



OPUNAKE & COASTAL NEWS

Vol. 33 No 5, March 21, 2024
www.opunakecoastalnews.co.nz

Published every
Thursday Fortnight
Phone and Fax 761-7016
A/H 761-8206
for Advertising and Editorial
ISSN 2324-2337, ISSN 2324-2345

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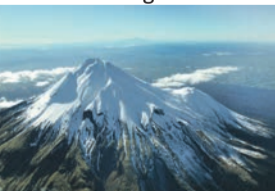


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OPUNAKE & COASTAL NEWS



From left. Bianca Ruakere, Oliver Mills, Justine Gilliland.

Wind energy backers put their case

Blue Float Energy and Elemental Group want to set up a 900MW offshore wind project off the South Taranaki coast producing enough electricity to power half a million homes.

Last week representatives of these groups fronted up to a community information evening at the Sinclair Electrical and Refrigeration Event Centre. Partnerships director Justine Gilliland, communications manager Bianca Ruakere and technical director Oliver Mills took questions and spoke about how their project would work and what it would mean for centres like Opunake.

Justine said Blue Float Energy bring specialist knowledge from developing wind farms around the world while Elemental Group, an international energy developer and consultancy headquartered in New Plymouth brings a knowledge of local conditions. She said Blue Float Energy are committed to working with a local partner wherever they go and have been in partnership with Elemental Group since 2021. They share the same values which include partnering with mana whenua, making positive differences for the community where they are based and promoting

biodiversity.

They are also committed to reducing carbon emissions. Wind energy would contribute to developing green fuels, and New Zealand as an agricultural exporting nation could benefit from having its exports transported in ways that would avoid leaving a carbon footprint.

Justine said that with an abundant wind resource and being surrounded by ocean New Zealand was ideally suited for wind farms, particularly on its west coast. Taranaki's advantages included having a port as well as a work force that were used to working on offshore energy projects.

The previous Labour government had been developing a regulatory framework and the current government had said it was committed to carrying on with it.

Blue Float and Elemental still need consents and are hopeful of getting the space allocation they want. They hope to start construction in 2030 with the wind farm becoming operational in the early 2030s. After 30-40 years it would be decommissioned or repowered. Justine said the European experience is that most get repowered.

She said wind energy is only part of the answer and



Offshore wind is a proven, reliable, and cost-competitive energy source that is playing a crucial role in the global energy transition.

they want to work with other energy providers including other offshore wind farm operators.

The planned project 22km off the Ohawe coast is a good distance from land but still in reasonably shallow water, rather than further out where the water dips off and gets deeper.

At 15MW each turbine would be nearly as tall as the Sky Tower and would have three times the output of its land-based counterparts on the Waipipi Wind Farm between Patea and Waverley.

Questions asked included such subjects as the status of Blue Float Energy, the practicalities of maintenance, the effects on fishing, marine life, migratory birds and the potential for the kind of visual pollution similar to that seen with the proliferation of wind farms

in the Manawatu.

Justine, who is a former CEO of Venture Taranaki said that when Venture Taranaki had issued a report on the potential for wind energy in Taranaki Blue Float, whose head office is in Spain had been the first to express an interest.

Darrell Hickey questioned whether the existing infrastructure in Taranaki would be able to handle getting electricity out to the rest of the country.

"At the moment you haven't even got a power line over the Stoney River."

Justine said issues like that are being discussed with Transpower.

Oliver Mills said he couldn't see any issues with recreational fishing as the cables are buried too deep to interfere with boat anchors.

"At the moment the only people we are going to have

to exclude are commercial bottom trawlers," he said.

In an aside to a long running issue on the Taranaki coast Justine said having the wind farm would be incompatible with seabed mining.

On the issue of migratory birds Oliver said the European experience showed that birds avoided the turbines and there was no evidence of significant bird strikes, although he acknowledged there are different bird species over there and more research would be needed for New Zealand conditions.

Oliver, who has previously worked on offshore wind projects in the United Kingdom said that by the time the South Taranaki project gets going they will be better able to learn from the research and experience in other countries. Scotland now produces more power than it needs. He said Scotland and the UK in general had been "a bit slow off the mark" in integrating new jobs.

Justine said there would be job opportunities for people like welders, heavy steel fabricators and turbine maintenance engineers, as well as people who enjoy being at sea.

"What we need people to think about is those trades we need and the people coming through."

Easter messages from the four churches of Opunake

My Easter preparation is in its early days but already two thoughts are shaping that preparation. In our Catholic tradition we are reading Mark's Gospel. The Gospel tells us that Jesus took Peter and James and John up a

high mountain and gave them the experience of the Transfiguration and then later took the same three disciples with him into the Garden of Gethsemani. God the Father and Jesus gave those disciples enlightenment

so they could deal with the darkness that Jesus' passion and death would bring, so that they would recognize Resurrection, so that they could help their sisters and brothers to recognize Resurrection. God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit gift us also, so that we will recognize the Resurrection, that will lift us out of the darkness that we experience, so that we can help our friends and neighbours to recognize Resurrection.

The second thought comes from a reflection by Valerie Shultz. She talks about her struggles with judging others and how two sentences broke over her like dawn, like Resurrection, how they enlightened her. "Grace is when God gives us something we do not deserve. Mercy is when God does not give us what we do deserve". We acknowledge the gifts of life and love, and all those who and all that which, sustains those gifts – Grace. We acknowledge that we often take those gifts for granted, that we lack gratitude, that we do not look at others and creation with the eye, the insight of Resurrection. We cease to hear Jesus saying, "Father forgive them, they do not know what they do" – Mercy.

May the blessing of Easter help you to recognise Resurrection as it enters your life and may the mercy you share bring Resurrection to life.

Catholic church

The greatest news of hope for humanity came that Easter Sunday morning over 2,000 years ago – the resurrection of Jesus was news that gives us all the assurance of hope for the future. This Good News is for us today, no matter what we are facing. Instead of feeling vulnerable, worried and downcast, let's look up and see the Resurrected

Saviour of the World. His promise 'He will never leave us or forsake us.'

My prayer is that this Easter will be a time when all can take time to watch the waves at the beach, watch the sun rise or set and reflect and embrace the hope of the resurrection of Jesus. This will not only see us through the year ahead, but every day of our lives.

Happy Easter

*Jennie McCullough
Mission Enabler
Opunake Cooperating Church*

We are companions on a journey, breaking bread and sharing life..... For me, journeying through Easter is a journey through the most momentous event of history. It is a verifiable fact that Jesus, The Christ, lived, was crucified, and then, amazingly, was seen alive by over six hundred people during the six weeks post resurrection, just as the biblical record tells us.

The tomb was found empty, and Jesus was seen fully alive. 'How' this happened is a mystery and remains the mystery of the Christian Faith. Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come in glory. We are companions on a journey, breaking bread and sharing life. Do join us on the Way, it may change your perspective.

*Rev. Ian Sargent:
St Barnabas*

On Good Friday Christians from Opunake will join Christians from around the world to remember Jesus dying for the sins of the world on the cross at Calvary.

Jesus Christ did not govern a country, lead an army, write a book or do many of the other things conventionally associated with greatness, but 2000 years later his influence on world history is greater than that of anyone else who has ever lived.

Before Jesus there was

a gaping chasm called Sin separating God and humanity. By dying on the cross he bridged that gap and made it possible to come into the presence of God and have the eternal life which Jesus promised. But the story did not end with Good Friday. On Resurrection Sunday he rose from the dead winning the victory over death, a victory which can be claimed by those who follow him.

As Paul the Apostle wrote to the Church at Rome. "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved."

Jesus ascended into Heaven with the promise that he would be back, not as a baby in a manger as he did the first time, but as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Like to find out more about this Jesus? Come to the Good Friday combined service or go to a church service near you on Sunday.

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www.opunakecoastalnews.co.nz
Editor: Bernice McKellar
Journalists/Sales: Rolland McKellar, Bryan Kirk
Advertising/Production: Vanessa Smith
Production/IT: Shane Butler
Delivery: Thursday, fortnightly
Registered as a newspaper.

Member of the Community Newspapers Association of New Zealand



The Opunake and Coastal News is distributed free to every home and business within the rural area bounded in the north by the New Plymouth city border, extending east to Egmont Village, and around to the edge of Stratford, south to the Hawera city border and inland to Kaponga and through Eltham.

Easter Walk 2024



The Walk of Witness for this year is on March 29.

On 29 March the four churches of Opunake (Catholic Church, Wave Church, St Barnabas Church and St Paul's Church) will stand together as one church

to remember and reflect on what Easter means to us all. Each church has sent in their reflections to our local news to be published - please read what each church has to say

and you will find that we all agree that we serve one God Jesus Christ who gave His life on this day so we can have life everlasting. Please come to our Easter Service which will be held at The Waves Church at 10am on Good Friday.

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SH3 Mt Messenger asphalt resurfacing to improve resilience

Crews will be resurfacing a stretch of State Highway 3 at Mt Messenger in Taranaki next month under a series of stop/go and full road closures.

Work will begin on Tuesday 2 April, and is expected to be complete by Friday 19 April. Most of the work will be completed at night to minimise disruption.

A full road closure will be in place from 7pm on Friday 5 April to 4am on Monday 8 April because of the narrow and winding nature of the stretch of road being resurfaced.

There is no viable detour during the closure period so the road will be reopened at the following times each day to ensure people have an opportunity to get to where



Expect road closures at Mt Messenger in April. they need to go:

Saturday 6 April / Sunday 7 April. Midnight – 1am . 5-7am. Midday – 1pm. 5-7pm. Monday 8 April. Midnight – 1am. 4am – 6pm.

Outside the full closure, the road will be open overnight (6pm-6am) stop/go from Tuesday 2 April – Thursday 4 April and between Monday 8 April – Friday 19 April.

The road will be open during the day with a temporary speed restriction in place.

The stop/go traffic management is expected to add delays of approximately 30 minutes to people's journeys.

NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi System Manager for Manawatū-Whanganui and Taranaki

Liesl Dawson says the decision to close the road wasn't made lightly but a full closure on this occasion is necessary.

"We know this is a key route connecting Taranaki to the north, and as much work as possible will be carried out under stop/go traffic management. Unfortunately, due to the winding, narrow nature of some parts of the state highway, and the width of the machinery to complete the work, we need to close the state highway to safely carry out the work in these sections."

"This closure will be disruptive for road users and we appreciate people's support during this time, as they plan their journeys," says Ms Dawson.

This work is highly weather dependent and NZTA advises all road users to regularly check the Journey Planner website for up to date, daily information.

Apology

The story which appeared on page 14 of the March 7 issue of the Opunake and Coastal News about the Cliff Top Garden was incorrectly attributed to Maureen Martin. The Opunake and Coastal News apologises for the error.

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Fast Track Bill a blatant act of vandalism for corporate kleptocracy

Climate Justice Taranaki describes the Fast Track Approvals Bill as a blatant act of vandalism for corporate kleptocracy, and an annihilation of environmental stewardship and democracy.

"The Bill gives Ministers unfettered power in deciding the fate of 'significant' infrastructure and mining proposals, opens the floodgate for corporate lobbyists while shutting out environmental groups, local communities, and the public. The Ministers for

Infrastructure, Regional Development and Transport hold the decision power, not the Minister for the Environment.

"The new government is hell-bent on backing the extractive industry by removing the already weak protection in several critical pieces of legislation – the RMA, the EEZ and Continental Shelf Act, the Crown Minerals Act, Conservation Act, and others. This is blatant vandalism for corporate kleptocracy. We need to stop

extracting and start restoring and healing our land, our oceans and our people, now," says Catherine Cheung of Climate Justice Taranaki.

"The new coalition government has no real plan on how to transition this country facing unprecedented climate, ecological and social crises. This is despite almost all primary industry experts recently rating climate change, extreme weather, and water quality as the three biggest challenges likely to affect agriculture.

This government is going to totally ruin this country.

"With this Bill, we expect more battles against gold, coal, oil and gas, and seabed miners, polluting and damaging highways, aquaculture, damaging irrigation, windfarms and land conversion in places they should not be, all for the sake of insidious economic growth.

"We have been fighting alongside local iwi, Kiwis Against Seabed Mining (KASM) and numerous others against seabed mining for over a decade. We won all the way to the Supreme Court, yet this win is now at risk of being overturned by the Fast Track Bill."

