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WAIMARINO BULLETIN

Historic find at Pipiriki?

Plucky Patrick heads for world chumps

Bulletins online at Papers Past P3

West Ridge Quad turning again P4

Tourist trip to lure Aussies P5

Eruptions recalled at conference P7

Chateau Tongariro support petition handed to Parliament

The Parliamentary Petition to Save the Chateau, which gathered 15,469 signatures, was to be formally handed to Rangitikei MP Suze Redmayne on the steps of Parliament at 12 noon on Tuesday 16 September, before being presented to the House.

The petition has been driven by current mayor and mayoral candidate Weston Kirton.

He thanked everyone who signed, saying the response reflects the depth of public feeling for one of New Zealand's most iconic heritage buildings and its importance to the national tourism economy.

"The level of public support shows how much the Chateau means to New Zealanders – as an architectural treasure, a cornerstone of our tourism story, and a vital driver of regional growth."

Kirton noted that before its closure the Chateau generated around \$10 million a year in direct economic benefit, provided dozens of local jobs and training opportunities, and represented one-third of all high-end accommodation in the Ruapehu district.

Its restoration, he said, would revive those benefits and create new ones.

Turn to Page 2



The Parliamentary Petition to Save the Chateau has gathered over 15,000 signatures. Ruapehu's mayor Weston Kirton said that there are credible investors ready to restore the Chateau and revitalise the wider Whakapapa Village. Photo: Photo: Jimmy Ellingham, RNZ.

Green light for work on Raetihi temple



James Stuart from JC Consultants Ltd on site in Raetihi with koro Robert Williams testing the bell towers of the Rātana temple for asbestos ahead of a building consent application for the restoration project. Looking on is James's wife Claire. Photo: Liz Brooker.

While there is still at least \$200,000 left to find, a successful six-months of fundraising has resulted in a green light for work to finally begin on the complete restoration of the Rātana Temple in Raetihi.

Project manager Darnell Watling said the team, led

by koro Robert Williams, have been working hard behind the scenes to finally turn an eight-year dream into a reality.

"With our 100th anniversary coming up in September

Turn to Page 2



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Save the Chateau petition delivered

From Page 1

“Credible private investors are ready to restore the Chateau and revitalise the wider Whakapapa Village,” he said.

“This project will create employment and training pathways, attract higher-spending visitors, strengthen businesses throughout the central North Island, and celebrate our unique cultural heritage.

“It aligns perfectly with Government goals for regional development, high-value tourism, and heritage preservation - and it may not require any taxpayer funding.”

Kirton called on Government to seize the opportunity.

“We now need clear leadership from Government to remove any regulatory or other barriers and provide a pathway for investors to move quickly,” he said.

“This is a low-risk, high-reward project that will safeguard an irreplaceable national treasure and deliver lasting benefits for Ruapehu and for all of Aotearoa.”

Department of Conservation deputy director-general for organisation support, Mike Tully, said the expression-of-interest process was completed in March.

It informed the advice being developed for the Minister of Conservation Tama Potaka and cabinet about the Chateau’s future.

There were five parties interested in running it, but the department couldn’t say who they were.

“We have not yet consulted with iwi on any options, and consultation will need to occur before any option is progressed,” Potaka told Radio New Zealand.

Potaka said he was waiting on that advice before a decision was made.

Eating out in the Ruapehu District

Call 06 385 8532 to list your business here

KINGS BAR & RESTAURANT

3 Rimu St Ohakune Junction Ph: 06 385 8648

Est in 1913, historic Kings offers an inviting menu by international chefs, a great selection of boutique wines and craft breweries including award winning Ruapehu Brewing Co beers in the fridge and on tap. See our Facebook page for what's on. Please check our open times as these will vary.

LA PIZZERIA

6 Thames St, Ohakune Junction Ph: 06 385 8558

Ohakune's most famous pizza restaurant, for over 37 years we have been serving Ohakune's best pizza. Come up and see us in the "Junction" at the end of the Old Coach Road and try one of our hot, tasty, handmade pizzas. Same great menu available for takeaway. Open 7 days, 4 – late. Check us out online at: www.lapizzeria.co.nz

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2 • **RUAPEHU BULLETIN** 17 September 2025

Green light for work on Raetihi temple

From Page 1

next year, things were starting to get a little tight to have the restoration finished but we’ve had some amazing support both in actual dollars and mahi-in-kind, which has meant we can finally look to get spades in the ground.

“Throughout this journey Silks van Bohemen architects have been with us and now they are finishing off the last iteration of plans ahead of making our building consent application by the end of the month.

“Once this is granted, we hope to actually finally be starting mahi in mid to late October.

“Without the ongoing support of whānau, the Raetihi Marae trustees, our community combined with a number of successful funding applications to date, while over \$200,000 is a huge figure we believe the remaining pūtea can be found.”

Watling said a recent successful Tranche One grant of \$400,500 from Te Tahua Taiao Ngā Taonga (Lottery Environment and Heritage Fund) combined with \$67,000 from the Ruapehu District Council’s Better Off Fund, Whanganui Community Foundation \$59,000, Awhero Nui Charitable Trust \$50,000, John Preston Trust \$20,000, Four Regions Trust \$10,000 and over \$110,000 from the community themselves has meant that finally after a lot of kōrero, the restoration has become a reality.

“While there have been a number of attempts to patch fix our whare whakamoemiti, eight years ago Bertz (Roberta) Williams decided enough was enough and it was the turn of our generation to step up and ensure we weren’t going to leave our moko with a building that was literally going to fall down around them.

“The kaumātua and community agreed we should do it once and, finally, do it properly.

“Leading the restoration is Raetihi licenced builder Piha Smith from Ngā Kaihanga who brings over 25-years’ experience and a lifetime connection to our kaupapa.

“His whānau are from Rātana and father Jack was an āpotoro who helped work on the Centenary restoration of



James Stuart, left, and builder Piha Smith discuss the issues faced with restoring Raetihi's Ratana Temple. Photo: Liz Brooker.

the temepara down there.”

While there are some contractors and services that will need to be used from outside the rohe, Watling said the restoration team are committed to sourcing local contractors from around the Whanganui region for as much of the restoration as possible.

Anyone wishing to make a koha in support of the restoration can make a donation via their Give a little page at: givealittle.co.nz/cause/teparihaoraetihi

Ruapehu Events & What's On

SEPTEMBER 2025

Ruapehu Art Awards www.ruapehuartawards.com	17 September - 1 October
NI Secondary Schools Champs Visit www.nisssc.nz or Facebook North Island Primary & Secondary School Snowboard & Ski Competition. Email haigsnowboard@gmail.com or nisssc.snowsports@gmail.com	15-17 September
Atomic Demos Visit www.whakapapa.com or on Facebook/Instagram @whakapapa.mtruapehu for up to date information.	15-21 September
Tight Tight Tight The Royal Theatre in Raetihi.	19 September
Tūroa Rail Jam Visit www.pureturoa.nz or on Facebook/Instagram @turoa.nz for up to date information.	20 September
Raetihi Country Market Enquiries to Angel 0274 316 327	20 September
Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid Full details on the Theatre Facebook www.facebook.com/royal.raetihi	20 September
Bev Hiscox Spring Flower Show Enquiries to Di Rout 021 657 343	20 September
Retro Day The Kitchen, 4 Thames St, Ohakune Junction. See Facebook page for details. #RETRODAYOHAKUNE or ohakunejunction.co.nz	27 September
The Sound of Music Full details on the Theatre Facebook www.facebook.com/royal.raetihi	27 September
NZ Mountain Film Festival Matterhorn Restaurant, upstairs at the Powderkeg, Ohakune Junction. See Ruapehu Bulletin for details. ohakune.info or ohakunejunction.co.nz Fundraiser for Predator Free Ohakune	1 October

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A portrait of Weston Kirton, a man with short grey hair, smiling.

