening of that art exhibit. But that was not all the trip had in store for him. Before the opening party on Friday night, a special *Frank Calloway Welcome and Press Conference* was held earlier that day. Julian Bond, NAACP Chairman and Civil Rights Activist, introduced Calloway at the press conference.

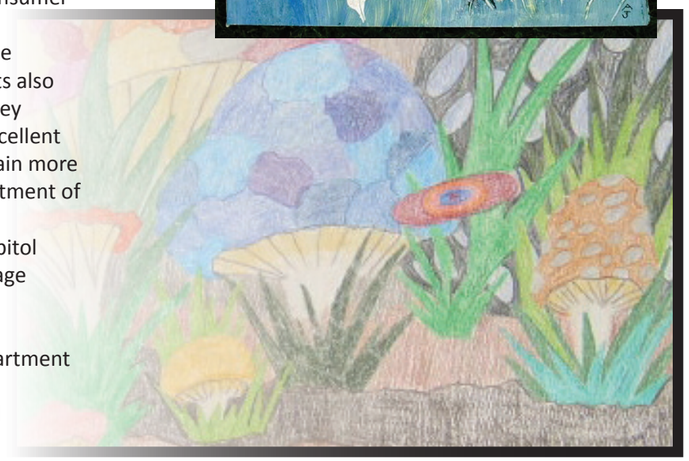
He was treated as a celebrity at the exhibit opening, with Hoffberger saying, "Frank ... has survived untold hardships, injustices, and loss, and yet never fails to radiate kindness to all and a personal and constant engagement with wonder. His instinctive love of numbers, the patterns they make, and the way his meandering calculations balance to form the great masses of numbers that fill his large notebooks make this phenomenon of nature a real start in our national museum's communal exploration of what Art, Science & Philosophy mean to each of us."

Calloway has lived an extraordinarily long life, although he has no birth certificate, hospital records indicate that he is 112 years old. But the past two years have brought experiences that were brand new to him. Last year, the director of Alice Kidd asked him if there was anything that he would like to do that he had never done. He thoughtfully replied, "I'd like to see the ocean." A few weeks later, Calloway was sitting in a "beach friendly" wheel chair with waves from the gulf at the Alabama coast spattering his feet. Now, with his trip to Baltimore, first plane ride, and first time out of the state, his new experience has also brought his vision to thousands of others throughout the country.

The Marriage of Art, Science & Philosophy runs through September 6, 2009, in Baltimore. For more information on the American Visionary Art Museum, visit http://www.avam.org/.

Mr. Calloway's work will also be featured in the department's upcoming Capitol Showcase Consumer Art Exhibit. Read more about this event on page 7.

Consumer Artists *display "abilities" and* share their stories



More than 100 pieces of artwork by consumer artists with mental illness, intellectual disabilities, or substance addiction illness from across the state of Alabama will be on display in the Alabama State Capitol Building during the month of November.

This is the fourth annual Capitol Showcase Consumer Art Exhibit, and the event gives consumers the opportunity to display their artistic abilities to the public. Along with their artwork, consumer artists also give heartfelt testimonies about the obstacles they have overcome in their lives. The exhibit is an excellent opportunity to promote consumer dignity and gain more understanding of individuals the Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation serves.

"We are encouraging everyone to visit the Capitol Showcase Exhibit. The immense talent and courage displayed by these individuals is inspiring," said Commissioner John Houston.

The exhibit is sponsored by the Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation. The opportunity to view these unique works will end November 30, 2008. ❖

State of the *State Combined Campaign*

Four weeks into the State Combined Campaign, department employees have already contributed more than $30,000 to support the work of hundreds of statewide charitable agencies and organizations. The State Combined Campaign, or SCC, is a once-a-year, on-the-job charitable solicitation of state employees, and was enacted by the Alabama Legislature in 1991. It is unique because in addition to providing the opportunity for state employees to contribute through traditional means of cash and check donations, it is the only authorized payroll deduction charitable fundraising effort for state employees.

As the above figure shows, department employees are taking that opportunity to support charitable organizations throughout the state providing services addressing very real problems and issues such as literacy, AIDS, teen pregnancy, child care, substance abuse, elderly care, health care, and more.

The entire SCC's goal is to raise $800,000, and the department's portion of that goal has been set at $51,820. While our generous employees have met the department's monetary goal in past years easily, we are also striving to the lofty goal of 100% participation. Right now, we still have plenty of room to improve as the department is at a little over 21% participation.