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ADELPHOS

Easter Haiku

Haiku One

His side pierced by sword
Soldiers drew lots for His clothes
Crucified to death

Haiku Two

Days of darkness gone
See the empty tomb...Jesus
Risen from the dead

Haiku Three

And maranatha
In the blinking of an eye
Jesus will return

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Goat track gets makeover

A pathway used by many as an alternative access to Opunake Beach is getting a makeover, the Taranaki Coastal Community Board were told at their March meeting at the Cape Egmont Boat Club.

South Taranaki District Council community development advisor Fran Levings said the pathway to Opunake Beach from the cenotaph, commonly known as the Goat Track would be closed to the public while new steps were boxed in and a new guardrail was installed.



There would also be culvert work done. The track is a popular access way to the beach, particularly during events like Americarna.

“We’re not reinventing it, we’re just upgrading it and making it fresh and new,” she said.

Work will also start on the Opunake Pump Track after a Blessing on April 2. Depending on weather, work

is expected to take a month.

A special Consultative Procedure (SCP) is being planned to get community feedback on putting in a green space on the corner of Napier and Tasman Street, an area which includes the Opunake LibraryPlus, the Peter Snell statue and the former Opunake TSB building.

A report will be presented to the South Taranaki District Council meeting on April 3, and if approved by Council, public consultation will begin in April.

Left: A familiar track to an iconic beach is closed to the public.

Community Board back Lions

An iconic Opunake Lions charity biking event has received a funding boost from the Taranaki Coastal Community Board.

The Opunake Lions Club were seeking \$1880 from the board’s discretionary fund to go towards a traffic management plan for the Mountain to Sea bike fundraiser and the board voted to grant the full amount being asked for.

The Mountain to the Sea bike ride had been going for “10 years or more,” Opunake Lions Club president Eric Arden told the board.

“We always had a traffic management plan, but it was pretty ad hoc.”

He said in previous years they had used the local fire brigade and police, but this year with the ride starting at the top of the Ihaia Road and taking in part of the Opunake Loop Trail something different was needed. They had increased the entry fee but didn’t want it to go too high as to discourage people from taking part. Last year there had been 198 entries but they had had as many as 300 people taking part.

“We’ve had an 80-year-old



The Mountain to Surf bike ride is a great community fundraiser and, fun.

do it on an e-bike and we’ve had seven-year-old children do it. Families really enjoy it,” said Eric.

Last year the ride had raised \$6500 for the Opunake Swimming Pool.

Among other groups to have benefited in previous years were the Surf Club and Fire Brigade.

Eric said the history of the bike ride could be traced back to the Mayoral Bike

Rides organised by Ross Dunlop when he was mayor of South Taranaki. After that “some bright spark” from the Opunake Lions Club had come up with the idea of having a Mountain

to the Sea bike Ride, and 10 landowners agreed to let bikers go across their land.

Community Board chair Andy Whitehead and board member Monica Willson declared conflicts of interest and did not take part in the vote.

Deputy chair Sharlee Mariekura said the Opunake Lions had given a lot back to the Opunake community so she was happy to support giving the full amount being asked for. She said she particularly liked the fact that they were using the Loop Trail which the Lions had played a big part in developing.

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Work gearing up on a safer Downtown Car Park for New Plymouth

Work is ramping up on getting New Plymouth’s earthquake-prone Downtown Car Park reopened by Christmas.

But the public won’t see much action from the outside as almost all the work to strengthen the 37-year-old building will be on the inside.

This includes new steel supports for the pre-cast concrete floors, vehicle barriers along the outside walls, a new lift and a new parking system.

The project, with a budget of about \$4.4 million, will restore about 270 leased and



NPDC Senior Infrastructure Project Manager Joel Richardson checks the proposed drilling points on a column in the Downtown Car Park.

scanning the concrete columns, so we know where to drill without damaging the reinforcing steel and we’ll start to attach the steel supports this month,” said NPDC Manager Infrastructure Projects Andrew Barron.

“The city is our district’s commercial, cultural and retail hub and the work means it will continue to support businesses by increasing available parking.”

The Downtown Car Park, on Powderham Street, is a seven-level building, with 14 split levels, built in 1987, and it has been closed since December 2020.

casual parking spaces to the city centre when it’s finished

late this year. “A contractor has been

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OBITUARY

David Nicholas 20 December 1949 – 4 March 2024

David was born in Middlemarch, Central Otago. He grew up in Timaru with his parents Ian and Dorothy and his two sisters, Helen and Barbara. Church, education and sport were highly valued in his family. From the age of 12, David was playing the church organ. He went on to develop an immense love of music. Together with his dad he played tennis and cricket, and his interest in hockey was fostered by his mum.

The family moved to Auckland in 1967 and David embarked on studies that would enhance his love of mathematics. He joined the university tramping club in his first year, then swapped to the university canoe club which provided opportunities for kayaking and tramping.

David and Mary met through his sister Helen, and they were married in January 1974, the year that David began his teaching career. By the third term of 1975 they wanted to do their "country service" and so began a round of applications to rural schools. David and Mary were both offered and accepted positions at Opunake High School. This proved a most fortuitous decision which would shape the next 37 years of their lives and in January 1976 the household goods were packed and moved to Opunake by NZ Rail.

Right from the beginning David felt a kinship with Opunake, where he and Mary would raise their three children. In his later years he would reminisce about life there fondly: making connections with local iwi, making connections through cricket and hockey, and making connections through the school community. As a teacher David strongly believed in the importance of being student-centred and has been described as a warm, gentle, knowledgeable and compassionate teacher. He was also actively involved with extra-curricular activities at school. He was an enthusiastic promoter and participant in outdoor education with many happy hours spent leading students on camps and tramps on Taranaki. He coached the cricket and hockey teams, and later on was involved with "Wheels", taking



David Nicholas and Mary celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary.

students skateboarding/ biking around Taranaki and beyond. He also had a lot of fun with music, including with the Opunake High School band, gigs with his friend Gerry Wilson at Sugar Juice as well as being part of the music team for the worldwide premiere of the locally produced musical, "Garbo of The Skys".

Living in Opunake expanded his understanding of the importance and enormous value of kids being grounded and secure in their cultural identity, including their language. David worked hard at gaining some fluency in te reo Māori, and he had a good understanding of the impact that colonisation had on the whānau of the school's rangatahi Māori. He was an active supporter of the establishment of Te Kōhanga Reo o Te Namu, and of the bi-lingual classes

at both Opunake Primary and Opunake High School, and a vehement advocate for including te reo Māori as a core junior subject at Opunake High School.

In 1991 he was appointed Deputy Principal at Opunake High School, and he held that role until his retirement at the end of 2012, when Mary was posted to Whangārei. At his funeral David was described as being a wonderful "Minister's Wife" with the parish being especially pleased to have also acquired a very competent musician. He found his place quickly in Whangārei. Whilst serving on the boards of One Double Five Whare Awhina, Whakaora Kai, Northland Urban Rural Mission (NURM) and the Kamo Resthome and Retirement Village,

he was able to uphold his dedicated commitment to social justice. His integrity and contribution to these

community groups will be missed. His death leaves a significant hole in the life of his whānau. Moe mai rā e te rangatira. Haere, haere, haere ki te pō, ki te rangimārie. Ka nunui te aroha ki a koe, Rawiri.

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Bowlers help Manaia club celebrate 125 years



Manaia Bowling Club life members. From left Willie Fleming, Jim Roberts, Hector Bell, Ernie Fevre, Bill Johnston.

While many bowling clubs have folded or are on the point of folding the Manaia Bowling Club has kept on going.

The club which was founded in 1899 celebrated its 125th jubilee with a Men's fours tournament on Taranaki Anniversary Weekend. There will be a Ladies Jubilee Tournament in April.

There were 32 teams taking part in the Anniversary Weekend tournament. These represented every club in Taranaki as well as a team from Whanganui and one made up of visitors from

Auckland. Each team played seven games over two days.

Six years ago the club was down to 18 playing members. They now have 46.

"It's going really well and everyone's gelling and having a great time," Ross Clark who has been club president since 2018 said on the Saturday.

"As President I'm really happy with the way the club's ben going."

In 2019 the club was named Taranaki Club of the Year and this year they won the Syme Shield.

The club has been busy preparing for the jubilee, painting the inside and outside of the building and adding a new roof and new windows with carpet still to come.

There were five life members at the tournament. One of these was Hector Bell

who joined the club 36 years ago.

"I've held president and treasurer but now I'm just an old feller," he says. "I was here for the 100th jubilee but I probably won't see the next one. For a small club

it's great to do 125 years and still be progressing quite well as some of the other clubs have been closing down. We're pretty lucky we've probably got one of the best greens in Taranaki which has been well looked



John Niwa looking at a photo of his father's 1983-4 bowls team.



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Bowlers help Maniaia club celebrate 125 years

after by our greenkeeper Willie Fleming.”

Willie Fleming is also a life member and says getting the grounds ready for the jubilee has been the main focus for the year. He says he joined the club in 1999.

“I might have played in the centenary tournament. I was like a non-bowler then. I didn’t think I played in it but the jubilee book says I did.”

He says having twilight bowls has been a big driver for club membership as people have come along and developed a taste for the game.

In recent years the town of Maniaia has struggled with a lack of venues as the War Memorial Hall and sports complex have both been closed for failing to meet



From left. John Niwa, Kevin Bird, Graeme Young.



Thirty-two games of bowls were played in two days.

earthquake standards. Other groups have used the bowling club rooms and a recently installed sign includes the logo of the Maniaia Returned and Services Association which had previously based at the War Memorial Hall.

The Bowling Club grounds also include a museum with photos and memorabilia from not just the bowling club but other Maniaia sporting clubs as well.

John Niwa who now lives in Waitara was looking through the photos and catching up with old friends Kevin Bird and Graeme Young.

“I used to live down here and that’s my old man here,” he said holding a photo from the 1983-4 season. “My Mum played here as well

and she’s on the championship board. I went to school around here and Pihama and Oeo. I was a teacher and ended up in Waitara and retired here.”

Jacob, his father and Emma, his mother are both

buried in Maniaia.

“This is a bit like a homecoming for me,” he says. “I played for Waimate while I was here. All the ones I used to play with play bowls now and they’re still as competitive as ever.”



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On this month in history - Michael Joseph Savage dies

On March 27, 1940 the Labour Prime Minister Michael Joseph Savage died. He had been PM since 1935.

He was born in Victoria, Australia in 1872 and left school at just 14. He had various jobs including shop assistant, farmhand and goldminer.

He arrived in New Zealand in 1907 and worked in a flax mill and as a cellarman.

After two unsuccessful attempts to enter Parliament he won the Auckland West seat, for Labour, in 1919. He was elected deputy leader in 1923 and leader in 1933 upon the death of Harry Hol-

land.

His Government enacted many legislative measures to help NZ overcome the Depression, including greatly reducing unemployment.

One of his MPs John A Lee carried out a campaign against him, partly fuelled by being overlooked for

Cabinet post and was duly expelled from the Labour Party.

Mr Savage was greatly admired and his portrait graced the walls of many voters.



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Local voice is important

March 8th was a significant date for the Coalition Government. The 49 actions designated to be done in the first hundred day have been completed. It has been like a house renovation, first the deconstruction needed to take place before the rebuild can be undertaken.

You can now look forward to Government and the Ministers beginning to put in place more of the policy promises from the election. These will be strategically worked through in quarterly blocks. While there is a lot to be done, Ministers will work consistently to ensure progress is made.

One thing that I am keen to portray is that members of the public are best to come to MPs early on in processes that bring them concern. David, Carl and I often get



BARBARA KURIGER MP
TARANAKI-KING COUNTRY

questions, once decisions are made. In a range of areas such as Resource Management, Overseas Investment, Transport, installing cell towers etc legislation and regulation stipulate how proposals will be undertaken. There are processes for all these areas and others, which give the public an opportunity to submit. Once the process is

complete, there is not a lot that can be done.

Central Government often sets out rules which local and regional councils are bound to follow. Many queries that come to us are related to actions of councils. While the two are linked, there are ways to direct questions

which we can help with.

Local voice is important. We can help facilitate conversations between all parties, but we are unable to change the rules or processes which are underway. This often frustrates people, thinking that we can simply change

or stop activities when that is not the case.