RE-ELECT Weston Kirton for Ruapehu Mayor

- Fighting for Tourism
- Proven leadership
- Fixing problems
- Real results

Vote for the Mayor **who started the Parliamentary Petition to Save the Chateau** which has nearly 15,000 signatures and brought out credible investors wanting to return the Chateau to its former glory supporting our tourism economy.

1#

“I started the petition to Save the Chateau to show Government how much people care and protect our vital tourism economy”

Authorised by Weston Kirton, RDA Tourism

Vote Colin Pakai for Waiouru-Waimarino Community Board Ruapehu District Council Local Body Elections 2025

A portrait of Colin Pakai, an older man with white hair, wearing a patterned shirt.

I have lived in Waiouru for many years. I worked in the Waiouru Military Camp for over 50 years in various roles (Machine Operator-roading, Plumber, Facilities Maintenance Supervisor). My last role being Facilities Site Maintenance Supervisor for NZ Defence Force. I have considerable knowledge and experience regarding infrastructure. If I am re-elected onto the Waimarino-Waiouru Community Board, I aim to continue using my knowledge and experience, in order to get the best outcomes and value for money for all ratepayers in the district.

Authorised by Colin Pakai, 29 State Highway 49, Waiouru

Just under two decades of the Ruapehu Bulletin and its predecessor, the Waimarino Bulletin are now online on the National Library's Papers Past website.

“This milestone ensures that the stories, people, and events that shaped the Ruapehu district during these years are preserved for future generations and accessible to anyone, anywhere,” says trustee Professor Lachy Paterson.

“The real strength of these local newspapers is their closeness to the communities they served and the wide range of local news they covered, particularly local politics.

This is just one issue of the hundreds the Trust has digitised.

“Newspapers like these were able to provide deeper coverage of local activity than the larger urban dailies, with readers more likely to personally know those being reported in the news. As time passes, this content becomes

For more information about the project or how you can support further preservation work, visit preserving-localhistory.com.

VOTE!

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thriving Ruapehu Community.***

Authorised by Rodger Baker. VibrantRuapehu@gmail.com

Vote Robyn Gram
for Ruapehu District Council

Stability
Economy
Environment



A portrait of Robyn Gram, an older woman with short, curly grey hair, wearing glasses and a blue top. She is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background of the portrait shows a body of water and some greenery.

Authorised by Robyn Gram, 158 Golf Road, Taumarunui
027 389 1912 robyn@buythegram.co.nz

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WAIMARINO BULLETIN

VOICE OF THE RUAPEHU REGION
Tuesday 8 October, 1985, Volume 3, No. 20

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Agreement on district council

The new district council for the region should now be established by next year after a last-minute meeting between Raetihi and Waimarino County representatives last week.

The deadlock over the number of representatives from each ward was resolved by a return to the original suggestion of five from Waimarino County and four each from Raetihi and Ohakune Boroughs.

NAME

The other outstanding issue — the name of the new council — is still to be confirmed. Both Raetihi and Waimarino favour 'Waimarino County Council', and Ohakune councillors will confirm their choice at their council meeting on 17 October.

Only a few replies were received to our request for your name suggestion in last week's Bulletin. However all but one favoured 'Waimarino County Council'. The odd one wanted 'Ruamano'.

Obituary

DEATH OF ALWYN CARTER

Alwyn Carter, former chairman of Carter Holt Holdings Ltd, died last Thursday aged 76.

Mr Carter, often known as KCA, took the Carter family firm to its beginnings in the Waimarino to become one of New Zealand's top 10 companies.

Alwyn Carter, 1909-1985.

The Carter family moved to their mill settlement at Rangatu in 1918 after milling in other areas. Alwyn took over the company after his father, F. J. Carter, died in 1949 and later moved operations to Auckland.

He directed the company's growth into a major forestry, sawmilling, fishing and processing company with extensive national and international connections.

He is survived by his wife, Stella, daughter Dorothy, and twin sons Richard, executive chairman, and Ken, managing director of Carter Holt Holdings Ltd.

Mr Carter was chairman of the company and of most of its subsidiaries until his retirement in 1984. He was still director at the time of his death.

Historic find at Pipiriki?

Wooden panels found in a bush clearing near Pipiriki which some think may have been part of a canoe. They have been lifted by helicopter to Pipiriki.

Two large adzed panels in good condition have been found by a Waimarino forestry contractor's gang in a clearing in the Naparoro area about 5 kilometres north of Pipiriki.

The panels are about 4.7 metres long, 700 millimetres wide and 70 millimetres thick. Mr Matt Marikura, speculated that they may have been prepared as part of a canoe. It had been reported previously that part of a canoe had been seen up there.

The panels were supplied by a helicopter against by Waimarino last Wednesday and taken to Pipiriki where they will be stored at the moment. It is hoped that carbon dating of a small piece will give an idea of their age.

They were treated as tapu until last Tuesday when the tapu was lifted with prayers in an ancient ceremony.

The panels were found on land owned by the Naparoro-Waimarino Forest Trust which is being cleared for plantations in pines.

Senior Archaeologist with

the Historic Places Trust, Mr. J. McKinlay, said the find was interesting.

He thought the panels were probably Maori but pointed out that he had seen adzed panels until early this century.

If the panels were more than 600 years old they should be reported to the Department of Internal Affairs under the Antiquities Act, he said.

He cautioned that care needed to be taken with the panels. He said that once they began to dry out they would warp and crack.

Plucky Patrick heads for world champs

Local boy, Patrick Cooper, is to take part in the World Championships for Disabled Skiers to be held in Sweden in April 1986.

Patrick is seventeen and is studying for U.E. at Ru-

apehu College. He lost his right leg when he was run over by a bus at five years of age, but he has never let his handicap slow him down.

He first learned to ski in one of the disabled skiers' weeks, run by the New Zealand Association for Disabled Skiers, held every year on Whakapapa.

"I just played around for a few years and then someone persuaded me to enter the Disabled National Championships in 1981 — I surprised myself by winning two silvers."

Since Patrick has gone from strength to strength, coming first in his class this year.

Patrick's next big hurdle is to raise the money for his trip. He needs approximately \$10,000 because the host country will pay only for accommodation and other costs during the 12 days of the competition. Patrick has to raise money to pay for fares, board and lodging for his two-month training time in Sweden before the competition, a race coach, plus all the other costs that skiers must pay such as lift tickets.

With typical courage Patrick plans to begin raising money with a sponsored bike ride round the mountains at Labour Weekend. He will be accompanied by his mother and sister on horse-back, and he expects to take two days, staying a night in Turangi.

We wish this plucky young man all the luck in the world.

Patrick Cooper (right) on Turangi, with Robin Foubister, mountain manager at Turangi skifield.