Coordinators are working hard in each of the facilities as well as at the department's central office to meet these goals. Our deadline for contributions has been set for November 14, and we hope to reach both the SCC's goals as well as our own. Questions about the department's participation in the SCC, as well as general questions about the SCC, can be directed to the Office of Public Information at 334-242-3417. ❖

"Prevent It!" Ties Fun and Education Together

Fun and innovative activities were on hand for local children in the Greensboro and Demopolis areas as they participated in the West Alabama Mental Health Center Prevention Camp, termed "Prevent It" by campers and staff. Prevent It was designed to relate information about drug and alcohol intervention, self-esteem, anger management, good communication skills, and decision making that the children could relate to their environment and prevent them from making bad choices.

Children aged six to thirteen were chosen by an application process to attend either the Greensboro camp or the Demopolis camp, which were located at area churches. About 30 youths in each location participated in a host of activities throughout the five-day event that provided intervention support.

Among the most popular activities included learning a rap song that centered around preventing the use of alcohol and drugs, making posters on "Saying No" to drugs and alcohol, painting flower pots and planting a seed that signified "Growing a Better You," and making door knob hangers that said, "Don't hang around drugs." They also made personalized license plates which highlighted their uniqueness and elevated their self-esteem, made thumbprint pictures with their thumbprint symbolizing their unique qualities, and painted bags that helped them "bag their anger."

An additional surprise that campers in Demopolis received was meeting and listening to professional basketball player, Theo Ratliff. The 13-year veteran, who currently plays for the Philadelphia 76'ers, was born and raised in Demopolis. He has always been very active in community outreach and desires to give back to his hometown. His contribution, coupled with a federal grant, will aid in the development of the "Theo Ratliff Activity Center" that is underway in the Demopolis area.

Theo was on hand when self-esteem was the topic for the day. He relayed how they should strive to be all that they could, and that making something out of themselves comes from making good decisions. The campers were understandably excited to see that a professional sports player had taken time out of his schedule to come and talk to them.

West Alabama Mental Health Center Director Kelley Parris-Barnes says that the center has been holding these Prevention Camps since 1994 and that they have always been quite successful. She goes on to say, "The planning stages for each camp comes from the long and dedicated hours that the staff devotes several weeks prior to the camp ever taking place. Our success is centered around preparing each camper to handle situations that will cross their paths in the future by providing them with the necessary tools to live a successful, long and healthy life within their community." ❖

NASMHPD *Legal* Conference

Alabama was a popular choice for the upcoming 2008 National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) Legal Division's Annual Meeting. The meeting will be held November 16-19, at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach. The division is divided into regions, and each year one of the regions hosts the meeting. Several members of the group who had lived in or worked in Alabama suggested that it be held there, and the Commissioner was happy to approve it.

Due to his role as Secretary on the Executive Committee, the department's own Courtney Tarver, Director of the Legal Division, has been highly involved in preparations for the meeting, including selecting the location and preparing the agenda. Over the course of the Annual Meeting, the draft agenda includes presentations such as *Mental Health 101, How to Use Your Attorney ... From a Commissioner Perspective, Electronic Discovery, States Role in Serving Veterans*, and much more. DMH/MR Commissioner John Houston will be on hand to welcome the attendees and will also be the presenter for the *How to Use Your Attorney ... From a Commissioner Perspective* presentation, along with Emmett Poundstone, Past Commissioner and General Council for the DMH/MR.

The purpose of the Legal Division is to establish and maintain as an integrated group, members of the legal profession who are legal advisors to state mental health program directors, and others who provide legal liaison for state mental health program directors; to provide an opportunity for the exchange of information and ideas concerning mental health law; to improve professional responsibility and expertise with the study, discussion, resolution, collection, and dissemination of ideas, information, data, conclusions, and solutions with respect to the legal problems common to the field of mental health.

NASMHPD is the only member organization representing state executives responsible for the $29.5 billion public mental health service delivery system serving 6.1 million people annually in all 50 states, 4 territories, and the District of Columbia. NASMHPD operates under a cooperative agreement with the National Governors Association. It serves as the national representative and advocate for state mental health agencies and their directors and supports effective stewardship of state mental health systems. ❖

ALABAMIANS ATTEND NATIONAL SABE CONFERENCE

Several Alabama representatives attended the 2008 Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) Conference held September 3-7, in Indianapolis. SABE is a national self-advocacy organization for people with developmental disabilities. It is comprised of a national board with regional representatives and members from every state. George Neal, Director of the department's Office of Consumer Empowerment, attended the conference, as well as representatives from People First of Alabama.