We are always interested in policy ideas too because most of the good ideas come from discussion with people we talk to in our electorates. I would like to acknowledge Glen Bennett's return to Parliament resulting from

the resignation of Grant Robertson. Many of you will have met Glen during his three years in the previous term of Parliament. While we sit on different sides of the House, people are often surprised that we do collaboratively work in the interests of Taranaki.

Jo Luxton – 100 day plan



JO LUXTON
LIST MP
NZ LABOUR PARTY

When Labour came into government, our 100 day plan was ambitious. It focused on taking New Zealand forward with a plan to help Kiwis get ahead and tackle the big challenges facing our country. The National Government has taken a different approach. It's spent the last 100 days stopping, reversing, and cutting. Scrapping stuff for the sake of it, without putting up any solutions of their own.

In our first 100 days, we put more money in people's pockets with the Families Package and a boost to the minimum wage. In the first year alone, more than 300,000 families were better off by \$55 each week and over 160,000 workers, including here in Canterbury, benefited from a wage increase.

While we got serious about

tackling child poverty so kids could have a better start in life, National has made it harder for households to get by. Cutting the minimum wage in real terms, putting thousands more kids in poverty with benefit changes and introducing extra costs for Kiwis.

In the middle of a cost-of-living crisis, National hasn't stepped up to support people in Canterbury like they promised they would

before the election. Instead of helping families with costs like early childhood education or public transport fares, we've seen them prioritise tax cuts for mega landlords and introduce extra costs.

National said they weren't going to introduce any new taxes or increase fuel taxes – and yet they're doing both. They promised frontline services wouldn't be cut as they search for money for tax cuts, but they've gone too far.

More than 100 days in, National haven't delivered cost of living relief. Instead, they've made questionable choices, like reversing the country's smokefree laws – a win for the tobacco lobby at the expense of lives and billions in healthcare costs.

It's clear that their priorities are wrong. But with a leader that doesn't see the problem

with taking a \$52,000 allowance, which equates to \$1,000 a week, while telling others to make cuts and save money – it's clear these decisions are coming from the top.

As a country, we need to keep tackling the big issues, like climate change, housing, and infrastructure, but National's plan so far has been to kick the can down the road. They've scrapped successful climate programmes, reversed work to upgrade water infrastructure and the Resource Management Act, and won't commit to continue building social housing.

The first 100 days are supposed to show vision for New Zealand. Instead of 'back on track', it feels like we're stuck in reverse.

Mountain bike champion looks to go pro

Okato readers of this paper can now say they have a national mountain bike champion delivering the paper to them.

Seppy Binsbergen who delivers the Opunake and Coastal News in Okato finished first in the Under-17 Downhill national championships held at Coronet Peak. There was a field of around 200 competitors at the

championships, with 40 in his age group, of which he was one of four from Taranaki.

Were the trails there different to what he is used to?

"It's a lot rockier down there. The trails are really fast and steep," he says.

The good news did not end there, as he heard that he had finished first in the Under-17 Men at the Mountain Bike NZ DH Series which is

run over four events at Whangamata, Rotorua, Christchurch and Cardrona. The Year 12 New Plymouth Boys High School student from Okato took up mountain biking less than four years ago.

"It kind of started with all my mates getting together riding our bikes and helping each other to get over obstacles, and we were all egging each other on," says Seppy. "Then I started joining training in New Plymouth and we would meet once or twice a week." The bug seems to have well and truly bitten him and he is aiming to race professionally. Later this year Seppy plans to race in Europe where he will compete in four European Downhill Cup events and the International

Rookies' Downhill World Championships.

"People come from all over the world to go racing," says Seppy.

He will be based in Switzerland where he has family and take part in events in Switzerland, Slovenia, Austria and Italy. He says the trails are longer than they are here as the mountains are bigger.

"It's really steep and the terrain's a lot different."

Mountain biking can be an expensive sport so Seppy has set up a Give a Little page to help finance him. Mountain biking may not be so well known at the moment but interest has been growing, particularly during Covid and lockdown.

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Seppy Binsbergen is ready to take on the world.

STDC Draft Plan focuses on looking after District's infrastructure amid skyrocketing costs

Increased spending on roads and wastewater infrastructure, and a commitment to getting on with town centre upgrades in the District's smaller communities were some of the big-ticket items in the South Taranaki District Council's draft 10-year plan, which was adopted for public consultation at today's (Monday 18 March) Council meeting.

South Taranaki Mayor Phil Nixon says the District is on an upward trajectory and the Council's draft Long Term Plan is about maintaining that momentum while also doing what's needed to look after the District's assets.

"In previous feedback, our residents have told us that they want to see better roads, our towns amenities and gardens looking good and an improved dog control service. In response, over the next three years, we're proposing to increase our roading expenditure, have committed to continuing town centre upgrades in Hāwera, Manaia, Eltham, Ōpunakē, Pātea and Waverley, and have budgeted to increase resources in the animal control team," he says.

"The big challenge for us is how we afford to do this at a

time when local government is facing unprecedented cost increases.

Like households and businesses across the country, Council is facing increased costs for the things we buy. Local government inflation has risen by around 20% over the last two years and continues to rise. Fuel, bitumen, electricity, construction, and insurance costs have all increased considerably - in some cases contractors' costs have increased up to 60%. Higher interest rates have increased the cost of borrowing and paying back debt and compliance costs driven by government requirements have meant we need to spend a lot more on our infrastructure.

This means we need to pay more just to keep doing what we are already doing, without adding anything else," says Mayor Nixon.

Mayor Nixon says the Council worked tirelessly to find savings across all activities to keep the rates increase as low as possible in the proposed plan, including reducing budgets for things like the Hāwera Town revitalisation project, tourism, and events, delaying some non-urgent capital projects works, increasing borrowing

and the amount Council's Long Term Investment Fund subsidises rates each year by an additional \$350k.

Despite this, the average total rate increase for the 2024/25 Year is 11.29% with an average rate increase over the next ten years of 5.47%.

"We know the rate increase will be really hard for a lot of ratepayers. It's higher than what we want and higher than we've had over the previous ten years, but it reflects what it costs to simply maintain existing services while ensuring our critical infrastructure meets our community's needs and Government requirements," says Mayor Nixon.

"If we don't maintain our assets well, they will cost us more in the long term if we have to replace them sooner than expected or all at once. You don't have to look hard to see places around the country where years of underinvestment by Councils has led to unacceptable infrastructure failures and we don't want South Taranaki to be in that situation," he says.

The skyrocketing costs are affecting Councils right across the country.

According to Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) of 48 Councils surveyed almost 80% are

proposing rate increases above 12%, with the average being a 15.3% increase.

"Councils are acutely aware they need to balance the need for investment with affordable increases, but the pressure has reached a tipping point and I think we need to have a national conversation about local government funding - including the value of the services councils provide to communities."

"Given the major cost increases we are facing, we believe our proposed Long-Term Plan will allow us to do what we are required to do and provide the services and facilities our communities expect, but now we want to know what our residents

think."

Mayor Nixon says public consultation on the draft Long-Term Plan opens on Thursday 21 March and runs until 6 May. A summary of

the Council's proposal will be on the Council's website or LibraryPlus centres from that time.

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Festival of Lights boosts local economy



Photo credit: Charlotte Curd

Spirograph, designed by Onga Artful Light Company from Thailand, was among 14 light installations featured in the 2023/2024 TSB Festival of Lights. Photo Charlotte Curd.

This summer's Festival of Lights delivered by the New Plymouth District Council (NPDC) kept local tills ringing – pumping \$9.2m million into the Taranaki economy and a record 175,000 visits over the five-week lights and

entertainment spectacular. An independent report on the 2023/2024 festival cemented the love and importance of the event, highlighting increased visits and spend in the region – up from \$8m GDP and 140,000 visitors the year before

(2022/2023). The report from Business and Economic Research Ltd (BERL) highlighted that of those who visited the festival 39 per cent of total festival visits were by people from outside Taranaki and of these, 69 per cent said

the festival was their main reason from coming here. New Plymouth District Mayor Neil Holdom says he is not surprised by the continued success of the festival, which is much loved by locals as well as visitors to NPDC's award-winning Pukekura Park.

“It just keeps getting better every year with mesmerising new light installations and entertainment, attracting both locals and people from all over Aotearoa, helping to create amazing experiences for our people and visitors in our Sustainable Lifestyle Capital.”

NPDC Events Lead Lisa Ekdahl says organising the festival is a massive undertaking which starts almost as soon as the previous one packs out, so it is satisfying to see all that work pay off. “We started preparing for this festival February and are always looking at how can we make it better, so to hear people loved it, visited several times and that our local economy has benefitted makes all those hours of effort worth it.”

Meanwhile preparation is already underway for the 2024 TSB Festival of Lights Winter Pop-Up event which takes place on Matariki weekend - Thursday 27 June to Sunday 30 June. Event details will be announced soon.

The 2023/2024 TSB Festival of Lights ran from 16 December 2023 to 21 January 2024.

This year's festival featured 14 light installations, outdoor movie screenings and 85 events.

Up to 140,000 people have visited the Festival of Lights in New Plymouth's Pukekura Park in recent years. The 2023/2024 season seeing 175,000 people was a 20 per cent increase.

The 2023/2024 festival season post analysis study by Business and Economic Research Ltd (BERL) showed that the festival generated \$17.9 total expenditure, \$9.2m GDP and 39 per cent of total visits from people from outside Taranaki.

In 2022 the TSB Festival of Lights won two New Zealand Event Association Awards from their last season, including Best Government Event 2023 and New Zealand's Favourite Event 2021 (as voted by the public).

Up to 7,000 people attend the festival's free New Year's Eve event.

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It's time to have your say on NPDC's 10-year Plan

What's Brooklands Zoo worth to you? It's been a family favourite for generations of Taranaki residents, but can we afford \$9million to keep it for our tamariki?

Upgrading some of the animal enclosures to meet new government standards is one the big questions included in the Council's 10-Year Plan for 2024-2034, currently open for feedback.

NPDC manages around \$3.4 billion worth of assets and delivers services to residents from drinking water for your coffee and fixing local roads

to attracting world class entertainment to our venues such as the Bowl.

In these tough financial times, among our big challenges is how to stay on course towards our vision of a Sustainable Lifestyle Capital and keep rates affordable.

The proposals in the plan focus on three big calls:

Future-proofing our district

Should we double our investment in local roads, bridges and footpaths from \$155m to \$315m to look after what we've got? Given more frequent wild weather, should we boost our Disaster Recovery Reserve by \$500,000 each year?

Sustainability

Should we invest \$100,000 a year over three years to trial a central city bus loop trial with our partners? Should we put aside another \$300k for sustainability programmes?

