

RUATĀHUNA RECYCLING PARK OPENS

Our “clean green” image is one of the main reasons New Zealand is considered a great place to live and visit. In a local sense, that image received a welcome boost when the Ruatāhuna Recycling Park began serving Te Ūrewera communities on Monday, 22 April.

Ruatāhuna is a small, tightly knit community of 350 people, which boasts 10 Marae; a small shop; a Wharekura and Kohanga reo; a 2,000-hectare farm which provides employment to the community; and a church. While it is typical of many isolated communities in some ways, Ruatāhuna is showing what can be achieved if there is strong local support for change and development.

Life in this serene and beautiful region certainly has its challenges. Providing the level of services that many of us in larger communities take for granted is one of those challenges - one which the Hinepukohurangi Trust was more than willing to face. The Trust is an established Māori provider of health and disability services in Ruatāhuna and approached the Whakatāne District Council in late-2011 for support in developing a recycling centre and refuse transfer station at Ruatāhuna. A survey confirmed the community's desire to participate in a recycling programme which would help keep their environment safe for generations to come and the Council then

confirmed its support for the endeavour. The development of the park was funded through the Council's Waste Minimisation Fund and the Council also assisted the Trust to obtain the necessary equipment and materials and donated a utility vehicle to transport all recycling and refuse collected to the Murupara Transfer station.

From the outset, the focus was on promoting “Recycling and Re-use”. Where possible, local materials and labour were used and in order to provide the required range of services within the budget available, refurbished equipment and recycled building materials were used. The suppliers of the main recycling equipment, Pioneer Group and Mil-tek NZ, were keen to support this community initiative, and as a result, the Ruatāhuna Recycling Park now boasts a glass and can crusher and compacting baler that significantly reduces recycling volumes.

“The recycling park not only helps safeguard this pristine region, but also empowers the community to take ownership of their environment,” says Tomasz Krawczyk, the Council's General Manager Infrastructure. “That can only be a huge plus for this region.”

Doris Rurehe of the Hinepukohurangi Trust says the community is “excited and happy”



Doris Rurehe of the Hinepukohurangi Trust and WDC Solid Waste Manager Hanno van der Merwe pictured with the Ruatāhuna Recycling Park's glass crusher (foreground) and compacting baler (background).

about the facility. “We're very proud of our area and it's just fantastic to have a recycling park which allows us to deal with our solid waste in an environmentally responsible way.”

If your community – no matter how small – would like to discuss similar initiatives, contact Whakatāne District Council Solid Waste Manager, Dr Hanno van der Merwe (tel. 07 306 0500; email: hanno.vanderMerwe@whakatane.govt.nz).

TRUSTPOWER AWARDS CELEBRATE COMMUNITY HEROES

Entries are now open for the TrustPower Whakatāne District Community Awards, which showcase and celebrate our local volunteers. The Awards are open to all voluntary groups and organisations working for the benefit of the district.

The awards cover five categories: Heritage and Environment; Health and Wellbeing; Arts and Culture; Sport and Leisure; and Educational and Child/Youth Development. Category winners receive \$500, runners-up receive \$250 and the Supreme Winner will take home \$1,500 and an expenses-paid trip to the TrustPower National Community Awards.

The Manawahe Eco Trust took out last year's Supreme Winner Award for the District. This year, it could be your voluntary group or organisation.

Entry forms can be picked up at any of the Whakatāne District Council Offices or Libraries, or download one from our website (www.Whakatane.govt.nz). Entries close on 21 June 2013.

SUNNY SESSION FOR SEVENS STARS

The New Zealand Sevens rugby team had a great training break in the country's sunshine capital last month – and an opportunity to enjoy New Zealand's best beach.

Before departing for the last two rounds of the Sevens World Series in the UK, the 19-member team spent three days based at Ōhope, enduring one of Coach Gordon Tietjens' legendary, torrid training camps.



During their stay, Whakatāne District Council Promotions Officer Nicola Burgess took the opportunity to share the news about the sunshine capital/best beach accolades, entrusting the trophies to the sure hands of the world's best sevens rugby team.

“The trophies are available to any local business or organisation which would like to

display them for a short period of time and right now you can see them at the Ōhope Beach Top 10 Holiday Park,” she says. “We also have a poster for any businesses which would like to mount a display and anyone who would like a copy, or wants to book in a time to display the trophies, can call me at the Council.”

