

I love my mum because...



April 14, 2009

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JOAN STOKES NAMED BARNARDOS' NT MOTHER OF THE YEAR

In a special ceremony hosted today by **Barnardos Australia**, and presented by His Honour Mr Tom Pauling AO QC, Administrator of the Northern Territory, **Joan Stokes** of Adelaide River was announced as the **Northern Territory Mother of the Year** in the **2009 Barnardos Australia's Mother of the Year Awards**.

Joan will now attend the national function in Sydney on **Thursday, May 7** (just prior to Mother's Day) along with the other seven state and territory finalists where the **2009 Barnardos Australia's Mother of the Year** will be announced.

From the age of 17, Joan Stokes, a full blooded indigenous woman could not bear to witness the local indigenous children suffering from neglect. Joan made a decision to place her own young life on hold and instead dedicated all her efforts to love, care and protect these children in trouble.

Over 31 years she has raised 34 children as well as her own four children and an adopted boy. Joan's ambition was to save these children from street life, educate them and provide them with a chance to grow and develop safely.

Joan's skills in art and story writing have always provided a positive starting point. Joan's greatest dream is to create a sanctuary on her property, to continue her work with disadvantaged indigenous children but she is finding it difficult to get funding for the project. Even though she is sick and money is scarce, Joan refuses to give up on these children.

Joan says she was shocked, humbled and honoured when she was announced as the **Northern Territory Mother of the Year**. "There are so many amazing mums out there doing incredible work and I feel very privileged to have been chosen to represent the Northern Territory."

"This year we had thousands of nominations for truly remarkable mums from around this country of ours," says Glynis Sequeira, Marketing Director for Barnardos Australia. "However Joan's determination and devotion to care for those less fortunate won her acclaim amongst the judges."

As the **2009 Barnardos Northern Territory Mother of the Year**, Joan was presented with a Johnson & Johnson gift pack, a motherInc.com.au pamper pack, a Lindt chocolate hamper, a Canon digital camera, a 12-month subscription to Practical Parenting magazine, a Captain Cook Sydney Harbour Sightseeing Coffee Cruise, a deluxe flower arrangement from EasyFlowers, a framed certificate and trophy to mark the event and flights and accommodation to Sydney to attend the national function.

The overall winner will receive a Ford Fiesta 5-door CL Hatch, a 3-night Murray River Wetlands Discovery Cruise for 2 people from Captain Cook Cruises, a deluxe flower arrangement from EasyFlowers and a Lindt chocolate hamper.

Launched in 1996, the Awards aim to acknowledge the enormous contribution that mothers make in shaping Australia's future through their role in nurturing children.

For more information contact Sofey Youssef, Awards Publicist, Barnardos Australia on 02 9743 2790 or 0419 272 237 or email sofey@bigpicture.com

Nominate her for Barnardos Australia's Mother of the Year
www.barnardos.org.au

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