

# Recognition for service

WORKING class hero Todd Hartley – who has dedicated the past 10 years to bettering the lives of others – has been named 2009 Cairns Region Citizen of the Year.

The founding director and driving force behind Choice Australia Management was given the top gong before a packed Cairns Civic Theatre, gathered for the Australia Day awards and citizenship ceremony.

"I don't know whether it means when I'm walking down the street I've got to smile at everybody," he joked later. "I think what it does say is I haven't changed who I am in 12 years to achieve where I'm at.

"I'm still a big, bald guy. I've still got big earrings. I've still got a lot of tattoos and I still live the life that I want to, so I think the view is if you want to achieve something in this country, if you think about it and carefully plan it, and believe in it enough, it can come to fruition."

Mr Hartley, 39, said the love and care of his own mother had enabled him to help others. The former footballer and heavyweight boxer said it was while travelling in South Africa, where he developed a crime prevention strategy for Cape Town, that he realised his potential to make a difference.

Mayor Val Schier said Choice had focused on educating young people "in how to make healthy life choices... whether it is to say no to drugs or yes to getting a traineeship or a job or; yes to exercise and staying healthy". She said Mr Hartley had been instrumental in attracting major state funding for training and jobs for young people and launched economic enterprises such as Ballerz Café and Choice Water.

St Mary's Catholic College student Caitlin Pollard, 17, was named Cairns Region Young Citizen of the Year for her work as a "global citizen" and her passion for social justice.

She has raised money for projects overseas, Harald's House in Cairns, is involved with Amnesty International, represented St Mary's at the Student Constitutional Convention, received the Member for Mulgrave Youth Volunteer Award and the Australian Defence Force 2008 Long Tan Leadership and Teamwork Award.

The Cairns Region Volunteer of the Year is Noel Weare of Miallo, while the Open Cultural Award was won by Cairns Choral Society musical director Jan O'Donnell for her "significant and lasting contribution to the arts".

Popular sporting hero Aaron Grabau, the last of the original Taipans team, was named Senior Sportsman of the Year, while national and state hockey representative Lewis Short, 16, is Junior Sportsman for 2009.

In a first for the Australia Day Awards, three Mossman teenagers – Matthew Werner, 14, Alex White, 15, and Sam Gibson, 15 – received the Youth Courage Award for their outstanding bravery.

Cairns Regional Council chief executive Noel Briggs said the three had saved the life of their friend, Reece Nesbit, when he slipped on a rock and plunged 35m over a waterfall north of Mossman – bouncing off ledges on the way down and suffering a head injury.

"His mates watched in horror as his limp body floated face down in the bloodied water," Mr Briggs said.

"Sam and Alex clambered down the cliff, while Matthew, a sprinter, ran for

help and called triple-zero."

Sam and Alex pulled Reese from the water, with Sam applying CPR for 30 minutes until finally Reese began to breathe. Matthew ran 2km down a dirt track until he met the ambulance.

"Reese owes his life to his three mates," Mr Briggs said. "Their actions are truly amazing. Their mateship, courage and sharp thinking epitomise a great Australian."

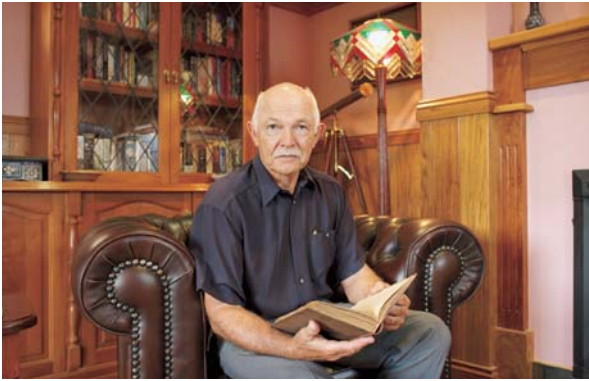
Cairns also gained 71 new citizens – 62 adults and nine children – at the Australia Day ceremony, with the new Australians arriving from China, England, Finland, Germany, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Laos, Kazakhstan, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Scotland, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, Sudan, Switzerland, Thailand, Tonga, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Wales and Zimbabwe.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Caitlin Pollard (above) was named Cairns Region Young Citizen of the Year for her involvement and participation in numerous committees and causes, while Citizen of the Year Todd Hartley was recognised for his contribution as a founding member of Choice Australia Management and its role in helping members of the community.

Pictures: PASCO ROGATO

## Top Aussie honour for doctor



HONOURED: Dr Michael McAuliffe has been awarded a prestigious Medal of the Order of Australia.

FORMER Cairns general practitioner and police watch-house volunteer Dr Michael McAuliffe has received a prestigious Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the 2009 Australia Day Honours List.

Dr McAuliffe, who now lives at Yungaburra, received the award for "service to the community of the Cairns region as a general practitioner and Government Medical Officer".

A GP at the Barrier Reef Medical Centre in Cairns from 1976-2007, Dr McAuliffe was Government Medical Officer for the Cairns Region of the Queensland Police Service from

1978-2007. During that time, he helped collect evidence on more than 100 murders and 500 rapes. Dr McAuliffe has also been a Volunteer General Practitioner for the Cairns Cardiac Rehabilitation Program since 1996.

In addition, Dr McAuliffe offered his services to Australia's defence forces, working as a medical officer with the Australian Army Reserve from 1981-1992 and retiring with the rank of Major in the 9th Field Ambulance – having served in Kiribati and Papua New Guinea.

In 2003 he was awarded the GP Medal for his outstanding service

to general practice.

Meanwhile, three Department of Child Safety officers in the Cairns area have earned an Australia Day Achievement Medallion for their commitment to abused and neglected children.

Child Safety Minister Margaret Keech said Cairns North child safety service centre manager Pat Andersen, Edmonton acting manager Corie Porta and Cairns North CSSC team leader Joan McNally would each receive a Department of Child Safety Australia Day Achievement Medallion for their dedication and commitment to vulnerable children.



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