



MEDIA RELEASE

Alice Springs Desert Park's Motorised Scooters A Rolling Success

A unique project set to bring social, cultural and economic benefits to the men and women of the Western Desert has begun at the Alice Springs Desert Park.

Park manager Gary Fry said the joint project with the Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation and the NPY Women's Council was symbolised by the park's motorised scooters.

"In a situation of modern meets traditional, patients of the Renal Unit and their carers are spending some of their time painting some of the electric wheelchairs of the Desert Park in traditional designs," Mr Fry said

"The park has commissioned the artists from the south-western part of the Northern Territory and the Anangu Pitjantjatjara lands of South Australia to paint each of the shop-riders and the artists are available to tell the stories of their artwork to park visitors while hard at work.

"The project is running throughout most of November and staff at the park are truly delighted to be involved in this project.

"The men and women are in town as part of their necessary renal treatment although they do say when they are at the park it reminds them of home.

"The park is becoming a place where local people are able to tell their desert stories in their voice, at the same time providing a memorable central Australian experience for park visitors."

Artist Noelene Baker said she enjoyed going to the park and adding her own special touches to the park's undoubted beauty.

"This is a lovely, peaceful and beautiful place," Ms Baker said. "The other artists and I love to sit here and paint all day and the smell of the flowers makes us feel good."

The WDNWPT and NPY agree the project is a win-win situation for all involved.

"The Anangu who have to live in town are keen to give back to this community and are keen to be involved in works that remind them of their own country they have had to leave far behind," WDNWPT manager Sarah Brown said.

NPY worker Angela Lynch said: "This is a great opportunity for the men and women to be engaged in some meaningful work while between dialysis treatments.

"The women have been looking forward to this work since first the idea was suggested a few months ago."

Media Note _ For more information contact Gary Fry on 8951 8713 or 0419 814 581.

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There will be a media photo and filming opportunity at the Alice Springs Desert Park at 11am on November 22.