

neighborsgo

The Dallas Morning News

Friday, July 26, 2013

# Rockwall | Rowlett

## Deborah Keys' care for mom earns vacation

By EDEN STIFFMAN  
estiffman@neighborsgo.com

Deborah Keys of Rowlett was recently recognized for her efforts as a caregiver for her aging mother. Soon she'll have an opportunity to recharge and care for herself.

Keys was selected from hundreds of applications to win a "Rest and Recharge" vacation from Joan Lunden, former host of *Good Morning America*, and A Place for Mom, the nation's largest senior living referral service.

She was chosen because of the sacrifices she has made to care for her 83-year-old mother, Derlene Keys, who suffers from dementia.

According to A Place for Mom, the role of care-giving falls primarily on women and the organization wants to shed light on the reasons it is important for caregivers to maintain their own health and well-being while caring for others.

Derlene, who had been living in Terrell, moved into Deborah's Rowlett home in 2008.

"When mom first came to live with me I was looking for help anywhere and everywhere I could get it," Deborah Keys said. And that's how she came across A Place for



Staff photo by EDEN STIFFMAN/neighborsgo

Deborah Keys (left) was recently selected to win a Caregiver vacation from Joan Lunden, former host of *Good Morning America*, and A Place for Mom, the nation's largest senior living referral service.

Mom. "I didn't realize at that point that they were going to be so helpful so fast," she said.

She signed up for their newsletter and

read about the contest. She submitted her entry essay immediately. Just a few weeks later, she received a phone call. Lunden was on the line, announcing that Keys had

“  
I have very mixed emotions,  
but it will be good for  
everyone.

— Deborah Keys

won.

The vacation is a four-day stay at Lunden's Camp Reveille, located on Long Lake in Naples, Maine. There, she can do as much or as little as she wants — from traditional camp activities like archery and jewelry making to yoga and Pilates.

By the time she leaves for camp in August, she hopes mom, who now needs around the clock care, will be moved into an assisted living home.

"I have very mixed emotions, but it will be good for everyone," Deborah Keys said.

Rockwall/Rowlett neighborsgo editor Edén Stiffman can be reached at 214-977-8486.