

Road Safety Song Competition- See it on DVD

by Aaron Watson

The power of music is being harnessed in the Northern Territory to spread important messages about road safety in remote Indigenous communities. In its second year running, the Road Safety Song Competition took place at the Barunga Cultural and Sports Festival on the June Queen's Birthday long weekend. Indigenous bands from across the Territory made the trip to Barunga, 80km south east of Katherine, to showcase their music and to take part in the competition and Festival activities.



The competition is a fantastic way of encouraging safe road use practices at the Barunga Festival and is proving a success in promoting road safety messages at the grass roots level. Eleven songs were entered in the 2007 Road Safety Song competition, each featuring a unique blend of messages and musical appeal.

The Sandridge Band from Borroloola took out first prize of \$2000 with their song, *Take care when driving along*, which is packed full of road safety messages including reminders to never drink and drive and think about the lives of your passengers.

Warren H Williams from Hermannsburg near Alice Springs was runner-up, winning \$1000, with

Hey you mob which asks people to put their seatbelts on and look out for cars near the road.

Barunga School won the school category, winning \$500 for performing a fantastic song they wrote with well known Indigenous musician Shellie Morris. Kriol, or pidgin English, is used in one of the school's songs and will have wide appeal across the region.

The strong field of entries in the competition builds on the successful roll-out of the winning songs from the 2006 competition on radio and as backing tunes to television and radio commercials. The 2006 competition winner, Reggae Dave, features on road safety television commercials aimed at heightening road safety awareness amongst Indigenous people.

The Barunga Live 2006: Safe Tracks Home CD, featuring last year's road safety songs and other music from the Festival, has been well received in Indigenous communities across the Territory and proceeds from the sale of the CD go towards future Barunga Festivals.

A high quality DVD production of the 2007 competition will be launched in late August. The DVD features all the road safety songs performed, road safety scenarios and interviews with band members. The DVD will be sold widely through community stores, music shops and online at NT Indigenous music publishers Skinnyfish Music. Visit www.skinnyfishmusic.com.au for more details. The DVD will be given to Indigenous TV stations and distributed to bush schools in the NT. It is shaping up to be a great tool to spread strong messages about very important road safety issues including drink driving, pedestrian safety, seatbelt use, the importance of having a licence and general road safety issues. The winning road safety songs will continue to be aired on Aboriginal radio stations throughout the NT and beyond.

For more information about the Road Safety Song Competition, the CD or DVD visit www.roadsafety.nt.gov.au or phone (08) 8924 7017.

Rolling on Road to Disaster

By Raphael Grzebieta

[Ed: This article was published originally in the Herald Sun Newspaper of 14 June 2007 and is reproduced by permission. It is a good example of how the media can provide opportunities for College members to promote the cause of road safety.]

I CARRY out crash tests for a living. I know how much energy a barrelling big rig possesses. I keep well clear of them if I can.

Big trucks and cars do not mix well. Big questions are being asked. The State Coroner is searching for the answer after horrific crashes in the Burnley tunnel and at a Kerang rail crossing. Both disasters involved trucks. What went wrong?

When trucks travel at 80-100km/h they take a lot of stopping in an emergency. It is obvious that if we want a truck travelling at 100km/h to safely stop at a railway crossing, it takes time. Any warning sign of an approaching train must be clearly visible when the driver is at least 300m away. Slowing the truck to 60km/h well ahead of the crossing is an obvious alternative.