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Authorised by: S Peke-Mason sorayapm@extra.co.nz



The Raetihi Ohakune Garden Club present

Bev Hiscox Spring Flower Show

**Saturday 20 September 2025, 9am – 1.30pm
at The Centre, Seddon St, Raetihi**

Entries accepted:
3pm - 7pm Thursday 18 September
8.30am - 10.30am Friday 19 September
Childrens entries until 10am Saturday

**Schedules with entry times etc,
available from:**
**Raetihi Info Centre and Ohakune
Bookshop. Sales table, raffles, etc.**

Enquiries to Di Rout 0211 657 343

Letters

Maunga sacred

•In answer to Helen Leahy, pou arahi/ chief executive reply to John Riding 10 September: I like John Riding letter "Sacred Place" (Bulletin, 3 September). I think he presented some valid points.

I too skied for New Zealand's ski team in Switzerland and Italy in 1967 on the Federation International Du'ski B Circuit with fellow NZ top ski racer Robert Palmer; he was Olympic grade A.

I view with interest the development of Whakapapa and Tūroa ski fields and believe they are doing a pristine job keeping the ski fields open and prospering and making a way for the younger generation to enjoy the slopes.

Since the closure of the mills and the Chateau, skiing is probably keeping the National Park and Ohakune thriving.

I have two questions for Helen Leahy: if the mountain is holy why do you promote ski activity, should you not close it, if you are the landlord?

If the mountain is holy, when did it become holy, before arrival of Māori, after arrival, what constitutes it being holy?

New Zealand is a democracy – surely it is an individual decision?

I would like to forward a view that we could have a referendum and let the people decide.

That would seem fair to me.

Ben Mitchell

Candidates write

This section is set aside for letters from Ruapehu District election candidates.

Letters are limited to 300 words and the Editor reserves the right to edit or reject any letter. Priority will be given to candidates who haven't had letters published previously.

Letters will be published as space allows.

Community boards

- This council term began with bold

structural changes: fewer general seats, the introduction of three Māori wards, and the creation of the Ōhura Taumarunui Community Board. The intent was clear — streamline council for strategic oversight and empower community boards to lead locally.

As a member of the Waimarino-Waiouru Community Board, I was part of those early conversations. We envisioned boards stepping into a more active governance role. Yet, months in, their absence from public discourse is striking. Even candidates standing for both council and board positions rarely mention them. Why ignore the very bodies meant to carry the weight of local leadership?

Community Boards are far more than advisory panels. They're the first point of contact for local concerns, they shape decisions on bylaws, funding, and public spaces, and they represent their communities in council workshops and ceremonial roles. They're the bridge between residents and council — ensuring feedback flows both ways.

But their work is not easy. Ruapehu's geography isolates many communities, and poor internet limits participation. Boards operate with constrained authority, and their visibility remains low. Navigating relationships with iwi, council officers, and community groups requires diplomacy and trust — both hard-earned.

Still, boards persist. Tools like Resolve have improved transparency and efficiency. But technology alone won't elevate their role. Recognition will.

If we're serious about community-led governance, we must start by acknowledging the boards that make it possible. Their silence in the public narrative isn't just an oversight; it's a missed opportunity to strengthen democracy from the ground up.

John Chapman, Ruapehu District councillor candidate

West Ridge Quad ready to ride

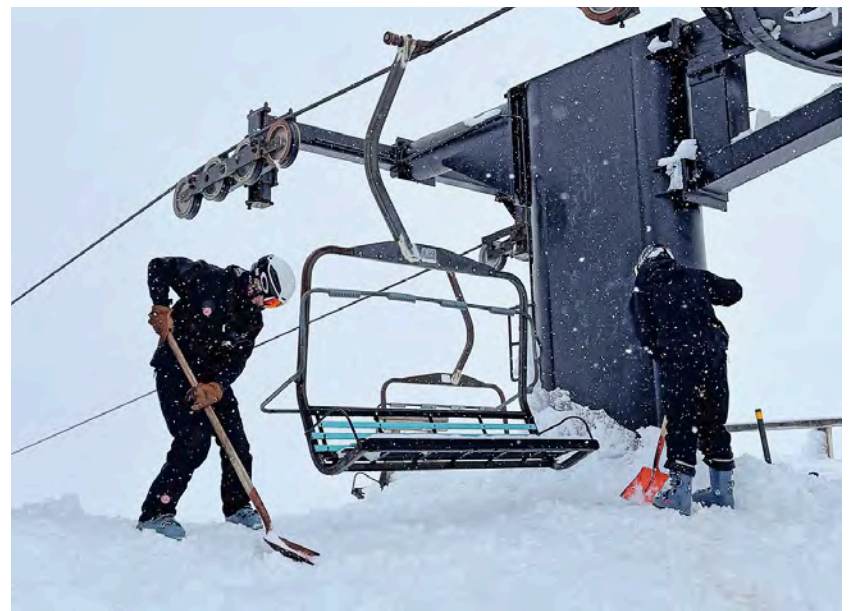
For the first time in two years, Whakapapa's West Ridge Quad is turning and preparations are under way to get the Far West T-Bar cable installed and running.

"After a massive team push, final checks are done and everything's in place. Big thanks to the whole crew including patrol, grooming, maintenance and operations who have worked hard to bring this lift back to life and we're stoked to say it's ready to open, weather permitting," states Whakapapa.

"Getting lifts spinning out west is a big milestone. We're confident the West Ridge chair will be available through to the end of the season if the weather holds. With that in place, the team now turns its focus to the Far West T-bar. We'll need four good days in a row to get that underway and the next week's forecast doesn't show that window just yet."

"We're confident the West Ridge chair will be available through to the end of the season if the weather holds," states the company.

Whakapapa have confirmed that skiing, snowboarding and sledding in Happy Valley will stay open through to 5 October.



Whakapapa's teams have been working hard to get the West Ridge Quad turning for the first time in two years.

VOTE ELIJAH PUE

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Climate change action

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I'm back, I'm ready.
Let's get to work,
together.

Elijah Pue
māori

Authorised by Elijah Pue, info@elijahpue.com



THE WEEKLY WORKOUT

answers for each puzzle are included on this page

819

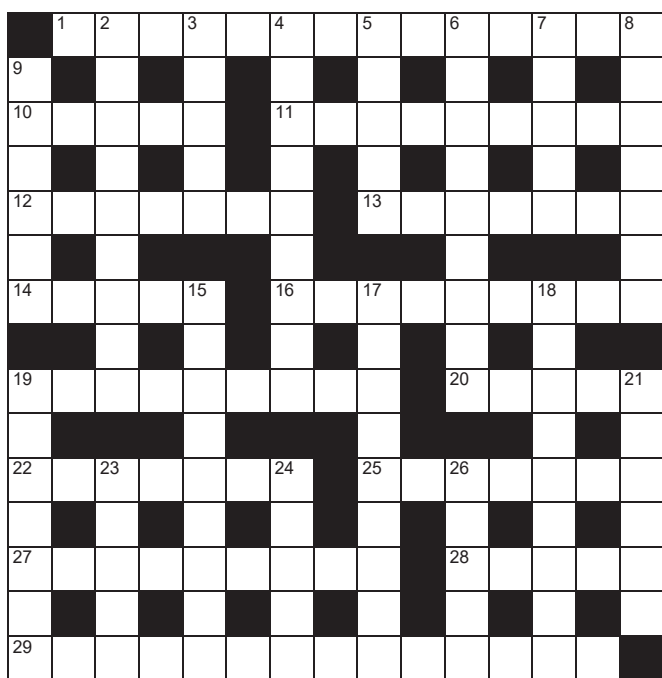
QUICK CROSSWORD

Across

- Available without prescription (4-3-7)
- Discussion meeting (5)
- Essential (9)
- Windy US city (7)
- Doubter (7)
- Pulsate (5)
- Avalanche (9)
- Distressing (9)
- Blood-sucking worm (5)
- Tallboy (7)
- Farm vehicle (7)
- Large spider (9)
- New Zealand lizard (5)
- Sleeping deeply (4,2,3,5)

