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**BRYCE CAMPUS RESIDENT AND ALABAMA ARTIST FRANK CALLOWAY  
TO PARTICIPATE IN ART EXHIBIT IN BALTIMORE**

MONTGOMERY – On July 2, 1896, Alabama artist Frank Calloway was born. On October 1, 2008 Mr. Calloway will take his first plane ride to attend the opening of an exhibit featuring his art at the American Visionary Art Museum in Baltimore, MD. Did you do the math? If you added properly, you rightly calculated Mr. Calloway's age is 112! At 112 years old Frank Calloway is one the oldest citizens in the United States. Although he has no birth certificate or known family, his age was established from the predominant information in his hospital records. He has been a resident of one of several Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (DMHMR) facilities since 1952. Currently, he resides at the Alice Kidd Nursing Home on the historic Bryce Hospital campus in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Mr. 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 Mr. Frank'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 Calloway's scenes. Using a ballpoint pen, crayons and an elaborately contrived numbering system Mr. 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 past five years, the Alabama DMH/MR has featured Mr. Calloway's work in its annual Consumer Art Exposition. Twice the event was held at the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts and for the last three years it was held in the State Capitol. Mr. 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. In some ways, the high point of Mr. Frank's artistic career will be the American Visionary Art Museum (AVAM) in Baltimore, Maryland. The American Visionary Art Museum (AVAM) opened to the public in 1995 and has since received numerous awards and is appreciated as one of the premier museums in the world. 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 don't listen to anyone else's traditions. They invent their own. Rebecca Hoefburger, the founder of AVAM says that they choose Mr. Calloway's work because of "his intuitive grasp of math and the colorful execution of his living memories." 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 Mr. Calloway.

A special *Frank Calloway Welcome and Press Conference* featuring an introduction by Civil Rights Activist and NAACP Chairman Julian Bond will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, October 3, at the Museum.

Many of the employees have worked with Mr. Calloway their entire career. "They are in essence, his family," said John Houston, Commissioner of the Alabama DMH/MR. Mr. Calloway has lived an extraordinarily long life. Last year, the director of Alice Kidd asked him if there was anything that he would like to do that he had never done. Mr. Frank thoughtfully replied, "I'd like to see the ocean." A few weeks later, Mr. Calloway was sitting in a "beach friendly" wheel chair with waves from the gulf at the Alabama coast spattering his feet. "It's so big," he said, "you can't see all the way across it!" Now, he will have a new experience and an even greater view of the horizon...from a plane.

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*Note to press:* If you or an affiliate would like to attend the press conference, please RSVP to Pete Hilsee at [pete@avam.org](mailto:pete@avam.org).

For more information, please contact the Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation at 334-242-3417.