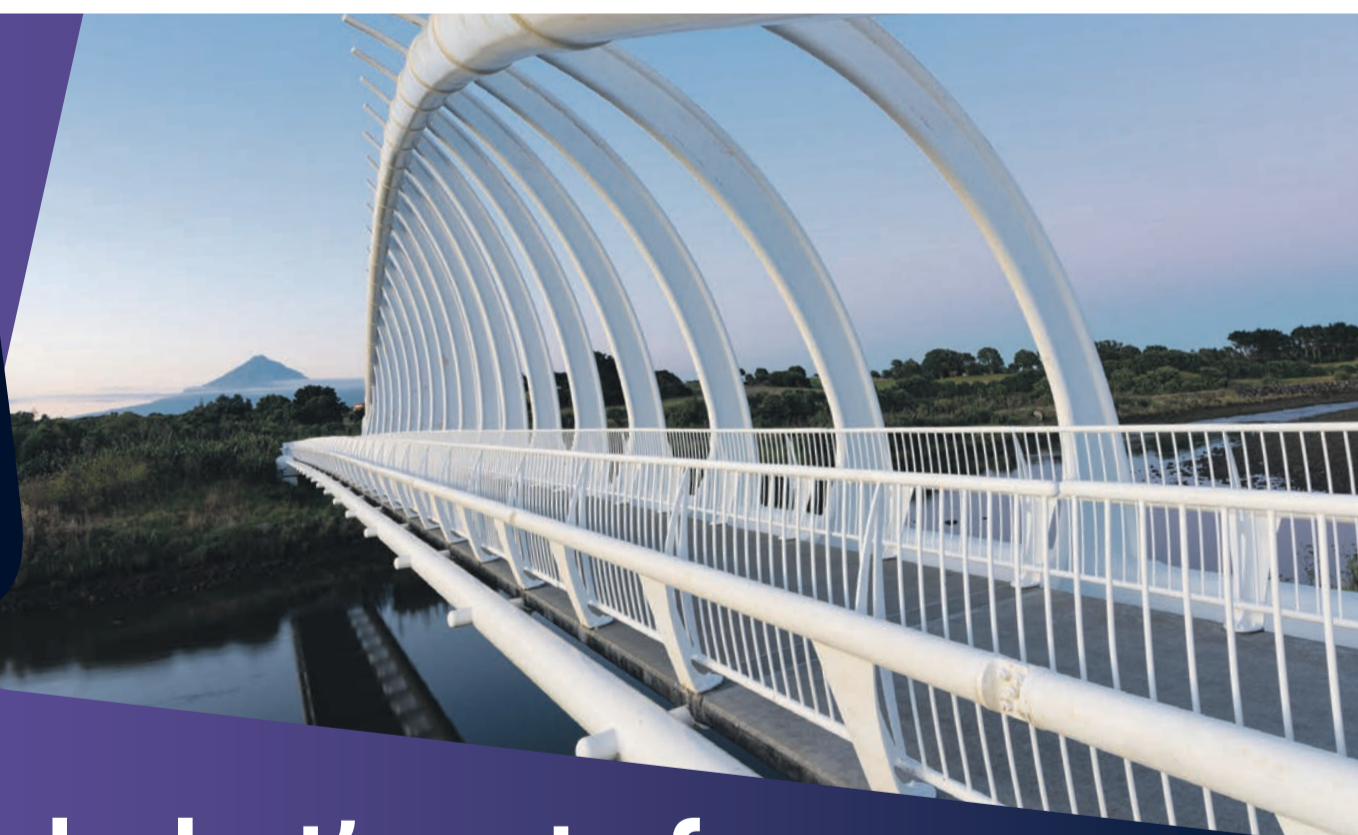
Paying it Forward

Is \$9m to upgrade our free Brooklands Zoo to meet central government standards worth it? Is \$16m to upgrade the ageing Bellringer Pavilion in Pukekura Park the way to go to ensure we get to see world class cricket on our doorstep?

Should we invest \$35m to build a new indoor stadium with at least four courts, as part of a lower cost Tūparikino Active Community hub project?

Should we explore other ways to deliver water, traffic management and housing for the elderly by organisations entities at arm's length of Council?

To find out more and to have your say go to npdc.govt.nz/10-year-plan. Everyone who completes the survey goes into the draw to win one of 10, \$100 grocery vouchers. Feedback closes 5pm Friday 19 April.



What's in and what's out of our draft \$4b work programme?

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Opunake Basketball volunteers honoured



Life members awarded at the Opunake Basketball Association Jubilee dinner. left to right Bryan Roach, John Kensington, Adrienne Kensington, Aarun Langton, Rebecca Langton and Haydn Langton.

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fruit - Bambina, Kakapo, Ponamu, Triumph or Unique
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Want to grow feijoas as a hedge? - Karamea, Apollo, Triumph

Planting
Feijoas are frost hardy. They prefer full sunlight and protection from strong

winds and tolerate most soils from heavy clay through to sandy soil. When planting dig a hole double the depth and width of the container the plant came in, then fill the hole with a mixture of your existing garden soil and a good quality garden mix. Add blood and bone to stimulate growth. A layer of Mulch around the base will

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Talking Taranaki

Your Place, Your say

Taranaki Regional Council wants the public's views on six key focus areas as we look at how to meet the challenges the region faces over the next decade.

Feedback is now open on our draft 2024/2034 Long-Term Plan (LTP) with the views set to shape our strategic direction and how we fund services.

Decisions have to be made on six areas which are crucial to many of the work programmes we deliver including how we continue to care for freshwater, protect biodiversity, control predators, adapt to climate change and manage resources.

Chair Charlotte Littlewood says the LTP will enable the Council to respond to the gathering pace of regulatory reform and funding changes while ensuring work continues on improving lifestyles, supporting livelihoods and taking the region forward.

"We want as many people as possible to get involved with our community conversation and share their views on the big decisions we have to make," says Mrs Littlewood. "The six key focus areas cover many parts of our core work. Public feedback will help determine what we prioritise and where the funding goes to ensure we keep delivering services essential to the wellbeing and future of our communities."



We want your feedback on six issues:



Improving resource management



Delivering on freshwater



Adapting to and mitigating climate change



Our approach to possum control



The future of Towards Predator-Free Taranaki



Protecting indigenous biodiversity

For more information about the options and to have your say:

- ➔ Go to www.trc.govt.nz/longtermplan
- ➔ Complete the survey by 12 April 2024
- ➔ Consultation documents which contain the survey are also available at our offices at 47 Cloten Rd, Stratford, 4332

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Principals' Address

A time of remembrance for a few of us old timers this week with the loss of a legend. David Nicholas passed this week. Those of us who knew him have reflected on his genius, eccentricity, love of music, and equity for all in education, mind bending cricket score recollections and passion for Te Reo and the community. He will always have a place in our hearts here at Opunakē High School, and we send our aroha and condolences to Mary and whanau.

David Nicholas first arrived at OHS in February 1976 through 1980. His family then went to Rarotonga for two years, returning to OHS in 1983 through to 2013. He was appointed to Deputy Principal in 1991.

We have had an incredibly energetic start to the year, with our year 10s surviving in the outdoors, and forging life long friendships and memories during the mana tane and wahine camps. Our prefects have been problem solving, and developing their leadership skills as well as swinging from high ropes at their leadership camp. Meanwhile our ākongā schoolwide have been swimming, running, jumping and throwing at both athletics and swim sports day. It is wonderful to see so many tamariki involved in exercise, as the camaraderie, and positive hauora that results is undeniably worthwhile.

Swim sport champions are:

Junior Girls - Henri Carr

Junior Boys - Victor Gibson

Intermediate Girls - Alicia Hurly

Intermediate Boys - Charlie Field

Senior Girls - Eden Lark

Senior Boys - Harry Rankin

The OHS surf team is also starting to make waves (excuse the pun) in the region with Cade Carr winning the TSSSA surf comp, and Kymani Parata, and Sahan Larsen hot on his heels.

We continue to develop our food forest with the addition of \$6000 worth of compost bins (thanks to Curious Minds) put together by Whaea Esther and her Education For Sustainability team. This is the beginning of realising our aim to make OHS a truly sustainable school.

And finally you may have seen flags flying outside the kura. We will be celebrating the diversity and whakapapa of all our ākongā and kaiako by raising the flag of the countries which they hail from. During Manaakitanga time we will also be learning about these countries, as in order to know where we are going, we need always to know where we are from.

And I say it again, with my hand on my heart, thank you so much for the support you all continue to give our wee kura on the coast. This community runs on kindness, care and aroha, that is why it is the best place to live in the world!!!

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Andrea Hooper Carr
 Principal



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Taranaki Anniversary Weekend, March 2025

Health coalition launches petition to protect school lunches

Health Coalition Aotearoa (HCA) has launched a petition calling on the Government to protect free school lunches - Ka Ora, Ka Ako, and not make cuts to the programme.

The programme offers 230,000 students in about 1,000 of the least advantaged schools' healthy lunches - ensuring they receive at least one nutritious meal each day.

HCA say that it ensures that kids have the fuel they need to grow and learn.

Without this vital service, kids will go hungry, and their education will suffer.

Associate Education Minister and ACT leader David Seymour is reviewing the free school lunches programme ahead of Budget 2024 in May and has stated he wants to cut funding for the programme by up to 50 per cent.

In the context of increasing child poverty, food insecurity and poor nutrition this proposal is incomprehensible and morally wrong, say HCA.

Cuts to the programme would disproportionately affect Māori ākonga (students)- who have the highest rates of food insecurity with one in three affected, compared to one in five of all children, according to the latest NZ Health Survey data released last year.

"Because more than half of the students receiving lunches are Māori these cuts would hit them the hardest - so it's yet another Government action that will cause greater harm to Māori, which is gutting," HCA co-chair Professor Lisa Te Morenga said.

The same survey showed just 5 per cent of children aged 0-14 years get the recommended amount of fruit and vegetables per day.

It is a stated priority of the Government to support families struggling to afford the grocery basics with food price hikes of 50 per cent in the last year..

"Cutting the programme by enforced targeting to those children who can somehow prove they are poor would doom it to failure - they

would simply go without rather than be subjected to that kind of stigma," HCA co-chair Professor Boyd Swinburn said.

Recently published analysis of the PISA (Program for International Student Achievement)

results and food security data shows that students who miss meals due to lack of money are two to four years behind their peers who never miss meals in educational achievement.

Prime Minister Christopher

Luxon has said his Government is focused on enhancing school achievement. Cutting school lunches would reduce school achievement.

Parents of children at schools with free lunches told University of Auckland

researchers the lunches helped reduce their grocery bill, increased financial security and helped change their child's food choices - towards healthier options.

A literature review shows widespread positive impacts

of school lunch programmes on students, families, schools and communities. These included improved health and educational achievement, local employment, and increased student engagement with the school.

Opunake Basketball Jubilee



Opunake High School Senior Boys Squads played at the Opunake Basketball Jubilee celebrations held on Taranaki Anniversary weekend with Aaron Langton and Leroy James.

Photos- Simone Cook

Over the weekend of 9th and 10th March, Opunake Indoor Basketball Association celebrated their 50th Jubilee. Young and old came to play games throughout the weekend.

A well supported weekend with 10 games played over

both days gave everyone a lot of variety of basketball to watch of our very own local talent. Saturday afternoon a 3 point shootout and dunk competition was held, with Bonlord Almazan winning the 3 point comp.

Sunday saw 3 generations play in the men's master game. Later in the day we were also entertained by high level basketball from Taranaki Thunder and Taranaki Airs playing Opunake invitational

teams. The weekend was finished off with a dinner, catered by Stadium

4616, where we celebrated some exceptional people that have given a lot to Opunake basketball over the years by making them life

members. Bryan Roach, Aaron Langton, Bex and Hayden Langton, John and Adrienne Kensington. Thank you to everyone who made this weekend a success.



Daniel Sefton with 3 point shootout competitors.



Jaree Summerfield and Ben Carlile-Smith jumping to start the mens game.

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An active few weeks for Mangatoki Women's Institute

On February 7, our meeting was held at Denise and Greg Carter's house on Hunter Road, a lunchtime garden party, when 13 members and one visitor attended. We were welcomed by President Robyn Roberts and soon after enjoyed a lovely lunch, provided by Andersons of Hawera with the sweet treats provided by the committee, all very enjoyable.

After lunch we held our business meeting. The minutes for the past few months were read as we hadn't been "at home" for these meetings. A Christmas card was received from Maree Kemp and a "Thank You" letter from Susan Johnson and family. Helen Whyte had visited the family after Susan had lost her mother. The sick visiting



Mangatoki CPR and AED Refresher.

work and gifts were given to them in appreciation.

Points: 1st. Helen Whyte 44 points, 2nd Robyn Roberts 43 points, 3rd Denise Carter 41 points. A gift of a gerbera in a pot was given to Bev Marx and Lucy Moger for their contribution to the WI and also to Denise and Greg Carter for hosting the WI for the day. After the meeting members wandered around their lovely garden and some played lawn games and one or two even tried some hula hooping! In all, an enjoyable day once again.

On March 6th 2024, our meeting was held at the Mangatoki Hall, starting at 11am. 11 members and 4 husbands, one adult son, 3 ladies of the district and one child attended. A member of St. John's and a member of Central Taranaki Safe Community Trust came and gave us an instructive talk and demonstration of CPR and of the use of an AED on dummies they brought with them. The AED gave instructions for the operator doing CPR and several members and visitors to the meeting that "had a go" said they found it reasonably easy. For some it was a refresher course. For those not able to operate the AED or do CPR, they can always use a phone to call an ambulance and follow phone instructions until someone arrives. There are AED at Eltham and at the Kaponga and Mangatoki Halls having been installed at around \$3000. They are maintained regularly and renewed around every 4 years.