Down

- Natural patina formed on copper, brass or bronze (9)
- Ballroom dance (5)
- The common people (3,6)
- Quotes (5)
- Global (9)
- Goggle box (2,3)
- Use again (7)
- Remnant (fabric) (6)



- Type of pumpkin (9)
- Discuss terms (9)
- Exactly the same (9)
- Modernised (7)
- Film genre (6)
- Artery (5)
- Crouch (5)
- Hostility (abbr) (5)



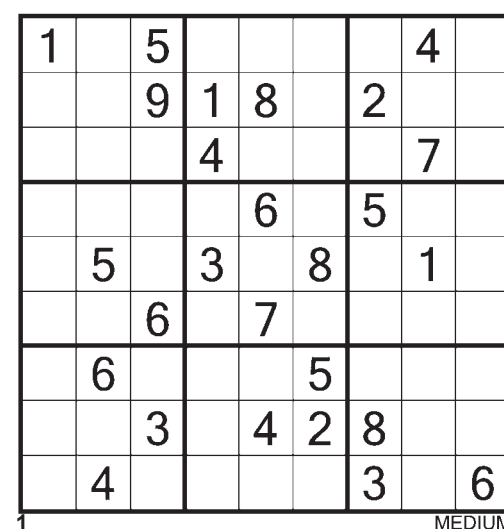
Enjoy WordFit puzzles?
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THE TOP 10

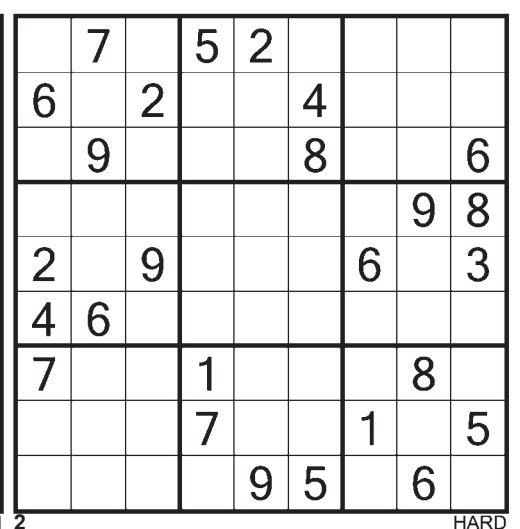
- Jack Sparrow, 10. Croquet.
2. Soil, 3. Hydrogen, 4. Sour cream, 5. 225 (15x15), 6. Heptathlons, 7. Alice, 8. Punt, 9. Friends, 10. Croquet.

SUDOKU

Fill the grid so every row, column and every 3x3 box contains 1-9



MEDIUM 2



HARD

The Top 10

- Which TV show's theme tune included the lines: *your job's a joke, you're broke, your love life's D.O.A.*?
- Is pedology the study of feet, soil, or motion?
- What is the most common element in the universe?
- In beef Stroganoff, what is added after the meat is cooked?
- How many squares on a Scrabble board?
- If men compete in decathlons, what do women compete in?
- In a children's story, who says she has believed "as many as six impossible things before breakfast"?
- What can be a small boat or Ireland's currency before the Euro?
- Who is captain of The Black Pearl?
- If blue and black are playing red and yellow, what's the game?

CROSSWORD

- Across: 1. Over-the-counter, 10. Forum, 11. Intrinsic, 12. Chicago, 13. Sceptic, 14. Throb, 16. Landslide, 19. Upsetting, 20. Leech, 22. Drawers, 25. Tractor, 27. Tarantula, 28. Gecko, 29. Dead to the world.
- Down: 2. Verdigris, 3. Rumba, 4. Hot polli, 5. Cites, 6. Universal, 7. TV set, 8. Recycle, 9. Offcut, 15. Butternut, 17. Negotiate, 18. Identical, 19. Updated, 21. Horror, 23. Aorta, 24. Squat, 26. Aggro.

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Ruapehu tourism at inaugural Kiwi North launch in Australia



The Ruapehu team at 'Kiwi North' – from left, Antika Scarf, Amanda Crang, Stu Barclay and Mahalee Guieysse (Visit Ruapehu).

Visit Ruapehu joined 14 other North Island Regional Tourism Organisations and more than 70 tourism operators for the inaugural Kiwi North roadshow in Sydney and Melbourne last week.

Local operators Powderhorn Chateau and Adrift Tongariro were also in attendance to help promote the diverse range of North Island experiences to bring more Australian visitors to the regions, increase night stays in Ruapehu, and spend.

“It was inspiring to see such a passionate group of operators all in one room, present-

ing to buyers with so much love for what they do. The energy was incredible – a fantastic opportunity to showcase the North Island and to educate Australian buyers on what makes it truly unique and well worth a visit,” said Amanda Crang, trade and marketing manager, Adrift Tongariro.

The three-day roadshow included a media event, appointments with product managers, presentations to frontliners as well as the opportunity for the North Island contingency to gain new connections and prospects for collaboration within and across regions.

Crunch time for Māori wards

By Mark Ebrey
It’s crunch time for local iwi and others as they face a major challenge in retaining Māori Ward seats on the Ruapehu District Council.

A simple majority on 11 October will determine whether or not the three Māori seats introduced at the last elections stay or go.

Election NZ figures show there were 8260 enrolled voters as at this week, with a voter turnout of 4301 or 50.9 per cent in 2022.

If the same applies this year, then a simple majority to retain or lose the Māori ward seats would be 2151 votes.

Based on figures from Electoral NZ, it would take a 100 per cent turnout from those on the Māori roll (1980) and a further 171 votes from those on the General roll to retain the seats.

However, Statistics New Zealand figures from the last census shows that of the 13,550 residents in the Ruapehu District 5979 identified as being Māori or 44 per cent, as

compared with 31 per cent on the Māori roll.
This suggests there could be a lot more support from those on the General roll, sufficient to get the seats across the line.

Voting papers have been arriving in local letterboxes, with the last expected to be delivered by 22 September.

Those not currently enrolled can do so and record a special vote until election day – Saturday 11 October – when voting closes at noon.

Orange ballot bins will be available throughout the district and at the three council offices, or ballot papers can be posted back.

To make voting as convenient as possible, there will also be a ‘mobile’ voting station visiting harder-to-reach parts of the district. Dates and locations will be confirmed closer to the time.

The most important thing is to get out and vote.

You can’t complain if things don’t turn out how you would like them if you haven’t bothered to have an input.

