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**Farmers' green award P3**



**Arrgg! Kids are pirates P14**



**Fifty years a fireman P9**



**Welcome to our Taihape readers! P6-7**

# Iwi investment helps whānau thrive across Ruapehu

By Moana Ellis, Local Democracy Reporting

An iwi-led investment initiative has injected nearly \$300,000 into supporting whānau to build a diverse range of enterprises across the Ruapehu region.

Ngāti Rangi has funded 34 new whānau initiatives in its fourth round of Whiria Ngā Hua, a programme aimed at creating local solutions to help whānau and hapori (communities) thrive.

Helen Leahy, pou ārahi of Ngāti Rangi's operational arm Ngā Waihua o Paerangi, said the investment enables whānau to pursue their aspirations.

"This is the essence of Whānau Ora," Leahy said.

"All of our experience and evaluations prove that outcomes are always more enduring and more meaningful when whānau

are in the driving seat."

Ngāti Rangi launched Whiria Ngā Hua in 2022 to support social, cultural, medical and economic wellbeing. Leahy said the initiative is driven by whānau, for whānau.

Research from previous funding rounds has shown that investing directly in whānau enterprise delivers positive social impacts by strengthening cultural and community connectedness as well as health and economic development, Leahy said.

"The model of funding invests in ideas and initiatives to improve a broad range of wellbeing outcomes for whānau, underpinned by a whānau-centred approach.

"Rather than being directed to comply, or be a passive recipient of services, whānau have told us they want to create positive solutions for themselves."

**Aspirations**

In the latest round, whānau are bringing their aspirations to life through kaupapa ranging from creative kākahu huruhuru sewing workshops for marae to environmental work training, including fire-arms licences, chainsaw skills and risk management.

"Our priority for funding was to invest in rangatahi," Leahy said.

Among the ventures supported are Matua Te Mana Muay Thai, Ruapehu Waka Ama, and Ka Ora Ngā Rangatahi Maara Kai – a hunting and gathering initiative under the kaupapa Maara to Jar, involving cultivation, seeding, planting, hanging



A student practices fire safety skills during 360 Rangatahi's fire extinguisher and general fire awareness training. The programme was funded through Whiria Ngā Hua. Photo Supplied.

Turn to Page 2



The Tongariro Fire on Sunday, showing several hot spots as well as the devastated areas either side of the Mangatepopo Road. Photo: John Funnell. Inset: what is possibly the location of the start of the fire near the Mahuia Rapids. Photo: Alison Beath. See inside for more.

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# Tongariro fire: Crossing escapes major damage, but extensive biodiversity loss

The fire that has devastated almost 3000 hectares of the north-western areas of the Tongariro National Park along SH47 has left the Tongariro Alpine Crossing relatively unscathed, Damian Coutts, regional operations manager for the Department of Conservation said yesterday.

## Pou survives

Fire fighters managed to save all structures in the Tongariro National Park, including the welcome shelter at the Mangatepopo end of the Tongariro Alpine Crossing.

They also managed to save the pou that was erected almost exactly a year ago and unveiled by Conservation Minister Tama Potaka.

He said he spotted the figure from a helicopter during a flyover of the damage on Sunday.

“There are charred remains of the earth, but actually in the middle of it all, there’s one little area where it’s a little bit of green, and right there is where the carving to the pou [post marker], there standing and amongst all the smoke, and it has not been destroyed.

“It’s been charred, it’s been scarred, but it’s still there”.

It represents Te Ririo, a significant figure in the histories of Ngāti Hikairo ki Tongariro, hapū of Ngāti Tūwharetoa.



The pou at the start of the Tongariro Alpine Crossing has suffered charring, but has otherwise survived the fire. Photo: Mike Scott.

He added that they will know more over the coming days as they are able to get in and properly assess the damage.

This news was a huge relief for the many businesses and their staff that rely on the Tongariro Alpine Crossing for their summer income.

However, the impact on the biodiversity of the area is much more concerning, with Te Runanganui O Ngati Hikairo Ki Tongariro announcing two rahui over the area.

The first rahui covers the Tongariro Alpine Crossing and will remain in place for one week, allowing time for the maunga and its pathways to rest and recover.

“The second rahui applies to the burnt areas where the fires have damaged the whenua and native vegetation.

“This rahui will remain in place for an extended period to enable the natural regrowth and healing of the land.”

Both rahui were placed at Opotaka following karakia led by Ngati Hikairo ki Tongariro kaumatua and whanau.

“We ask that all visitors and the wider community respect these rahui and refrain from entering the affected areas until further notice.”

Te Ngahe Wanikau - Ngati Hikairo ki Tongariro – pointed out that across the state highway from the National Park are extensive areas of weeds – broom, blackberry and gorse – and that it was important that these weed species were not allowed to become established in the Park.

### Project Tongariro support

Project Tongariro has said that native species will take time to recover, while fire-adapted weeds like contorta pine, broom, gorse and heather are likely to bounce back quickly.

“Restoring balance across this landscape will require time, collaboration and careful management,” stated the organisation.