There was no business meeting, so after the demonstrations, a lovely BBQ lunch prepared on the premises by the committee members was enjoyed. There were sweet treats, tea, coffee and cold drinks available after lunch, all made by the committee members. The demonstrators were thanked before they left. The day was most informative, all who attended leaving with more knowledge of CPR and the use of an AED.

They were both great reports. Treasurer Cathy White then handed out the yearly financial statement and read the financial report. It was decided that the present signatories be kept and that an application be applied to the Toi Foundation for a grant. The elected officers were:

President: Olwyn Duthie
Secretary: Denise Carter
Treasurer: Cathy White
Vice President: Robyn Roberts and Karen Joblin
Committee: Olwyn Duthie, Denise Carter, Cathy White, Robyn Roberts, Judy Barr, and Helen Whyte.

Competitions: Bev Marx
Reporter: Lucy Moger
Link: Cathy White
Hall Committee: Helen Whyte and Jos Hicks

Olwyn thanked Robyn, Denise and Cathy for their

*Lucy Moger
Mangatoki WI Reporter*

was completed and the Mangatoki Church at Pioneer Village had been cleaned it was noted. Eight apologies were next received. The financial statement were then read by Treasurer Cathy White, reimbursements for gifts and prizes were made, all donations approved and paid, and the raffle tickets upped from 50c to \$2 or 3 tickets for \$5 all approved and seconded. A borer bomb is to be put in the church. It was noted that Liz Perks is now in Trinity, Hawera and Jos Hicks is on crutches. Some members had visited Liz.

Everyone wore a hat, so as it was a hot and sunny day, they came in handy.

Our next meeting is yet to be arranged and our bulbs for the competition in the spring will be mixed freesias. It was noted that Olwyn and Denise are to attend Founder's Day at Manaia. The raffles were won by Kathi Cameron and Robyn Roberts. Our visitor to the meeting as a new member was proposed by Robyn and seconded by Olwyn.

Following our normal meeting, we held our AGM for 2024-25. Apologies and members attending as per previous meeting were noted. President Robyn Roberts took the chair and opened the meeting. Secretary Denise Carter read the minutes of the last AGM and was seconded by Olwyn Duthie. President Robyn read her report for 2023-24 then Secretary Denise read her report for the past year.

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Opunake Surf Lifesaving Club



Caleb Lawn placed sixth in the Open Men's beach sprint.

Over the past week, the Opunake Surf Lifesaving Team took part at the TSB Surf Lifesaving Nationals held in Mount Maunganui from the 14th-17th March. The team consisted of 6 athletes Bella Pivac, Caleb Lawn, Caro Olliver, Jerram Sinclair, Jordan Grylls, and Riley Grylls. The team had been training hard over the past 6 months leading up to this major event.

They saw early success on thursday in the Open Female Beach Relay (Bella Pivac, Riley Grylls, Caro Olliver, Jordan Grylls), dominating the field by 15 metres taking away a much

deserved gold medal. Friday proved to be just as successful, with five athletes lined up in their respectful age groups in the beach sprint. Jordan Grylls walked away with a narrow second in the Open Women's beach sprint, Riley Grylls with a third in the U19 Women's beach sprint, Bella Pivac fifth in the Open Women's beach sprint, Caleb Lawn sixth in the Open Men's beach sprint, and Jerram Sinclair eighth in the U19 Men's beach sprint. Saturday brought more action to the table in the Beach Flag Arena, where the hard work began to show.

Jerram Sinclair finished both third in the U19 Men's and eighth in the Open Men's. Caro Olliver finished third in the U19 Female with team mate Riley Grylls coming out on top with a national title. Bella Pivac came a close Fifth in the Open Female yet again, and Jordan Grylls finished in Third. To round out the day Caleb Lawn earned himself a very close third in the Open Men's arena, just pipped at the flag. Overall, it was a very successful weekend for a small town club competing against the best athletes across the country. The

results would not have been able to come without the countless hours put in by

coach Trent Olliver who gives up a lot of his time to coach these athletes and see

them perform at such a high level, he truly is 'In It For Life



Bella Pivac (Green stripes on cap) placed fifth in the Open Women's beach sprint.

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Kiwi dairy farmers help increase native wildlife numbers

Dairy farmers around New Zealand are grabbing spades and heading onto their farms and into their communities to plant native trees and plants.

Goals include creating great habitat for birds and other wildlife to thrive. Farmers report seeing more native birds on their properties including tūī, kererū and kārearea (New Zealand falcon). In some cases, they're seeing bird types they've never seen

before.

Northland dairy farmers Andrew and Vicky Booth have been planting on the family farm for over seven years, with more than 4000 native trees and plants going into the ground every year.

While the farm has always had native bush, and the Booths have always seen kererū, tūī and other native birds, they're providing even more shelter and security for wildlife.

"Over the past three



Andrew and Vicky Booth.

years, we've been seeing more native birds including banded rail and kākā. It's great to hear kākā squawking at each other," Andrew says.

Andrew says planting has many benefits. Trees and plants alongside waterways create shade for fish, eels and insects – which helps

them flourish. This includes enhancing native species such as Kiwi favourite whitebait and kanakana (fish that look like eels). Trees also provide shade for cows.

He says farmers throughout the country are involved in a wide range of environmental initiatives in

their communities. "They're helping create nurseries to grow native tree and plants, and working with schools to help children learn about nature."

Andrew and his wife Vicky host school groups on their farm so students can connect with nature. The children help plant trees and learn about the difference native bush can make for the environment.

"It's great for students to come back to the farm and see over time the positive change they have contributed to."

Andrew says farmers nationwide are helping develop community facilities so people can get out in nature, including walkways near or on their farms. They're working with others to create ecological corridors to support native wildlife including birds and bats.

"Some farms are close to urban areas and it's great to see town and country people working together. We're in Titoki, close to Whangarei, and love that urban/rural connection."

Andrew is one of 400 environmentally focused farmers in the Dairy Environment Leaders (DEL) network, which was created

by farmers, DairyNZ and the NZ Farm Environment Trust in 2007. The network aims to empower leadership and create opportunities to support and share on-farm actions to reduce environmental footprint.

Andrew says it's important New Zealand gets the balance right between ensuring farm businesses can remain viable to continue contributing to local economies, while meeting increasing community and consumer expectations around sustainability.

The Booths have created a wetland covering 1.5 hectares, with 5500 trees planted around it.

"We've reduced our herd by 30 milking cows, from 430 cows to 400, and we're breeding even better cows so we can reduce our herd size even further."

Andrew and Vicky have two children – Tamsyn (10) and Hannah (9). He says they help drive his commitment to a sustainable future.

"We want farming to have as little impact on the environment as possible so we can continue to farm for generations to come, providing vital food and supporting local economies," says Andrew.

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Government partnership to tackle \$332m facial eczema problem

The Government is helping farmers eradicate the significant impact of facial eczema (FE) in pastoral animals, Agriculture Minister Todd McClay announced.

"A \$20 million partnership jointly funded by Beef + Lamb NZ, the Government, and the primary sector will save farmers an estimated NZD\$332 million per year, and aims to reduce their reliance on zinc dosing as a



Todd McClay.

preventative measure," Mr McClay says.

"The Coalition Government backs the New Zealand pastoral sector and is committed to ensuring they remain world best. This project is about making sure the sector is productive, efficient, and successful.

"The program will support multiple approaches, building on research, and bringing together many of the country's top researchers."

"FE can reduce growth rates, fertility and production

in livestock while significantly impacting animal health.

At present there is no cure for FE, with limited management tools available.

"Prevention solutions such as early detection, mitigation and management options are key to the programme. Decision support tools will also be collaboratively developed with farmers and rural professionals.

"These solutions will be complemented by the FE breeding value for dairy cows recently announced by the Livestock Improvement Corporation."

"This Programme will provide farmers with tools so they can get on with the job, providing the safe and high quality food that New Zealand is known for."

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DWN welcomes new Associate Trustee

Dairy Women's Network (DWN) has appointed Sarah Hopkins as a new Associate Trustee.

Sarah, originally from Manawatu, is now a Chartered Accountant with a Certificate in Public Practice, based in Invercargill.

Lucy Johnson DWN Trust Board HR Committee, says "Sarah was a natural fit for the Associate Trustee role, with her strong regional networks and



Sarah Hopkins. Photo supplied by DWN.

customer focus. She also brings leadership and team mentoring capabilities to our team.

"Sarah has a strong set of values, and we could see she wants to contribute positively to the governance space".

Sarah believes being an accountant is about more than simply crunching numbers.

"It's about providing comprehensive support to my clients, helping them to achieve their business goals, and offering a listening ear

when they need it. I look forward to taking these skills into governance with DWN," says Sarah.

The Associate Trustee role was created to support women with a desire to develop their governance experience. The 20-month position provides a framework and mentoring to develop skills and experience by actively participating in DWN's governance.

"I'm excited by this position and know that I will gain experience, grow my skills, and build confidence.

I hope that I can give back as much as I receive. I see a future in governance and appreciate the opportunity I've been given by DWN," says Sarah.

During her free time, Sarah enjoys travelling overseas, playing both social and competitive netball and serving as the treasurer for St Mary's Netball Club.

Lucy, "We look forward to supporting Sarah on her governance journey and inducting her into the wider DWN fold in early March.

New Zealand Honey strategy resets industry ambitions for a strong future

A plan to revitalise New Zealand's honey sector and set it on a new, more sustainable and profitable path for the long term was launched by the Minister of Agriculture, Hon Todd McClay.

The strategy project was initiated by Apiculture New Zealand and drew on extensive engagement with those working in the industry.

Nathan Guy, Chair of Apiculture New Zealand says, "the new strategy, Thriving Together: Futureproofing New Zealand Apiculture 2024-2030, has been developed with the aim of resetting the industry's ambitions for a strong, sustainable future, one that reflects the growing maturity of the sector and provides a means to access resources needed to invest in that future."

"The New Zealand apiculture sector has experienced extraordinary growth since mānuka honey's antibacterial properties became internationally renowned, and in that time, honey has become a valuable export earner for communities throughout New Zealand. In the ten years to 2020, New Zealand honey export revenue increased five-fold to just over \$525m.

"While we have seen the industry contract since then with a fall in export revenue and hive numbers, projected growth in the international honey market makes it clear there are compelling reasons for New Zealand honey producers to be optimistic and ambitious about the future," says Nathan Guy.

The plan is based on three key pillars – sustainability, quality-led and consumer focus – which support a goal of doubling New Zealand's honey export value by 2030.

That goal will be enabled by strengthening industry leadership, creating a sustainable industry

reinvestment model, making sure regulatory needs are met to enable future growth, and creating a unique and differentiating New Zealand honey story.

The strategy also considers what the industry needs to do to protect bee health and support beekeepers.

"While industry participants are facing significant challenges at the moment, we haven't lost sight of the growth potential. New Zealand is a trusted source of high-quality honey, and commands premium prices for all its honey products, not just mānuka."

Rob Chemaly, Chair of the Unique Mānuka Factor Honey Association says the strategy lays a strong foundation for all in the sector to capitalise on the opportunities for growth.

"The global natural

health market for 2024 is estimated to be at least US\$24 billion by 2030 with a forecast compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 8%. If we solidify our export structures and work together as an industry to continue to respond to what consumers want, New Zealand honey will be perfectly placed to continue capitalising on this growth," says Rob Chemaly.

The Chair of The Mānuka Charitable Trust, Pita Tipene welcomed the industry strategy.

"As kaitiaki for mānuka as a taonga species of Aotearoa-New Zealand the strategy strengthens the partnership we have with both industry and government. This confirms our collective aspirations for our unique honey to build a compelling mātauranga Māori mānuka story.



New Zealand's honey sector set to revitalize.



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February was drier and cooler

It was a drier February than normal, according to Taranaki Regional Council (TRC) figures.

On average February rainfall was 63.5mm, 44% less than usual, ranging from 78% less rain than usual at Brooklands Zoo at New Plymouth, and 8% less than usual at Omaru at Charlies.

Year to date rainfall ranges from 48% less rainfall at Patea at Stratford, and 8% more rainfall at Uruti at Kaka Rd, with an average of 22% less than normal. Compared to typical full year totals, on average sites have received 9% of a typical year's annual total rainfall, with the highest value at Uruti at Kaka Rd, 13% of normal, whereas Patea at Stratford sits at 6% of the typical year's total.