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Authorised by Weston Kirton, RDS Taumarunui

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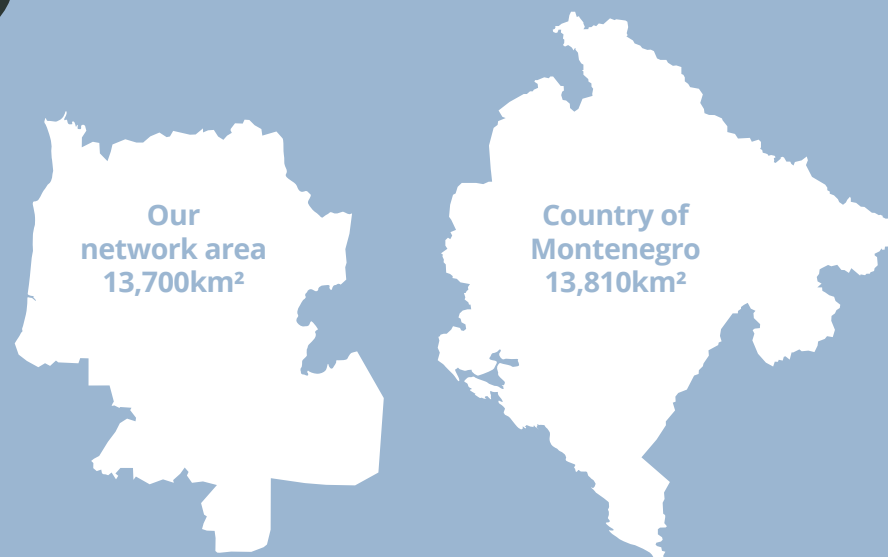
Our region

The King Country is vast, varied, rugged and remote, which makes maintaining our electricity network a major ongoing challenge.

There's a lot of country around here, but there aren't many people. There are only about 4 customers per km of power line on average, compared to upwards of 30 customers per km in other regions. That means we need around 2 power poles for every customer on the network, with almost half of those poles inaccessible from the road.

With significant areas of farmland being converted to forestry, unpredictable weather, and wilding pines growing 2 metres per year, trees are a serious threat to our lines, and require ongoing monitoring and work including heli-saw trimming.

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inaccessible from
the road

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man-hours of work in
the field, and more than
3 million km driven

4300km
of lines maintained —
Longer than a return trip
from Auckland to Sydney

572
poles
installed

18000
customers, with 24,000
connection points to the
network

841
Planned
shutdowns
completed for
maintenance

30 years on: Mt Ruapehu eruptions focus of conference

Then and now: volcanic risk management in Tongariro National Park (TNP) 1995-2012 and management lessons learnt

Harry Keys, Hollei Gabrielsen (DOC) and Andy Hoyle (Whakapapa Ski Area) will be presenting to the conference marking 30 years since the 1995 eruption of Mt Ruapehu:

- More than 200 people can be within each of the volcanic hazard zones of the four active vents in TNP during busy periods in summer or winter. Several serious near-miss events have been documented over the last 80 years, mostly at Ruapehu including 1995 and 2007. Nowadays any one of such events could have resulted in Whakaari-Level tragedies, if lessons hadn't been learned, and if current volcano monitoring by GNS/GeoNet and risk management measures by DOC and RAL/ WHL were not in place.

Volcanic risk management has come a long way since the first warning system was installed at

Whakapapa Ski Area in 1984 and the start of the 1995-1996 eruption. Now there is a hierarchy of controls and procedures including better utilisation of current GeoNet monitoring and warnings in place for all four vents.

However, despite the lessons learned and improved practices, there are still significant risks from eruptions that are “unheralded” (i.e. precursors absent or difficult to identify). In particular, lahars from such eruptions are particularly hazardous on Whakapapa Ski Area and the upper Whakapapa Valley including the eruptions of 1969 and 1975 during long periods of unrest. Eruptions of size 3 and above are potentially hazardous for people hiking up from Whakapapa Ski Area or via the Whangaehu Glacier or Gliding Gladys to the outer crater rim, The Col, Dome, or the summit

plateau or camping in these areas.

A warning system is designed to give near-real-time public warning of otherwise unheralded lahars entering Whakapapa ski area. In 2005 David Johnson initiated the first semi-quantitative estimations of the proportion of people at risk from lahars who then moved to safety over the course of public simulation exercises of the system. These have been continued, and more recently more quantitative measurements are being attempted using drones. Over the years a persistent 5-20%

of people have been observed to still be within high-risk valley areas within a minute of the alarms first sounding.

To date, varying eruption characteristics and technological challenges have prevented near-real time public warnings being issued during hazardous eruptions (1995, 2007) but did allow systems to be improved. Costs of volcano monitoring and maintaining the system have escalated.

Can risks be better mitigated?



A lahar sweeps down the west slopes of Whakapapa in September 1995. Photo: James Gardner.

RDC signs third iwi agreement

Ruapehu District Council has signed a relationship agreement with a third iwi grouping.

It adopted the Te Nehenehenui Relationship Agreement at its last meeting, following earlier agreements with Ngāti Rangī and Ngāti Hāua .

Te Nehenehenui is the entity created to manage the Maniapoto settlement with the Crown.

Jason Nepia (senior policy advisor, Te Nehenehenui) explained that the relationship agreement solidified an already enforced relationship and formalised the conversation framework, allowing parties to engage respectfully and understand what was important whilst sharing aspirations for the future.

The agreement provides a framework for respectful engagement between Council, Te Nehenehenui trustees, Taranaki Regional Council, and Horizons Regional Council regarding natural resources management.

Officers explained that the agreement formed part of Treaty settlement legislation and involved

collaborative work on natural resources alongside regional councils.

The executive manager regulatory and customer services noted that early in the relationship, she would like Jason and his team to share areas of interest and consultation threshold levels to create a streamlined process.

Deputy mayor Viv Hoeta noted the journey over the previous three years, which had commenced with the previous Council.

She emphasised that the document set the foundation to start conversations and move forward. While there would be challenges, it provided the essential starting point.

She noted that documents and kōrero could change, but without the document, progress could not commence.

It was noted that the agreement could be renegotiated after three years if it proved too onerous for either party.

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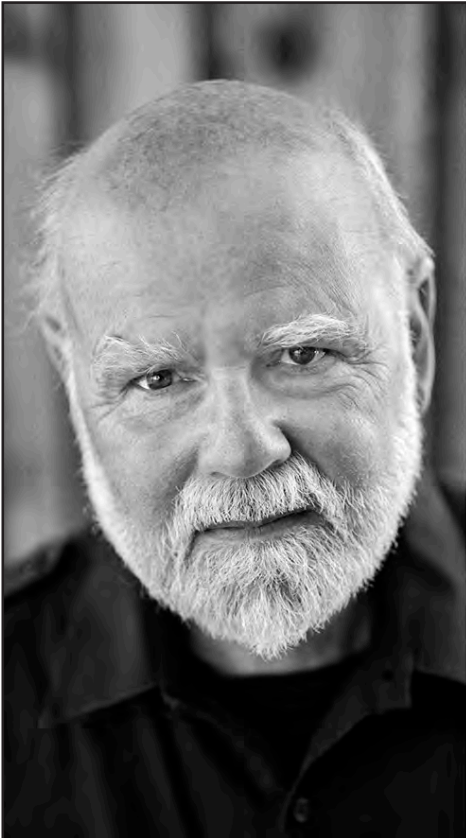
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Election 2025: candidates for Ruapehu mayor

Weston Kirton

Over the past three years, I have shown what can be achieved when leadership is focused on solving problems and creating opportunities.