WHAKATĀNE - KIWI CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

The Whakatāne Kiwi Trust has trademarked the name “Kiwi Capital of the World”, which seems fitting following the recent milestone of 200 kiwi chicks released in the reserves around Whakatāne.

Whakatāne is unique in being the one of the few places where wild North Island Brown Kiwi can be seen and heard in an urban setting and in some parts of the town, residents regularly encounter kiwi in their own backyards. Mayor Tony Bonne says the name “fits nicely with the area's Sunshine Capital and best beach accolades”, and

he will take any opportunity available to promote it.

More than 350 people joined with the Trust on Easter Saturday to celebrate the 200th Kiwi chick release, and they got to meet Whiti, the star attraction. Visitors to the area made up more than half of the numbers and for many, it was their first chance to see a Kiwi. The Trust and its project partners are also delighted with the Whakatāne District Council initiative of putting kiwi symbols on the roads within the Whakatāne Kiwi Project area.

TE RŌPŪ WHAKAHAU CONFERENCE

More than 70 delegates from around the country visited Whakatāne in April for the annual conference of Te Rōpū Whakahau – Māori in Libraries and Information Management. The three-day conference was hosted by librarians from the Waikato/Bay of Plenty, or Mataatua region.

The committee put together a programme to reflect that there are learnings beyond the confines of walls, bricks and mortar. Mataatua Waka have for several years promoted the idea of Mataatua Taawharautia - meaning that it was time for Mataatua to bring their knowledge together and concentrate it to build their future generations.

Staff from Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangī played a major role in the planning and delivery of this annual conference, which saw delegates visit Te Kōputu, Motouhōrā and the Mataatua Whareniui. Presenters included Whirimako Black, Kura Paul-Burke, Professor Wiremu Doherty, Frank Te Mihini Kawe, and Joe Harawira.

Te Rōpū Whakahau offers an extensive support network for Māori library and information workers and those working in museums, galleries and archives. This support ranges from regional and national activities to simply socialising with other members.

TE KŌPUTU EXHIBITIONS:
MAURI – What is the sound of human?
 6 April – 9 June 2013, Opus Gallery
 A collaborative exhibition from Te Kaha and Tangimoe Clay

GLOKOOL – An exhibition by Zena Elliott
 5 April – 19 May 2013, Whakatāne Community Board and Sheaff Family Galleries

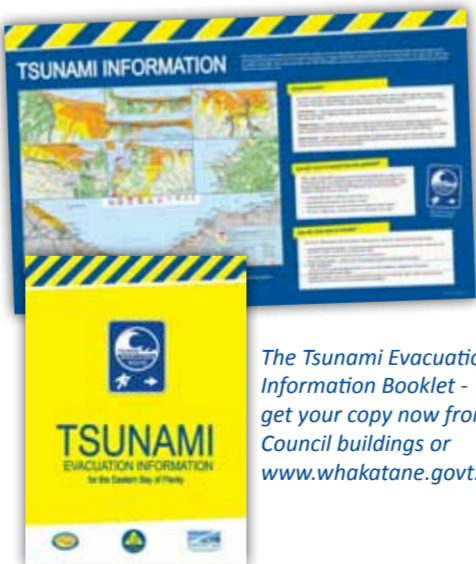
LESSONS LEARNT FROM SIREN TESTING

A joint tsunami siren testing carried out by the Whakatāne and Opotiki District Councils last month was both successful and a learning exercise. The newly-converted fixed fire sirens were activated for the first time in an exercise designed to raise awareness of the warning system and test its technical capabilities. The tests took place in Matatā, Whakatāne, Ōhope, Ōpōtiki and Waihou Bay.

Eastern Bay of Plenty Emergency Management Co-ordinator, Jim Tetlow, says all five sirens activated as planned using the pager number. “From a purely operational view, the test was a success in that respect.”

Mr Tetlow says some issues were identified with the use of this tone. “The constant tone does have some issues with sound loss and appears to be affected by atmospheric conditions more than the rise and fall of the fire alarms. However, we need to have a tone that is different to distinguish it from a fire call out.”

“If you didn't hear the siren and you're concerned, then you should consider other ways of receiving warnings, such as becoming part of a Neighbourhood Support Group telephone tree, or signing up to the Readynet system as a family group to receive text alerts,” Mr Tetlow says.