Mean river flows for February were 45% of typical values, low flows were 29% greater, and high flows were only 36% of typical highs. The lowest flow relative to normal values was in the Moumahaki at Johnston Rd with only 19% of its typical February mean. The maximum river flow recorded in February was 76.3m³/sec at Waitara at Bertrand Rd.

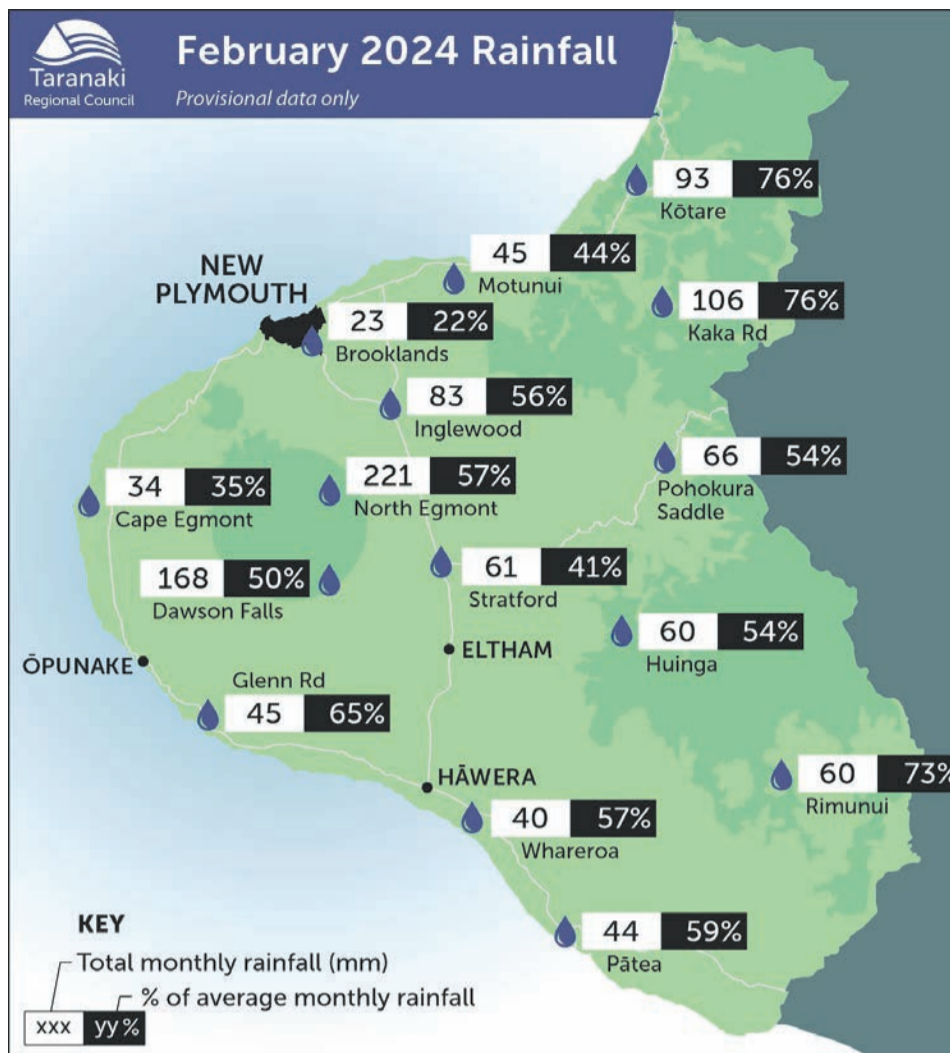
Mean river (non-mountain) water temperatures were 17.8°C, an average of 0.4°C cooler than long-term February values. Nighttime-low water temperatures were on average the same as historic lows, and daytime high temperatures were on average 1.2°C

cooler than historic highs. The maximum river water temperature recorded in February was 26.2°C at Kaupokonui at Glenn Rd.

The average air temperature for the region (excluding Te Maunga sites) was 16.7°C, which is 0.8°C cooler than long-term February averages. Low air temperatures for February were on average 0.4°C cooler than the February average for previous years. Day-time high temperatures were on average 1.2°C cooler than historic highs. The maximum air temperature recorded in February was 28.7°C at Inglewood at Oxidation Ponds.

The average soil moisture for February across sites in Taranaki region was 24.8%. Soil moistures were on average 2.1% wetter than typical February values. On average, low soil moistures were 8.7% wetter than previous lows, and the highs were on average 3% drier than previous values for February.

February soil temperatures



were generally 0.6°C cooler than long-term averages. Average nighttime low soil temperatures were 0.2°C warmer than recorded lows, and upper day-time soil temperatures were on average 1.9°C cooler than long-term February highs. The maximum soil temperature recorded in February was 27.627.6°C at Waitotara at Rimunui Station.

February average wind speeds were 14.4km/hr, with average gust strength of 41.3km/hr, these were 0.9km/hr lighter, and 0.3km/hr weaker than the long-term average. Average calm weather wind speeds were 0.7km/hr stronger than recorded lows, and windy conditions were on average 3.2km/hr lighter than long-term February highs. The maximum wind gust recorded in February was 129km/hr at Waitotara at Ngutuwera. Cape Egmont is generally the windiest station the TRC monitors, and Stratford is often the calmest.



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Back to back titles for champion driver

New Zealand Modified Champion Brad Lane came to Taranaki to defend his New Zealand title that he won last season at Huntly Speedway and that is exactly what he did over two nights of racing at Stratford Speedway, fending off challenges from twenty five other competitors to again be victorious and retain his title of New Zealand Champion.

Lane qualified comfortably finishing second in his group behind Christchurch racer Jacob Mitchell before doing what he needed to do in the finals to retain his number. Starting at the very back of the field in the first heat, Lane moved up an incredible thirteen places to finish seventh before placing third in heat two from grid ten and then placing second in heat three from grid one, recording enough points to win the Plant & Fabrication Services Championship outright from local driver Carl Hinton by five points.

Hinton had made the most of a grid one start to lead the first heat for a large portion of the race before New Zealand ranked number three Luke Brown from Auckland made a pass and won the race. He then made good ground in heat two to finish fifth from grid eleven before doing enough work in the final to



NZ Modified Championship Podium. From left. 3rd Luke Brown, 1st Brad Lane, 2nd Carl Hinton.

Photo. Matt Julian at Contact High Photography.

finish tenth from grid twenty. Brown retained his number three ranking, finishing third in the championship after recording two race wins, a DNF in heat two hurting his chances of progressing further up the rankings.

As there is with any event, there were plenty of hard luck stories. Three

of the most notable being Christchurch racer Jacob Mitchell who was very fast in qualifying and looked to be a serious threat for the podium until a flat tyre in the opening lap of the first finals heat saw his chances diminish while Huntly racer Brett Parsons exited the championship in the most

spectacular way with a very high roll over that destroyed his car. Popular local driver John Jackson, who crashed out of qualifying returned with a notable 'bin it or win it' attitude on the track on the Saturday night, making enough passes to progress through the repechage and then running the outside

line and completing daring passes next to the wall to move through the field in the first heat of the finals from grid sixteen to fourth. After running third in heat two and then being relegated to the rear of the field for an on-track incident, he made his way back to sixth position with the same daring driving

style. Jackson eventually came unstuck in the third heat when he rode over Newton Gordge's wheel and slammed into the wall. If the title was to be won by the bravest driver, then 'Jacko' would have won it for sure.

The second tier event was won by Lane's sister Samantha ensuring that both siblings went home with a trophy. Ricky Dykstra was second and Hayden Corbett third.

A full contingent of support classes over both nights saw a number of other trophies up for grabs. Logan Sharpe and Scott Williams won the Superstock Best Paris ahead of Kylee Symes and Matt Picard while Phillip Gargan and Hamish Booker were third. Booker won the King of the Mountain Superstock Champs from Sharpe and Williams. Ryan Hurliman won the Youth Ministock 60th Anniversary Cup, Cory Symes won the Youth version of the 60th cup. Minisprints raced for a range of trophies as part of their CANAM series that featured drivers from USA and Canada. Erin Uhlenberg, Cameron Hurley, Daniel Nickel, Cody Ogle, Jono Noonan and Canadian driver Luke Didiuk all featured amongst the podium placers

Jarrold MacBeth



Local driver Carl Hinton placed second in the Plant & Fabrication Services New Zealand Modified Championship at the Stratford Speedway.

Photo. Matt Julian at Contact High Photography.

NEXT EVENT

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Another Fight Night for Opunake

Pumped after her unanimous decision win at last year's Stratford Rumble, Kiara Katene is looking forward to the Fight Club Online event on April 20.

The only thing is, she needs an opponent.

"We're putting out an SOS to Taranaki," says James (Batman) Langton of Barbwire Boxing and Fitness which is running the event.

"We are looking for an opponent at about 80kg, and they need to have a little bit of experience."

James says there will be about six or seven fights on the night, and at this stage he is looking at the fights being two rounds of four minutes each.

As well as Kiara the fighters will include the likes of Bobby Katene, Liam Kupe, Sandra Gargan and Leilani Leatherby who have all made their names fighting for Barbwire Boxing.

"We've got a fantastic lineup of the Premier crop of Barbwire Boxing fighters," says James. "These are high trained athletes competing in this event. They've put in the hard work and training for this show."

It is a novel concept and James says it is a world first where viewers register online, cast their votes and decide



Kiara Katene and James (Batman) Langton.

who wins the fight. The first Fight Club Online event was held at the Barbwire Boxing Gym in Opunake last year.

James says he was pleased at the way that event had gone.

"After the first soft launch here at the gym which was

a huge success people from all around the country were saying what a great event it was, and they were keen to watch a second one."

He says that such is the interest that an online show to take place in Auckland is

being planned for later in the year.

The April fight club will be held at the Sinclair Electrical and Refrigeration Event Centre. Doors open at 6pm.

"It's going to be held in the lounge and bar area so

it will be a real amazing atmosphere," says James.

Kiara Katene who won her first fight against Marika Laupane at the Stratford Rumble is looking forward to getting into the ring again. She said she started going

along to Barbwire Boxing for the fitness training in November 2022, and in mid-2023 decided she would like to have a go at having a fight, so she started training for that in September.

She admits to having been nervous before her Stratford Rumble fight.

"When I turned up I was freaking out, until I walked out," she recalls. "When I stepped into the ring I was in the zone. As soon as I got in, I felt like there was no one there. I could hear the yelling but I was just concentrating on what I had to do."

She says she enjoyed the camaraderie of the training.

Would she recommend the experience to others.

"One hundred per cent," says Kiara. "It's physically hard, but it's mentally hard as well, particularly if you are somebody like me who doesn't like getting up in front of people."

Tickets for the Fight Night are on sale at the Sinclair Electrical and Refrigeration Event Centre. Those wanting to watch the fights online and vote on the outcome need to register on the Barbwire Boxing website.

"I'm really excited about the amazing format," says James. "We're the first in the world to do this."

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Te Kaunihera o Taranaki ki Te Tonga
South Taranaki District Council

He karere tā te Kaunihera o Taranaki ki te Tonga News from the South Taranaki District Council

Welcome to this special quarterly edition of Southlink for Ōpunakē and Coastal News readers.

Good Friday and Easter Weekend

Kerbside collection will continue as normal over the public holidays, so please put your wheelie bins and glass crate out on your usual day. To see when Council facilities are open over this long weekend, visit www.southtaranaki.com/easter



Kid You Not - we're upgrading the Goat Track!

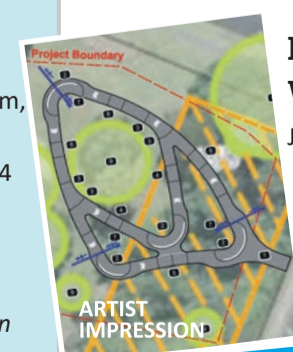
The access to Ōpunakē Beach off Bowen Crescent known as the 'Goat Track' is currently closed while the pathway gets upgraded.

Council's community development advisor Fran Levings says the track had missing and rotten steps, was narrow and slippery, and steep in areas. "Locally, this trail is known as the 'Goat Track,' although not everyone knows of it," she says. "This upgrade presents a good opportunity to provide clear directions to and from the trail, by extending the path at the top and bottom to improve connectivity between the township and the beach."