I've brought passenger rail back to Taumarunui and cleaned up the rail yards, secured support to keep our ski fields open, advanced the Waimarino Wellness Centre, fought for WPI workers, invested in vital infrastructure, and stood up for the Chateau's future.

I've fought for affordable services, from pushing for the lowest-cost water model that could have

saved households over \$1000 a year, to working with the chief executive to tackle overspending, make savings and restore confidence in Council.

The next Long-Term Plan will be the toughest yet, with reforms, cost-of-living pressures and affordability front of mind.

With your support, I will continue to fight for Ruapehu, protect what makes us unique, and build a council that is fit-for-purpose, low-cost, and committed to delivering maximum value for our communities.

Lyn Neeson

In the next three years as mayor I would see growth of the district as the most important issue a council I lead can influence. With growth comes new people, new opportunities, a buzzier district and a spread of income.

Council's responsibility in this would be to focus on the choke points, which are the wastewater issues and getting the policies and processes right on subdivisions and buildings. Also, by ramping up the partnership with our Economic Development partner to make the best use of all opportunities on offer for small and medium sized businesses and to simplify process within council so that it is truly business friendly in every aspect.

As mayor, a priority is that councillors and community board members can understand and articulate information out to the community to keep Council moving in the direction and at the pace that the Community wants. Of course, representing the District at local, regional and national level in a manner that does our district proud and sharing the ideas and opportunities with other Councillors

so that we all are engaged and working with a confirmed purpose, is a key role of mayor.

We managed to save \$700,000 in the past six weeks to meet an out-of-budget overspend so is there enough fat in the system to deliver with less? Any reduction in levels of service has to be clearly explained to the community who are perfectly capable of understanding the implications and making the right decision. Meanwhile let's look at some of the automatic annual increases departments add to their budget and decide collectively if that is needed, like always having the latest library

books or upgrading our vehicles.

All communities have different opportunities with active, vocal, clever locals that will support good ideas. There are some good examples of philanthropic support for communities we love. Let's celebrate and share these successes. Council is the enabler, not the creator for everything.

Tourism has always been a growth industry and now is no different. There are plenty of other opportunities to support other industries. Our investment in VR and the isites will continue, but let's look at looking after all our residents and seek other opportunities. If there are extra demands in tourism then that industry can collectively look for solutions.

Regarding our zero waste ideal, lets finish implementing the food waste initiative. That would be a good start!

Making savings can start small and I fully intend to lead by example.

Grant Lethborg,

I am standing for mayor as I feel the Ruapehu District is at a turning point and now, more than ever, strong, grounded leadership is needed to restore confidence in council decision-making and financial management. Being very experienced in accountancy, farming and business, I know I am capable of achieving this. I see my role as mayor to be the people's voice at the council table, as I am one of us. I will not push personal agenda, and will lead with integrity. I will listen to our people and make sure every dollar spent provides maximum value. I aim to bring communities back together,

Turn to Page 9



Weston Kirton.



Lyn Neeson.



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Candidates for mayor

From Page 8

not divide them.

The key issues are the skyrocketing rates, massive debt and lack of fiscal control and management, hence the \$700,000 overspend. For too long council has overspent on consultants and “pet” projects, ignoring the core services. Residents and Ratepayers deserve financial discipline, transparency and accountability. Council needs to concentrate on the core services first, including their infrastructure, and then see what is left to spend! A total internal



Grant Lethborg.

review which will involve the mayor and reps from the councillors, will be undertaken into all council spending and activities.

Unnecessary consultants and inflated projects will be cut. I do see opportunities for alternative funding from government sources and leveraging tourism revenues. I would like to see another 400 ratable properties to add around \$14,000,000 revenue to the RDC, easing the burden on current ratepayers, so will make it a priority to ease the regulations so this can be started at the end of the first year. This will also enable us to clear debt and keep rates at least to the rate of inflation.

As owner of Owango Adventures, I bring deep tourism experience and see it as our biggest growth industry, so along with the important Economic Development, will work closely with the council’s branches to ensure it continues. I would mandate that all council staff must work within the Ruapehu. This alone would bring in \$4,000,000 to the communities.

I believe all communities in the Ruapehu matter and we must balance resources so none is left behind.

The thought of Zero waste is great and would like to see more education, better and practical recycling solutions and working closely with community groups to make more progress in this area.

There will be zero waste of our money though!

I am not a career politician, my background is grounded in real world experience, not politics. I am standing for us, our children and our mokopuna. A vote for me is a vote for action, accountability and a Ruapehu we can be proud of.

School ski races back at Tūroa

After a five-year break, the North Island Secondary Schools Skiing Competition is back at Ruapehu, and brought back to Tūroa where the competition started.

The event started on Monday, with one run being completed on the Yahoo run.

Bevan Thompson, organiser of the event, said they were in rebuilding mode, with 122 skiers and 44 snowboarders, from 33 schools – well down on the event’s heyday when between 500 and 600 skiers would take part.

Because of the lower numbers, it was decided to combine the skiing and snowboarding competitions.

Tuesday was to see the snowboarding GS, as well as the skiing and snowboarding slopestyle event. Wednesday was the event’s contingency day.

Thompson, from Bevan Events Services, said he was a bit disappointed that they only got one run in on Monday thanks to poor visibility and timing issues.

“But everyone was stoked to get it going again.”

The last time the event was held was 2019, with the pandemic stopping the event in 2020 and 2021, then poor snow years and issues with the ski fields’ ownership proving problematic since then.

Thompson said the skiing is sponsored by local businesses TCB Ohakune, Nordica, Blizzard, Arcade and American Socks. The snowboarding is sponsored by Smith, K2, and Bordertown. The sponsors donated prizes for the competitors.

Ohakune squash

Over the weekend Taumarunui hosted the second of the Ruapehu junior Tecnifibre series of tournaments. Several Ohakune Squash Club juniors travelled there with several good results. Ben Lee (Ohakune) won division 1 with Paige Drinkwater (Ohakune) runner up, Ashton Smith (Ohakune) won division 2 with Blair Ballantyne (Aria) runner up, Luke Jensen (Taumarunui) won division 3 with Royce Waetford (Turangi) runner up, Ocean Thompson (Ohakune) won division 4 with Levi Hemopo (Turangi) runner up, Georgia Smith (Ohakune) won division 5 with James Lomas (Taumarunui) runner up.

Round four of inter-house on Thursday had the following results: Dunlop beat Salming 97/72, Head beat Unsquashable 81/76, Tecnifibre beat Prince 98/71 and Karakal got 80 for the bye. Points after four rounds has Tecnifibre maintaining its narrow lead on 380, Karakal

359, Dunlop 352, Head 338, Salming 333, Unsquashable 330 and Prince 304. The draw for this Thursday is 5:00pm Prince vs Karakal, 6:30pm Tecnifibre vs Dunlop, 8:00pm Head vs Salming and Unsquashable has the bye.

The Ohakune E grade men’s team finished 8th in Napier last week in the national E grade teams final, whilst the Ohakune F grade women’s team finished third in Rotorua in the F grade women’s teams final.