Throughout the conference, the participants had more than 100 educational sessions to choose from as well as numerous opportunities to socialize and network. The conference was opened by a flag ceremony with all the flags from the 50 states represented. Julie Petty, President of the National Board of Directors provided the opening remarks for the conference. Attendees then heard from keynote speaker Keith Jones, who is President of SoulTouchin' Experiences, and a renowned community activist.

Gathering for a picture at the 2008 SABE Conference are (L to R): George Neal, Director of the department's Office of Consumer Empowerment; Joe Meadours, former director of that office and now the Executive Director of People First of California; Darren Morris, People First of Alabama Region 2 Team Leader; and Mark McClellan, People First of Alabama Region 5 Team Leader.

Later in the week, a state of the nation report was given by Petty, which highlighted SABE's mission statement and goals for the upcoming year. Directly after the report, participants broke into regional meetings and elected regional representatives. The state's very own Jeff Ridgeway, current President of Alabama Disability Action Coalition, was elected as the regional representative. ❖

Efforts During National *Suicide* Prevention Awareness Week

The American Association of Suicidology sponsors national Suicide Prevention Awareness Week each year in September. This year the observance was held September 7-13, and groups from around the nation and here in Alabama used the week to encourage people in crisis to ask for and receive help.

Nationally, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and other groups educated people about using the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Network Hotline (1-800-273-TALK) and the many lifesaving services it offers. They stated that more Americans than ever are turning to the hotline for help with suicide-related problems, and that the hotline serves an average of 43,000 people a month in crisis.

Using state of the art technology and a network of 135 crisis centers across the country, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline can immediately link a caller to a trained counselor closest to the caller's geographic location – 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Calls to the Lifeline and counseling services provided are confidential.

In Alabama, where suicide is the 11th leading cause of death in Alabama and the third leading cause of death for Alabamians ages 15-24, the Governor proclaimed the week Suicide Prevention Awareness Week in Alabama. In addition, the Alabama Suicide Prevention Task Force (ASPTF), which includes members from DMH/MR, worked to educate people about the warning signs of suicide and mobilize human resources to reduce the rate of suicide. The task force, established by the State of Alabama, also announced its updated Alabama Suicide Prevention Plan the week of September 7-13.

The plan provides specific action steps to carry out suicide prevention efforts including developing suicide prevention resources for Alabama communities, reducing the stigma associated with seeking help for mental illness, substance abuse, and suicidal behavior, and continuing public education and prevention efforts targeting vulnerable populations.

Judith Harrington, Coordinator for the ASPTF says, "The community is hungry for this. More people are willing and able to work together." More information about the Alabama Suicide Prevention Task Force and the Alabama Suicide Prevention Plan can be found by visiting http://www.adph.org/suicideprevention. ❖

What Americans *Really* Think About Substance Abuse

Nearly half of American adults report knowing someone in recovery from the use or abuse of alcohol or drugs, according to survey results announced recently by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). SAMHSA sponsored the nationwide survey to gain insight into public attitudes toward substance abuse, and the effectiveness of prevention, treatment, and recovery programs. The survey showed that most Americans are supportive of people in recovery and believe that prevention and treatment efforts can work.

"These results are encouraging and offer hope to everyone affected by substance abuse problems," said SAMHSA Acting Administrator Eric Broderick. "The survey shows that the American people believe that prevention and treatment efforts make a real difference in addressing this challenge and improving lives.

Among the survey's more notable findings:

- Less than one-fifth of Americans (18 percent) would think less of a friend or relative who is in recovery from addiction.
- Nearly two-thirds of the public (66 percent) believe that addiction to illicit drugs can be prevented.
- Most Americans report that they would feel comfortable being friends (66 percent) or working (63 percent) with someone in recovery for a substance abuse problem.