\$46,000 was ringfenced for this project as part of Ōpunakē Beach Masterplan. Over the next three weeks (weather dependant), local contractors will be:

- constructing a new path with boxed steps and centred railing.
- creating a kerb and channel for better water flow.
- Adding a new landing and rail near the end of Beach Road (at the turn around).
- Clearing the drain and installing a new culvert.
- Creating a better entrance for the track, separate from the road at the top and from the bottom.

"We look forward to when the Goat Track upgrade has been completed and we can offer better and safer access to our Beach," says Fran.



Pump Track work starting

Just a heads up that construction is starting on the Pump Track (Ōpunakē Recreational Grounds) in April.

Long Term Plan now out for consultation



Scan me!

continues to rise. Fuel, bitumen, electricity, construction and insurance costs have all increased considerably - in some cases contractors' costs have increased up to 60%. Higher interest rates have increased the cost of borrowing and paying back debt and compliance costs driven by Government requirements mean we need to spend a lot more on our infrastructure.

This means we need to pay more just to keep doing what we are already doing, without adding anything else," says Mayor Nixon. Mayor Nixon says the Council worked tirelessly to find savings across all activities to keep the rates increase as low as possible in the proposed plan, including reducing budgets for things like the Hāwera Town revitalisation project, tourism and events, delaying some non-urgent capital projects works, increasing borrowing and the amount Council's Long Term Investment Fund subsidises rates each year by increasing the fund an additional \$350k. The average total rate increase for the 2024/25 Year is 11.29% with an average rate increase over the next ten years of 5.47%. "We know the rate increase will be really hard for a lot of ratepayers. It's higher than what we want and higher than we've had over the last ten years but it reflects what it costs to simply maintain existing services while ensuring our critical infrastructure meets our community's needs and Government requirements," says Mayor Nixon.

The skyrocketing costs are affecting Councils right across the country. According to Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) of 48 Councils surveyed almost 80% are proposing rate increases above 12%, with the average a 15.3% increase.

Mayor Nixon says public consultation on the draft Long Term Plan opens today and closes on Monday 6 May.

A summary of the Council's proposal will be included in the 28 March issue of the Taranaki Star as well as available on the Council's website or LibraryPlus centres from that time.

Increased spending on roads and wastewater infrastructure, and a commitment to getting on with town centre upgrades in the District's smaller communities are some of the big-ticket items in the Council's draft 10-year plan. The Consultation Document was adopted for public consultation at Monday's Council meeting.

South Taranaki Mayor Phil Nixon says the District is on an upward trajectory and the Council's draft Long Term Plan is about maintaining that momentum while also doing what's needed to look after the District's assets.

"Our residents have told us that they want to see better roads, our town's amenities and gardens looking good and an improved dog control service. In response, over the next three years, we're proposing to increase our roading expenditure, have committed to continuing town centre upgrades in Hāwera, Manaia, Eltham, Ōpunakē, Pātea and Waverley, and have budgeted to increase resources in the animal control team," he says.

"The big challenge for us is how we afford to do this at a time when local government is facing unprecedented cost increases. Like households and businesses across the country, Council is facing increased costs for the things we buy. Local government inflation has risen by around 20% over the last two years and

Upcoming meetings (March - June)

Policy and Strategy Committee - Monday 18 March, 1pm

Extraordinary Council - Purpose to review and adopt Long Term Plan Consultation Document, Monday 18 March, 2.30pm

Ordinary Council - Wednesday 3 April, 4pm

Taranaki Coastal Community Board - Wednesday 17 April, 2.30pm, Pihama Hall, 3271 Surf Highway, Pihama

Policy and Strategy Committee - Monday 29 April, 1pm

Extraordinary Council - To hear submissions on the Trade Waste Bylaw, Monday 13 May, 2pm

Ordinary Council - Monday 13 May, 4pm

Extraordinary Council - Long Term Plan Hearing, Monday 20 May, 8am

Extraordinary Council - Long Term Plan Hearing Second Day, Wednesday 22 May, 3pm

Taranaki Coastal Community Board, Wednesday 29 May, 2.30pm, Manaia Bowling Club, 48 Riemenschneider Street, Manaia

Extraordinary Council - Long Term Plan Deliberations, Tuesday 4 June, 11am

Policy and Strategy Committee - Monday 10 June, 1pm



Unless otherwise specified, meetings are held in the Council Chambers, Administration Building, Albion Street, Hāwera.

Scan this to go to the meetings calendar on www.southtaranaki.com/meetings

www.southtaranaki.com

0800 111 323

Cancer diagnosis spurs Drop-in- Day

On Easter weekend Sharon Robinson is planning a drop in day to reconnect with mothers,

children and the families she cared for as their midwife. Any of her friends who would like to drop in are also welcome.

For the last two years Sharon has been based back in Taranaki in Opunake. She has been working as a self-employed midwife. The Drop-in-Day and Kids Talent Show will be held on Saturday March 30 at 74 Domett Street, Opunake from 11 am onwards.

She estimates that in the 12 years she was a midwife in Stratford (2003-2015) she helped with the births of about a thousand babies.

When she turned 50 in 2013, there were about 300 people who attended her birthday party at the Stratford War Memorial. She left Stratford in 2015 and worked in Auckland, Tauranga, Kaitaia, Golden Bay and overseas before returning to Taranaki and settling in Opunake in 2022.

Since being told of her diagnosis with Stage 4

Cancer, she has helped organize for the women she was caring for to be handed over to other midwives. She says that the cancer she now has in her bones was traced back to the breast cancer she was diagnosed with just after she left Stratford in 2015.

She has been told it has now spread to her spine, pelvis and right temporal bone which is a bone in her skull. She is currently undergoing what is called targeted therapy. It is milder than chemotherapy and the side effects are expected to be less.

She's been told that the average life expectancy for people with the form of cancer she has, at this stage, is probably another 4-5 years.

"I'm hoping to be one of the ones who does better," she says. "So far, I'm feeling fine."

When friends of hers found out about the cancer, they decided they wanted to do something.

"Some of the families I took care of in Auckland and Tauranga decided they wanted to come spend some



Sharon Robinson (second from right) with two generations of mothers from the same family she had cared for. (from left) Tessa Harris (daughter/mother), Sophia Harris (granddaughter) and Joelene Wadsworth (grandmother)

one family there for the last 22 years. When their daughter was born, Sharon assisted with the birth and they named the baby after Sharon.

Meanwhile Sharon is promising a day of fun for all on March 30. In the afternoon there will be

kids talent show which Sharon says will be very informal.

"I want the kids to be able to show us whatever they're good at or enjoy, a dance, gymnastics, whatever. If the kids want to bring legos they have built or artwork they have done, they are welcome to bring it." She says, "They'll have to bring their own music as I don't have a sound system. I'm trying to find a keyboard if anyone has one for some children who are coming and play the piano."

There will be a face painter at the party, and entertainment will include a skit about Huckleberry Finn performed by Sharon's husband, Dave Rohe, who is a seasoned actor. The partner of one of her mothers from Tauranga is a professional musician/singer and she says he has let her know that he may be able to come.

"Just drop in as you are able and bring a plate to share. The gathering will start at 11am and finish whenever we are done," says Sharon.

time with me, and things took off from there," she said. "It's amazing how many people I've taken care of who want to come visit while I'm still OK."

Recently she bumped into two generations of mothers, from the same family that she had cared for. The

grandmother and mother in the pic were both cared for by, Sharon.

Sharon grew up in Tonga, a country she has continued to take an interest in, and she is now pursuing how she can provide support for their midwifery services. She has kept in contact with

She Gives a "Clue"

Opunake Players first production for 2024 is the murder mystery "Clue". Based on the movie of the same name, which is based on the board game "Cluedo." It plays at Opunake Lakeside Playhouse May 9-11 and 16-18.

Director Lynelle Kuriger has wanted to direct "Clue" for some time. Not just because it's a great show but, as she puts it, "to bring something exciting to our loyal Opunake audience. They deserve the experience of a big name show."

Experience is something Lynelle has a lot of when it comes to theatre. Like most theatre people her interest was piqued as a school pupil. While in Jonathon Young's class, (yes, the MP) they put on a version of "The Three little Pigs." As a fourth former at St Mary's Stratford, (now Year 10 and Taranaki Diocesan School for Girls) she directed 'Footrot Flats,' taking the part of Dog. A stint at Hawera High School (now Te Paepae O Aotea) followed.

"My time at Hawera taught me the need to sit with everybody involved and read through the script so they all know the show."

A gap brought about by career and parenthood



Lynelle Kuriger. Writer. Director. Actor. Farm Administrator.

followed until a shift to Opunake where she joined the Opunake Players. Things took off from there. Although Lynelle has acted in many shows, both in Opunake and Taumarunui where she lived for a short time, it has been as a writer and director that her talents have shone. She has written "Farm Supplies And Other Lies," "Jersey Girls" and "Fleeced," all of which have been performed in Opunake. Others are 'in the pipeline.' Her directing credits include "Skin Tight," "Me'n'Gus," "Bad Jelly," "Mo and Jess Kill Susie" and "A Great

Face For Radio."

And now "Clue".

"I'm looking forward to unveiling the magic of the show, getting the audience involved in the transition," says Lynelle. "It's a full sized game of Cluedo where the characters roll the dice and keep their cards close to their chest."

So Lynelle, who dunnit? "It was.... you must be joking. Come and find out for yourself."

"Clue" plays at the Lakeside Playhouse Opunake, May 9-11 and 16-18. Ticket details announced soon.

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The Village Gallery



Cleopatra by Myron Bent.

Mt Taranaki acrylic by Carol Dalziel.

Detail of Carol Dalziel's acrylic painting of tulips.



Shag family Kaupokonui. Jean Finer.

Unlike Julius Caesar who was warned to 'Beware the Ides of March', the Hawera Art Club's Ideas of March exhibition is not to be missed. For varied and inspiring art, viewing the Hawera Art Club's exhibition at The Village Gallery in Eltham during March is a great way to spend some time. The Members of the Art Club love to paint and to present their interpretation of the world around us. Works in oil, acrylic, watercolour and charcoal feature in the newly revamped exhibition space."

"The exhibition opened on March 13 and runs until April 6. The Hawera Art Club has 18 members and meets on the first Friday of each month in the Salvation Army Rooms on Regent Street, Hawera. The members bring along their current art works to each meeting and often have a challenge to work on before the next month. Encouraging each other and just

enjoying the process of creating art works helps each artist grow and move forward in their artistic journey. New members are very welcome, no matter what their level of ability."

The Members area of the Gallery is a great space to visit, with plenty of art, crafts and gift ideas to choose from.

The Village Gallery is open Wednesday to Saturday, 10.00 am to 3.00 pm

The Hawera Art Club Exhibition



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CHURCH NOTICES



Church Services - Manaia, Kaponga, Opunake, Pungarehu, Okata, Oakura

Opunake Co-operating Parish

Havelock Street, Opunake - St Pauls - 9.30am every Sunday
Rahotu - Wesley - 11am first Sunday of the month

Okato Co-operating Parish

Okato - St. Paul's - Sunday Service every 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month, 10.00am
Oakura - St. James - Sunday Service every 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month, 10.00am
Mid-week open church - Okato - St. Paul's - Pew for You, every 3rd Wednesday of each month, 4.30pm-6.00pm

Opunake Catholic Church

St Martins, Pungarehu: Temporarily closed - no Masses
Our Lady Star of the Sea, Opunake:
Easter Mass Times:
March 28 - Holy Thursday - 7pm
March 29 - Good Friday - 3pm
March 31 - Easter Sunday - 10am

Other areas

Manaia - Sacred Heart - 1st, 3rd Sat at 5pm
(2nd, 4th & 5th Sat at Hawera's St Josephs)

St Patricks Catholic Church, Kaponga

2nd, 4th and 5th Saturdays of the month Mass at 6pm.
However during winter the time will be 5pm i.e. Saturday 10th June, 24th June and 8th July. After this date the time will revert back to 6pm.
1st and 3rd Sundays of the month Liturgy of the Word with Communion at 8.45am.
Thursday Mass 9.30am (subject to change).