Entries for the Ohakune Ossie’s open for the week-end of 3-4 October are almost full with a higher than normal number of top end players including several A graders. Locals are advised to enter online quickly or miss out.

Entries are also open for all divisions of the club champs that will start after the current round of inter-house finishes in early October.



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PUBLIC NOTICES



Ruapehu Mayor Weston Kirton

To arrange a meeting or call back please phone Council on 06 385 8364 or email: kay.kidd@ruapehudc.govt.nz



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BUSINESS NOTICES



This Saturday 20 September
at The Centre, Seddon St until 1pm

For stall info phone Angel 0274 316 327
Only \$10 per stall – third Saturday of each month

PUBLIC NOTICES

Tongariro Taupō Conservation Board

Notice of Meeting

Date: 25 September 2025

Venue: Tongariro DOC Office - Whakapapa Village SH48, 3951

Public Forum: 1pm to 1.30pm

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and engage with the Board during the public forum.

If you wish to attend the meeting or address the Board, either in person or online via MS Teams, please contact Louisa Meredith to receive an agenda and online link on

E. tongarirotaupoconservationboard2@doc.govt.nz

Ph. 027 256 1835

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/statutory-and-advisory-bodies/conservation-boards/tongariro-taupo>

www.ohakune.info

NZ MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL NATIONAL TOUR



SCREENING HERE: **Matterhorn Restaurant**

Wednesday 1 October, 7pm start

Tickets \$20 available from the Ruapehu Bulletin or on the door
Funds raised going to Predator Free Ohakune



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Schools' funding for sustainability projects

The regional council has announced the recipients of the 2025 Pat Kelly EnviroSchools Action Fund, awarding grants to 18 EnviroSchools across the region including two in Ruapehu.

The Pat Kelly EnviroSchools Action Fund supports innovative environmental and sustainability initiatives across the Manawātū-Whanganui Region (Horizons).

HMW senior environmental educator and EnviroSchools regional leader Sarah Williams says council received 33 applications, seeking a total of \$51,000 this year.

"We continue to see a growing desire from schools and students to learn and implement sustainable practices.

"With 118 EnviroSchools in the region we strive to fund as many projects as we can across the region. It was great to see so many new EnviroSchools apply for funding this year.

"Horizons Regional Council remains committed to supporting the next generation of environmental leaders through the EnviroSchools programme.

"We also offer support to those schools and centres that are not part of the programme with our Environmental Education Grant that is open all year round to help kick start action projects with a focus on biodiversity, biosecurity, and water quality. Details of this are available on our grants and sponsorship section of our website".

Ruapehu recipients of the 2025 fund are: Orautoha School to purchase fruit trees for a school orchard; Tau-maruui Primary School for building and designing pou for their ka mua, ka muri project.

Changes in Waimarino museum team

Two long-serving executive members of the Waimano Museum Society have retired.

Bernice Frost has been involved with the Museum for many years, serving as president since 2015.

Adrienne Maru has also served on the committee for many years including 22 years as treasurer.

They plan to continue to support the committee and with fundraising efforts and other volunteer efforts.

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at Raetihi Senior Elder Care Centre Lounge Seddon Street Raetihi recently.

"It was attended by the very devoted members of the Society – we were hoping that some of the community would attend the meeting to volunteer and support for its future development, preserving the history of this area," said Noelene Churton, secretary.

"We thank them for their service to the Museum and are happy that they are continuing to stay on the Committee for their knowledge will be good value and help to all."

The Society is asking readers to consider becoming involved with the Museum.

"You may know one of the people listed below and you could discuss with them what and how the Museum operates," said Noelene, who also invites people to call her on 027-244-5226 for information.

The Museum is open on Sundays at present and they are hoping to get some more interest from the community to be able to open the Museum on a Wednesday and for a person to do work for the records and other jobs that are needed to help the Museum in the future.

"The Museum is a place that you can find out information of past events and get information and see items of interest from this area that past residents used to live and survive back in those times."

The Society patron is Colin Fredricksen.

Officers elected are: president Merrilyn George; vice president Angel Reid; secretary Noelene Churton; treasurer Richard Bryce; roster administrator Viv Hoeta.

Committee: Bernice Frost, Adrienne Maru, Viv Hoeta, Noeline Pikari, Roger Granville, Graeme Bell, Richard Bryce.

The Museum has a stall at the Country Market, third Saturday in the month, selling cakes, raffles and various other items.

"Come and support this event held at The Centre, Seddon Street, Raetihi."

Election 2025: candidates for council

We presented a set of questions to candidates and asked for a profile of themselves. Some chose to answer the questions, some chose to provide a profile, and some chose to provide a mix:

Rhonda Kingston

•Tena koutou katoa. Ko Rhonda Kingston ahau. Ko Toka Toka Te Maunga. Ko Northern Wairoa Te Awa, e Te Kopuru Te Whenua. Te Waka o Te Hapu o 1859, Te Shalimar.

My name is Rhonda Kingston. I was born on the Kaipara Peninsula, where my mother’s people lived alongside the Ngati Whatua o Tatarariki (Te Kopuru). Since May 2020, my household has lived rurally in the Ruapehu region.

Should I be elected to serve, I bring knowledge, skills and experience in education, horticulture,

agriculture, sustainability, entrepreneurship, the arts, and respect for the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

I bring advocacy for the diverse, as well as empathy for the suppressed and oppressed. I have zero tolerance for bullying, harassment, and prejudice. I acknowledge the Rule of Law, which ensures the well-being of all people and the natural environment. Ma te Atua koutou e manaaki e taiki.

Sophie Stockbridge

What are the most important issues for the Ruapehu District?

Safe roads, local control of water, and making sure rates are spent wisely. Supporting families with practical things like playgrounds, toilets, and local facilities is also vital.

Do you want the council to spend more or less

than in previous years?

I want the council to spend smarter, with clear priorities and accountability.

If less, what would you cut to make savings?

Savings should come from reducing over-spending, sticking to budgets, and avoiding poor financial decisions.

If more, what extra services and/or projects would you like to see council spend money on?

Community facilities such as safe footpaths, shade in playgrounds, and reliable infrastructure in smaller towns.

If you want more projects but no more spending, what other ways could they be funded?

Partnerships with government, grants, and working alongside local businesses and com-

munity groups.

How can the council balance communities in decline and those developing?

By being flexible. Growing areas need infrastructure, while smaller towns need strong support for essential services and community initiatives.

Tourism is growing. How can the council meet industry demands?

Tourism revenue should be reinvested in local services like roads, toilets, and rubbish systems. A clean, safe, and welcoming district benefits both visitors and locals.

Is RDC doing enough on zero waste?

Not yet. We need more recycling options, local weighbidges, better education, and fairer costs for families.

Do you have any other comments for voters?

I am Sophie Stockbridge. I have lived in Ruapehu most of my life and am raising my family here. I stand for open, honest leadership, clear spending, and putting families and communities first.

Luke Pepper

• My name is Luke Pepper and I’ve represented Taumarunui/Ohura as chair on the community board and now super motivated to become a member and represent you all on council.

As always RDC is under pressure to perform from ratepayers and meet challenges from central government and will need dedicated strong people like myself to work collaboratively and tirelessly to advocate for you, we not only need to solve we need to create and having a cohesive focused table will undoubtedly be of benefit to all.

