

Catherine Murray and her son Jonathan at a Disability Enterprise art show in 2008. Jonathan's painting is behind them. Three weeks after this photo was taken, Jonathan died from an obstructed bowel.



# LOSING POSSUM MAGIC

BY DENNY ROSEY

Catherine Murray, diminutive, slight and softly spoken, doesn't look the kind of woman who would take on Kevin Rudd. But last year she confronted the Prime Minister at a Community Cabinet Meeting in Penrith NSW:

"You and I are the same age Mr Rudd. We have children the same age. But that's where the similarities end. I have a profoundly disabled son. Who will care for Jonathon when I die? Where will he be sent? Cradle to grave care is a big ask Mr Rudd. And I really, *really* dislike having to beg," she said quietly.

Much the same has been said to this, and other Prime Ministers before, but rarely as powerfully and Rudd listened; a month or so later so did thousands of people watching the ABC's Four Corners program *In Our Shoes* about Australia's army of parent-carers. Catherine Murray summed up the

fear at the heart of their anger: "Mothers are dying without the confidence that their child who may be in their 30s or 40s will be provided for – and in this day and age it's a disgrace."