St Patricks Catholic Church, Okato

Saturday Vigil 6.00pm - 1st, 3rd & 5th Saturdays

The Wave

Pentecostal Church 64 Domett St, Opunake
Sunday Services 10.30am
Women's Group 10am Tuesday
Men's Group 7pm Wednesday
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027 935 6191

St. Barnabas Anglican Church

141 Tasman St, Opunake
Sunday Services 10am
Communion 2nd, 3rd & 4th Sunday
Prayer & Praise 1st Sunday
Every 5th Sunday all 4 churches gather for a Combined Service

Okato Community Church

Meets 10.30am Sunday at Hempton Hall.
Everyone welcome

St John's Community Church. Kaponga

Cnr West and Egmont Streets.
Sunday Services 10.30am followed by morning tea

Manaia Union Fellowship

Terou St. Manaia.

Meet 10am every 3rd Sunday of the month with communion

Friend & Fellowship Group

Thursdays @ Manaia

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Airborne Earrings-Pounamu.



After School Surf- Boulters Bay -Lester Earl.

The White Sail Gallery welcomes you this Easter weekend with extended hours.

We're open Friday through Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm, and on Easter Sunday from 10 am to 3 pm.

Please note, we will be closed on Monday but resume regular hours from Tuesday to Saturday, 10 am to 4 pm.

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<p>Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire 1hr 55mins TBC Thu 21 Mar 7PM Sat 23 Mar 1PM Fri 29 Mar 1PM</p>	<p>The Convert 1hr 59mins R13 Fri 22 Mar 7PM Sun 24 Mar 1PM</p>
<p>Wicked Little Letters 1hr 42mins M Sat 23 Mar 7PM Sun 31 Mar 7PM</p>	<p>The Mountain 1hr 29mins PG Sun 24 Mar 7PM Thu 28 Mar 7PM Sun 31 Mar 1PM</p>
<p>Godzilla x Kong: The New Empire 1hr 55mins TBC Fri 29 Mar 7PM Sat 30 Mar 1PM</p>	



Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire
Coarse language, sexual references & scary scenes | 1hr 55mins | Rated: TBC
Thu 21 Mar 7PM



The Convert
Bloody violence & cruelty | 1hr 59mins | Rated: R13
Fri 22 Mar 7PM

THE SIMPLE LIFE

What's On Listings

ONGOING

Movies at Everybodys Theatre in Opunake: Playing several days and nights each week. Refer timetable in newspaper.

MONDAYS: The Barnabas Centre - St Barnabas Church Hall, 141 Tasman Street Opunake: Each Monday 10 am - 12:30 pm. Information call Jenny 7618080 or Glenys 6558025

TUESDAYS

Opunake Walking Group: Every Tuesday 10am. Meet outside Club Hotel on Havelock St. Phone Margaret 027 477 5600 for more info if needed, or just turn up.

Pungarehu Golf Club Twilight: Tee-off between 4.30 & 6.30pm.

Opunake District RSA: Meet 1st Tuesday of every month at 5.30pm at the Opunake Fire Station. Financial Members are welcome to attend.

WEDNESDAYS

Coastal Young Farmers: Meet 2nd Wednesday of every month at 7pm at Butlers Reef Bar & Cafe, Oakura.

Lisa Keen Audiology at Coastal Care, Opunake: Wednesdays 9am - 5pm, for an appointment call 027 591 4222 - 0800 555 676

Okato & District Historical Society open every Wednesday: At the Okato Community Trust Hall, 47 Cumming St, Okato. phone Meg on 06 752 4566.

Opunake Embroiders Guild: Meet 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month, 10.30am-3pm at the Opunake Business Centre, Napier St, Opunake. Just come along or phone Sheryl 06 761 8769.

Okato Market: In Hempton Hall, Okato 4pm to 5.30pm.

Free singing experience with Taranaki Harmony Chorus: Meet every Wednesday at Inglewood Mamaku Centre, 7-9.30 pm Phone Helen 021 296 0700.

THURSDAYS

Egmont Euchre Club: Every Thursday 1pm at the Opunake Bowling Club. Inquiries, 06 761 8337 or 06 761 8607.

Taranaki Country Music Hall of Fame, Manaia: Running every Thursday night from 7.30pm, 11 Surf Highway, South Road, Manaia.

FRIDAYS

Eltham Business Association Friday Markets: 9:30am to 1pm, Carpark of Touch Point, High Street, Eltham.

AT THE CLUB HOTEL THIS WEEK:

Monday: Burger special \$15, Happy Hours 3pm- 6pm; **Tuesday:** Pork ribs \$20, Pool Tournament 7pm; **Wednesday:** Pizza night 2 for \$24, Poker night \$30 buy in; **Thursday:** Steak night for \$20, Poker Night \$27 buy in; **Friday:** Pensioners lunch \$15, Lamb Shank \$20; **Saturday:** Chicken Schnitzel \$20; **Sunday:** Roast night \$20 Complimentary dessert for dine in customers.

last Easter when we were staying in Sophie's house in Cumbria I spent a lot of time talking to the gardener...



an amazing man - he really taught me a lot



I mean he wasn't cultured or anything and he only had a vocabulary of about two thousand words



still I didn't have any trouble relating to him... I mean we developed a real rapport



obviously I talked to him about things that mattered to him - the soil...



... the seasons... the trees... I mean a tree is a tree so a tree... that really taught me something



the wisdom... the innocence... the sheer humanity of the man was amazing



you know he was quite right... we just don't know how to live



I mean meeting him has made me understand that class barriers really don't exist



BRETECHER



MOVING?

Subscribe to the Opunake & Coastal News and we'll post you a paper as soon as it's out!

06 761 7016

OPUNAKE & COASTAL NEWS

MARCH 13 TO APRIL 6

The Hawera Art Club Exhibition: At the Village Gallery, Eltham.

MARCH 20-21

2024 Offshore Renewable Energy Forum: TSB Hub, Hawera.

MARCH 21

Coastal Machinery Auction: 341 Upper Puniho Rd, 10.30am.

MARCH 22

NPBHS Boarding Open Day: At the school, New Plymouth, 10.15 start.

MARCH 23

NZ Saloon Grand Prix & Under 23 Stockcar Champs at Stratford Speedway

MARCH 24

Manaia RSA AGM: At Manaia Bowling Club & RSA Rooms. 1.30pm.

MARCH 27-31

Garage Sale for the (formerly) Opunake Greengrocer: 52 Tasman St, Opunake.

MARCH 30

Drop-in Day & Kids Talent Quest with Sharon Robinson, Midwife: 74 Domett St, Opunake

APRIL 2 TO 20

NP Little Theatre's production of Social Climber: Little Theatre.

APRIL 3

Tumahu Hall AGM: 2417 Wiremu Rd, Okato. 7pm.

APRIL 13-14

Roadsafe Taranaki free Driver Training: Egmont A&P Showgrounds, Hawera. See ad for more details.

The next issue of Opunake & Coastal News will be out on April 4. Call us on 06 761 7016 to be a part of it.

PUBLIC NOTICES



SUPPORTING OUR TAONGA SPECIES TO THRIVE - Predator control on Te Papa-Kura-o-Taranaki (Egmont National Park)

Taranaki Mounga Project is an ambitious, landscape-scale project working to enhance our native birds, flora, and fauna across Mt Taranaki, Pouakai, and Kaitake, as well as Ngā Motu/Sugar Loaf Islands. In 2024, the Department of Conservation (DOC), with the support of the Taranaki Mounga Project, will conduct an aerial 1080 predator control operation to treat more than 34,000 hectares of the National Park. This will target rats, stoats, and possums which are the biggest threat to our native species.

Why we are doing predator control

Whio (blue duck), titipounamu (rifleman), miromiro (tomtit), rūrū (morepork), kererū (New Zealand pigeon) and many other native bird species are now seen more regularly and in higher numbers in the National Park. These species are good indicators predator control operations in Te Papa-Kura-o-Taranaki are working. Thanks to intensive trapping complemented with aerial 1080 operations, whio numbers have risen from functionally extinct 20 years ago to around 40 resident pairs across eight intensively monitored rivers. These rivers are now at carrying capacity and spillover of birds is occurring right around the Mounga with at least 200 birds estimated.

Seeing our forest flourish and having even more native birds visit neighbouring communities is another measure of success. Returning other species such as kākā, yellow-crowned kākārīki, kōkako, and more kiwi is also our dream for the future.

Predator control works

Aerial 1080 remains one of our best tools in protecting native taonga and is the most efficient, effective, and safest way to control predators in the rugged country of the National Park. In particular, it targets all predators in their home ranges at the same time. This is fundamental to the success of the project.

Method of predator control

This operation was scheduled for 2023 but will now be undertaken in 2024. DOC has worked closely with its treaty partners on desired outcomes and consulted with stakeholders and the community. From 15 March 2024 DOC with its contractor Epro Ltd will apply baits containing biodegradable 1080 over the area shown on the map. A pre-feed of non-toxic baits will occur first priming the predators to eat the pellets.

The toxic cereal bait pellets contain 0.15 per cent of 1080, are cylindrical and approximately 2cm in diameter. They are dyed green to deter birds and contain a cinnamon lure to attract rodents.

Non-toxic pre-feed cylindrical pellets are approximately 2cm in diameter and sandy coloured (not dyed).



The aerial operation uses calibrated buckets and GIS mapping technology to ensure bait drops in the designated area. Please see map attached.

1080 is poisonous to humans and domestic animals. Always remember:

- **DO NOT** touch or eat the bait.
- **WATCH CHILDREN** at all times.
- **DO NOT EAT** animals from this area.
- Toxic baits and carcasses are **DEADLY to DOGS**. These may wash downstream and out of the National Park.

Observe these rules whenever you see warning signs placed at the public access ways in the above areas. Warning signs indicate pesticide residues may still remain in baits and carcasses, possibly for more than six months..

If you suspect poisoning

Always contact your local doctor or local hospital or the National Poisons Centre: 0800 764 766 (urgent calls) or 03 479 7248 or dial 111.

For further information, contact:

- Biodiversity ranger, DOC Ngāmotu/New Plymouth Office 55A Rimu Street, Strandon, New Plymouth 4312 Ph: 06 759 0350
- Epro Ltd, 283 Broadlands Road Taupo, 07 378 4852

POULTRY FOR SALE

HYLINE PULLETS. Hatched 25/1/24. Located in Hawera \$25ea. Ph/txt Kelly 027 427 3133.

GRAZING

GRAZING AVAILABLE May to May for Dairy Heifers. Phone Richard 027 510 9667.

MAY TO MAY Dairy Heifer grazing available. Inglewood area. Ph Shane (06) 756 7372.

TRADES & SERVICES

HCL BUILDERS for building houses. Ph 027 459 8020.

HCL BUILDERS for alterations. Ph 027 459 8020.

CARPETS second hand, large selection After Disaster Ltd 223 Devon St West, NP. Phone (06) 769 9265

HAWERA BUDGET Advisory Service. Wed 9am to 12pm. Coastal Care, Opunake by appointment. Starting Feb 8th 2023 and fortnightly thereafter. Contact us by phone: 0800 333 048 (free from mobile). Facebook page: Hawera Budget Advisory Service. Email: info@hawerabudget.co.nz

LAWNMOWING, and section maintenance by local contractor SOS. Free quote. Ph 027 605 8437.

TRADES & SERVICES



Contact Toby Watt - 027 4598 020



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SCRAP METAL - for all scrap metal Taranaki wide, give us a call. Molten Metals (06) 751 5367. www.moltenmetals.co.nz

TUMAHU HALL AGM
Wednesday April 3 - 7pm
All welcome
tumahu.hall@gmail.com
2417 Wiremu Rd, Okato

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GARAGE SALE

52 Tasman Street, Opunake
Formerly Coastal Greengrocers
Wednesday March 27
to Sunday March 31
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THIS WEEK'S SPECIAL: 2019 Toyota COROLLA GX

LOW KM's NZ NEW, Daytime running lights, Lane Departure, Reversing camera, Sports Mode, Auto headlights, NZ Navigation, Stability Control, 1987cc, Petrol, CVT, 50kms



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2009 Volkswagen Scirocco TSI 147KW
NZ New Turbo Hatch, Stability Control, Parking Sensors, 3 Door Hatch, ABS Braking, 1984cc, Petrol, Auto, 62kms



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FAMILY SIZED WAGON
1.8 Petrol, Auto Full Option Alloys and Spoiler 97km



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ABS Braking, Climate Control Air Con, Reversing Camera, 1990cc, Petrol, CVT, 227kms



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