I love living here and proud to say I farm in Ruapehu – it has so much to offer, so if you’re serious about voting for someone who’s is approachable, community focused and just as comfortable around a council table as a cowshed then vote Luke Pepper your number one choice.



Rhonda Kingston.



Sophie Stockbridge.



Luke Pepper.

Election 2025: candidates for WWCB

Colin Pakai

• I am standing for a second term as I feel I still have tasks to complete.

Here are some of my thoughts:

I feel that communities like Waiouru/Karioi/Rangataua and Irirangi haven’t had enough representation over the years. In saying that, we need to look at the area as a whole and see where we can improve. (I see stormwater problems in all the towns).

The most important issues for WWCB are employment and debt. Also, Water Done Better.

I think that in the past council have had a lot of ‘like to haves’ and instead should have concentrated on the ‘need to haves’. For example: infrastructure water/sewerage/stormwater.

I see the biggest challenge is creating employment. As a community board we need to encourage council to contract to locals if practical. I have seen this before. Locals take ownership. They live in the area and employ locals. The money stays here.

I would also like to see less involvement by council on the WWCB. At times we are held back by their agenda. We need their in-put and guidance at times, but not always.

Jonathan Findon

• The Waimarino-Waiouru Ward faces a mix of challenges, with some communities in decline and

others striving to maintain essential services. To meet these needs, we must plan carefully, invest in infrastructure, and — most importantly — listen. I believe that effective leadership starts with listening: to residents, to businesses, and to those whose voices are often overlooked.

As a ratepayer in Horopito and an environmental scientist, I bring both local commitment and technical expertise. My professional background equips me to interpret complex reports and make evidence-based decisions, but my priority is always to hear what the community wants and needs.

Key issues for our ward include adapting to environmental change, improving civil defence readiness, and ensuring safe, healthy, and affordable housing. We must support local businesses and tourism through upgraded services, better roads, and vibrant community events.

Community boards should be the voice of the people. Their role is to listen actively, advocate strongly, and ensure council decisions reflect local priorities. While some feel the RDC has weakened community boards, I believe we must respond by amplifying our voice and deepening our engagement.

To be more effective, the board must consult widely, communicate clearly, and support initia-



Colin Pakai.

tives that reflect the diverse needs of our communities. Tourism is a major growth area, and we must meet its demands with smart planning and sustainable infrastructure — guided by community input.

I’m standing because I care deeply about our



Jonathan Findon.

district’s future. I will listen, advocate, and work hard to ensure our communities thrive. With your support, I’ll help make our area a place where everyone feels heard, supported, and proud of.

Candidate quits Te Tai Hauāuru seat contest

By Moana Ellis, Local Democracy Reporting

Tāwhiao McMaster has withdrawn as a candidate for Horizons Regional Council’s Raki Māori constituency, announcing plans to instead stand in next year’s General Election.

McMaster, 29, said he will seek election in the Māori electorate of Te Tai Hauāuru.

“Having been raised in te ao Māori, I will be standing as a rangatahi and a fluent speaker of te reo Māori,” McMaster said. “I will be making sure that the things I aim to change will benefit us all.”

Te Tai Hauāuru stretches across the western North Island from South Waikato, Te Kuiti and Taumarunui and the southern Ruapehu through Taranaki, Whanganui, Manawatū and down to Tawa.

McMaster (Te Ātihaunui a Pāpārangi, Tainui, Ngā Paerangi, Ngā Poutamanui-a-Awa, Ngāti Toa Rangatira, Ngāti Rangī, Ngāti Tūpoho, Ngāti Tama, Ngāti Aokehu and Ngāti Uenuku) said he was unable at this stage to confirm which party he will represent.

“There is a formal process underway to accept my nomination as a candidate in the next General Election. Until the formalities are completed, I am unable to give further details.

“This is a recent development and means that I have withdrawn from the Horizons Regional Council election process,” he said.

“I acknowledge and wish the best of luck to the remaining Horizons Raki Māori candidates Koro Jim Edmonds, Auntie Soraya Peke-Mason and my older cousin Elijah Pue.”

The Pūtiki Pā resident said he was making a preliminary announcement because local body election voting has officially opened.

“People will see I’ve withdrawn my candidacy for the regional council and they deserve to know why.”

McMaster has worked as an environmental lawyer and public servant. He chairs Māori land trust Ngāporo Waimarino Forest Trust in the central North Island and is a trustee for Whanganui River settlement entity Ngā Tāngata Tiaki o Whanganui, and the central North Island iwi collective Te Korowai o Wainuiārua.

Voting papers for the local government elections are expected to arrive in letterboxes from Tuesday until 22 September.

LDR is local body journalism co-funded by RNZ and NZ On Air



Tāwhiao McMaster has withdrawn from local body elections to prepare to stand for Parliament. Photo supplied.

Top tourism award for Ohakune business

An Ohakune business has won the top tourism award from the Qualmark system – which has official recognition by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). “Your business can be confident that achieving Qualmark accreditation aligns with global sustainability standards and displaying your award demonstrates that TCB Ski Board & Bike is dedicated to protecting the natural environment, strengthening connections with local communities, and providing a high-quality, safe experience for all visitors (manuhiri),” Will Chapman, service delivery manager told Ben Wiggins from TCB on announcing the award.

“TCB Ski Board and Bike are really proud to be chosen to obtain the Qualmark Gold award,” says Mike Wiggins.

“For several years now TCB has received awards for being in the top 10% worldwide from Trip Advisor and now to receive the Qualmark Gold award makes all the hard work worthwhile.”

“It is not just the systems that TCB use, but the outstanding efforts of Ben in the training of their team to make sure all visitors to Ohakune are made welcome and the working in with many other local businesses to provide a “Ruapehu Experience” to all who visit the area.”

Tourism minister Louise Upston has congratulated TCB. “This is a remarkable achievement and a testament to TCB’s unwavering commitment to excellence, sustainability and delivering an exceptional visitor experience. Your leadership in fostering a strong team culture, embracing



Mike and Ben Wiggins, celebrating their top tourism award.

nature restoration and collaborating with local businesses to deliver an authentic ‘Ruapehu experience’, exemplifies the kind of dedication that enriches our tourism sector,” she wrote in her letter of congratulations.

“TCB’s journey from a seasonal operation to a business that offers all-year-round services to visitors, is impressive. The resilience and adaptability you and your team have demonstrated make TCB an outstanding example of what a tourism business can achieve.”

A Gold Sustainable Tourism Business Award recognises “the best sustainable tourism businesses in New Zealand, with the delivery of exceptional customer experiences an integral part of everything they do”, states Andrew Boyle, Qualmark specialist.

The business was judged to be achieving

‘best practice’ under the health and safety. Under Qualmark’s ‘business system’, they were judged to be achieving ‘best practice’ for its business plan, policies and procedures, business improvement processes and risk management and mitigation. Under ‘environment’, they were judged to be achieving best practice for waste management and pollution as well as ‘restoring nature’. Under ‘people’, best practice was achieved for staff training and staff acknowledgement and satisfaction.

Under ‘community and culture’, best practice was achieved for local knowledge and products as well as community support.

In categories where the business did not achieve a ‘best practice’ rating, they achieve a ‘good standard’. In all categories, the business achieved better than ‘expected’.

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