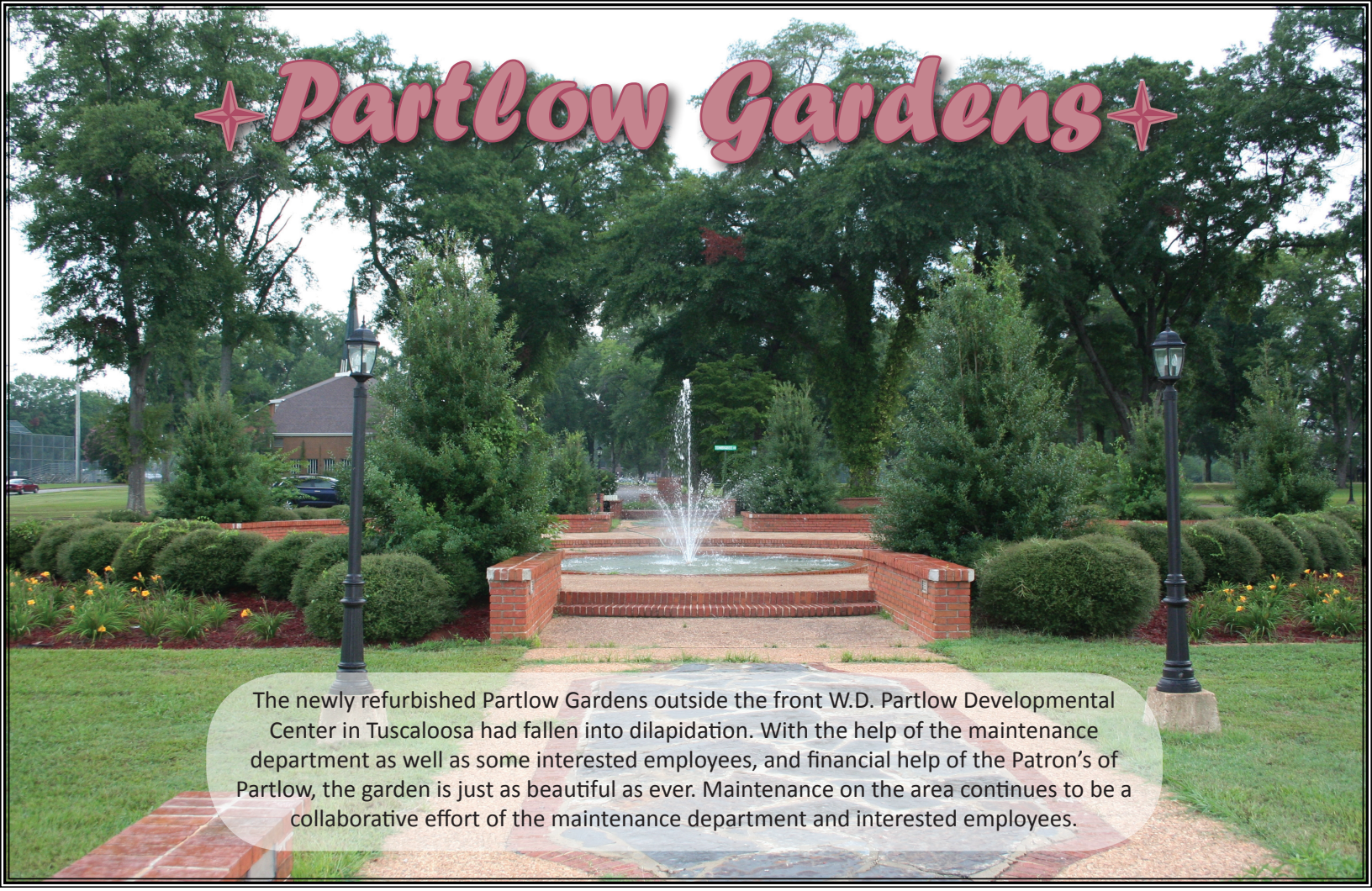
Although the report found widespread agreement on many issues, it also found some significant differences in how various segments of the public view certain substance abuse-related issues:

- For example, younger Americans aged 25 to 34 are more likely than those age 65 and older to believe that people in recovery from illicit drugs can go on to live productive lives (70 percent compared to 51 percent).

Differences were also found between the sexes on some issues:

- Females were more likely than males to believe that people with illicit drug addictions posed a danger to society (80 percent compared to 73 percent). Women were also more inclined than men to believe that people in recovery from illicit drug addictions can live productive lives (65 percent compared to 56 percent).

The complete survey findings are available on SAMHSA's Web site at www.samhsa.gov/attitudes. ❖



The newly refurbished Partlow Gardens outside the front W.D. Partlow Developmental Center in Tuscaloosa had fallen into dilapidation. With the help of the maintenance department as well as some interested employees, and financial help of the Patron's of Partlow, the garden is just as beautiful as ever. Maintenance on the area continues to be a collaborative effort of the maintenance department and interested employees.

Alabama Department of Mental Health & Mental Retardation
RSA Union Building
100 North Union Street
P.O. Box 301410
Montgomery, AL 36130-1410

PR SRT STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Montgomery, AL
Permit # 109