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NEWS

Florida Museum Exhibit Features Artwork from Nursing Home and ALF Residents

Tallahassee, FL – Beginning June 26, artwork from 35 nursing home and assisted living residents in Florida will be on display at the Museum of Florida History's Heritage Gallery in downtown Tallahassee. The artwork is a collection of entries from the Florida Health Care Association's (FHCA) "Art from the Heart" 2009 calendar competition.

The contributing artists for the Art from the Heart calendar are a varied group, ranging in age from 32 to 101. Some have been creating art their entire lives, while others have recently discovered they have a talent for art. Regardless of their experience, the artwork included in the calendar reveals each resident's enthusiasm for life and their own unique talent. Entries for the annual calendar competition are selected by a panel of judges from the Tallahassee art community.

"We are very pleased to be able to showcase the unique talents of Florida's elders and to highlight their art in our Heritage Gallery," said Secretary of State Kurt S. Browning. Thirty-five artists submitted entries for the 2009 calendar and all will be part of the Museum of Florida History display that runs through September 7, 2009.

Below are just a few of the unique individuals who submitted pieces for this year's calendar:

82-year old Helene Kereluk's passion is painting, as demonstrated by her "[St. John's River](#)" artwork featured on the 2009 calendar cover. She studied art in Chicago and continued her studies after moving to DeLand, Florida, where today she resides at The Cloisters independent and assisted living facility (ALF) and teaches a monthly class for her fellow residents.

84-year old Sally Darcangelo never realized her natural talent for painting, ceramics and crafts until entering Palm Garden of Pinellas in Largo, where she has lived for over a year. Her "[Starry Night](#)" painting is the featured artwork for May.

56-year old Bruce Landers is a C5, 6, 7 quadriplegic who is paralyzed from the chest down and has no hand or finger function. He used a hand adaptation to create his "[Lighthouse Keepers Home](#)" painted jigsaw puzzle that is the featured artwork for September. Bruce resides at Park Meadows Health and Rehabilitation Center in Gainesville.

"The stories behind what each artist was trying to convey with their artwork is inspiring. The calendar gives us an opportunity to treasure these elders and celebrate their unique abilities, as well as showcase the dedicated staff in Florida's long term care facilities who are committed to helping these residents improve their quality of life through activity programs designed to help them express their individual talents," said Emmett Reed, FHCA Executive Director.

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Representing the Florida Long Term Care Community

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The 2009 Art from the Heart calendars sold for \$7 each, with proceeds used toward FHCA's Quality Credentialing Foundation. The Foundation focuses on improving services and quality care for those living in Florida's nursing homes by offering long term care providers mentoring, information and resource sharing and advocacy. The Foundation also promotes increased customer satisfaction and employee retention in long term care facilities and offers continuing education and scholarships for long term care nurses, nursing assistants (CNAs) and other professional staff.

For more information about the Art from the Heart calendar, visit the Press Center of the FHCA Web site and read more about the Association's outreach programs which Raise Awareness of Long Term Care at www.fhca.org.

ABOUT THE FLORIDA HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION

The Florida Health Care Association (FHCA) is a federation which serves nearly 1,000 members and represents over 500 long term care facilities that provide skilled nursing care, short-term rehab, assisted living and other services to the frail elderly and individuals with disabilities in Florida. FHCA was founded on the premise that its members have a moral obligation to the residents they serve, and since 1954 the Association has worked diligently to improve quality of care and quality of life for the state's growing elder care population. For more information about the Florida Health Care Association, visit www.fhca.org.

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