The Tsunami Evacuation Information Booklet - get your copy now from Council buildings or www.whakatane.govt.nz

“Our survey results showed us that there is still a lack of understanding as to what the continuous siren indicates. It is simply to alert people to tune-in to Radio 1XX, where they will hear details of the tsunami hazard and localised instructions on the need to evacuate.”

He says anyone who hasn't already got a copy of the Eastern Bay of Plenty Tsunami Evacuation Information Booklet should get one, and keep it handy.

GRASSROOTS TRUST SUPPORTS WHAKATĀNE-ŌHOPE CYCLEWAY & WALKWAY

The Grassroots Trust last month announced a decision to grant \$55,000 to the Whakatāne District Council for the construction of the Whakatāne-Ōhope Cycleway and Walkway.

The Council is proposing to construct a combined roadside cycleway and walkway linking Ōhope and Whakatāne and believes that providing a safer, purpose-built track adjacent to, but separated from the roadway, will encourage greater use by cyclists, walkers and runners and encourage a more active and healthier community.

The cycleway will be developed in two stages, and the goal is to commence construction this year and complete the project by July 2014.

Whakatāne Mayor Tony Bonne has welcomed the Trust's support for a key community project. “The construction of a safe cycling and walking track off the road surface has been a long-held ambition for the Whakatāne and Ōhope communities,” Mr Bonne says. “This

\$55,000 grant gives us the confidence to go ahead and put in place a resource which will encourage more people to get involved in healthy outdoor activities and provide a great recreational link between our two main population centres.”

He adds that there is a small funding shortfall still to be bridged and that the Council would welcome support from commercial organisations for the cycleway project.



NEWS IN BRIEF

CREATIVE COMMUNITIES SCHEME – GRANT APPLICATIONS OPEN

Applications have opened for local arts funding grants through the Creative Communities Scheme. The Scheme is administered by the Whakatāne District Council and provides arts project funding for both groups and individuals. To be eligible, projects must meet one of three criteria:

- **Broad Community Involvement** – creating opportunities for local communities to engage with and participate in arts activities;
- **Diversity** – supporting the diverse arts and cultural traditions of local communities;
- **Young People** – enabling and encouraging people under 18 years old to engage with and participate in the arts.

Applications close at 5:00pm on Friday 31 May 2012. Forms are available from Council offices and Libraries, or on the Council website (www.whakatane.govt.nz). For information or assistance with your application, contact scheme administrator, Janie Storey on 306 0530, or email Janie.Storey@whakatane.govt.nz.

ENROL TO VOTE



The local body election to select the District's Mayor, Councillors and Community Board Members for the next three years is to be held this year. There is a 3 week voting period commencing on Friday, 20 September until noon on Saturday, 12 October 2013. In order to receive a voting paper you must be enrolled on the electoral roll at your current address. So if you are new to the area, have recently changed address, have just turned 18, or never been on the roll - go to elections.org.nz or your nearest Post Shop to enrol.

SPEAKERS HAVE THEIR SAY ON THE DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN

People from around the District presented their submissions on the Whakatāne District Council's draft Annual Plan 2013/14, draft Fees and Charges 2013/14 and Matatā Sewerage Scheme Options at yesterday's hearing. About 40 people made submissions to the Mayor and Councillors and shared their concerns and ideas.

In total, around 220 submissions were received to the draft Plan with a variety of submission topics covered. The largest number of submissions related to the proposed sewerage scheme in Matatā. Amongst the many other subjects raised were: a proposal to establish a fenced dog park; concerns over Sullivan Lake; and ideas about how we can improve the services at our Aquatic Centres.

Having now heard all of the submissions, the Council will meet again on 20 and 21 May to finalise its decisions. Members of the public are welcome to attend the Deliberations meeting. The final Annual Plan 2013/14 will be adopted on 26 June 2013.



ANZAC DAY

Almost 100 years after World War 1 began, the servicemen who fought in that and subsequent conflicts are honoured and remembered for the sacrifices they have made to preserve our nation's freedom. Pictured here are some of the servicemen and women who attended this year's Anzac Day ceremony at the Whakatāne War Memorial Hall.

Mayor Tony Bonne lays a wreath on behalf of the citizens of the Whakatāne District.