“Project Tongariro – deeply connected to Tongariro National Park and its people – stands ready to support the Department of Conservation, Ngāti Hikairo ki Tongariro and other partners in both immediate response and long-term restoration.

“We fully support Ngāti Hikairo ki Tongariro’s rāhui focused on recovery and restoration. Active kaitiakitanga and stewardship must guide this work.”

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National Park Volunteer Fire Brigade are among the many teams that worked – and continue to work – on dealing with the Tongariro fire, working through the day and well into the early hours of the morning, helping with the effort. Photo: NPVB.

## Tongariro fire start

National Park fire chief Marilla Swift says there was no way the four firefighters from her brigade who were first to face the blaze in Tongariro could have foreseen the devastation that would unravel.

“You see it when it’s small and you can’t imagine that within just a couple of hours, it’s going to be like Armageddon almost and the whole country is coming your way.”

A vegetation fire was unusual for the National Park brigade. It had been more than a year since the team had to battle

any significant fires of that kind.

Swift said the area wasn’t usually dry enough for fires to go big and move this fast.

Four National Park volunteer firefighters responded quickly but the blaze was already bigger than a football pitch and moving fast when they arrived.

“The fire conditions were such that it was just blowing it away at speed,” Swift said.

“It was really clear from the moment it started that it was out of control.”

## Iwi-led investment helps whānau thrive across Ruapehu

From Page 1

meat and turning produce into pickles and relish.

Other kaupapa include Te Hā o te Huru (The Essence of Hair), nurturing rangatahi in the art of barbering, and Taonga Pūoro Hauora Kete, focused on the stories and creation of traditional musical instruments.

“Some of the successful applications focused on soul-to-soul healing such as counselling and equine-assisted therapy, while four local kura will also benefit from this round.”

Leahy said the Ruapehu region had experienced significant employment shocks over the past two years, and Whiria Ngā Hua was well placed to create new opportunities for whānau and communities to prosper.

With business liquidations expected to exceed 2500 this year nationally, marking a ten year high, Whiria Ngā Hua is reversing the national trend by creating new opportunities for whānau and communities to thrive.

### Māori enterprise

“Whiria Ngā Hua continues to grow the Māori enterprise ecosystem and strengthen whānau-led economic resilience,” she said.

The 34 funded ventures were selected from 69 applications, with a total investment of \$293,500.

Of 46 complete applica-

tions assessed by an independent panel, 27 were fully approved, seven partially approved, 12 declined and one withdrawn.

More than 70% of approved applicants (24 whānau) intend to establish legal entities to build sustainable ventures. Collectively, the initiatives are expected to reach 1756 individuals across the wider Ruapehu, Waimarino and Whanganui communities.

An evaluation commissioned by Ngā Waihua o Paerangi found the Whiria Ngā Hua model has produced significant outcomes for whānau and the wider community, fostering cultural connection, capability building and a stronger sense of empowerment, self-determination and wellbeing.

The research concluded the initiative is driving positive change for hundreds of people across the Ruapehu region and demonstrates the multifaceted impact of direct whānau commissioning.

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



Rangatahi learn about safe river crossing, rescue swimming with recovery ropes, CPR, first aid and spinal injuries in the water in last year's 360 Rangatahi Life Skills initiative, funded through Whiria Ngā Hua. Photo supplied.

## Alzheimers Whanganui

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- Do you need the support of someone who understands dementia
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- Do you just require some information about dementia

Our Support Coordinator will be in Raetihi

Wednesday 26 November 2025

10.30am - 12.00pm

If you would like to make an appointment

Please contact Mary: Ph 022 694 4978

## Ruapehu Events & What's On

### NOVEMBER 2025

**Raetihi Culture Festival 13 November**  
Raetihi School, 06 385 4402 or [office@raetihi.school.nz](mailto:office@raetihi.school.nz)

**Renegade Muster 15 November**  
#mountainstoseanz Ruapehu NZ, Discover Whanganui, Dept of Conservation

### DECEMBER 2025

**Raetihi Christmas Carnival 13 December**  
Seddon St, Raetihi from 9am. Contact Kay on 027 924 7252 for stalls.

**Christmas in the Park 23 December**  
Christie Park, Ohakune from 5pm.

### JANUARY 2026

**Mahi Aroha - DoC Summer Programme 1 - 30 January**  
For further information: [www.tongariro.org.nz](http://www.tongariro.org.nz)

**The Goat Adventure Run 17 January**  
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2 • **RUAPEHU BULLETIN** 12 November 2025





**Celebrating Blue Duck Station's success, from left, Minister Tama Potaka; Mel Rickards – Blue Duck Station operations manager; Jack Cashmore – Chef's Table; Dan Steele and Sandy Waters, and Mahalee Guieysse, Visit Ruapehu.**

## Waimarino Waiouru Community Board members sworn-in

The new Waimarino-Waiouru Community Board for the 2025/28 triennium was sworn-in at a ceremony in the Ohakune Council Chambers on Tuesday last week.

The WWCB elected members for the next three-years are: John (Luigi) Hotter - chairperson, Stu Robinson - deputy chair, Kay Henare, Colin Pakai, and new first-term member Emma Young.

Councillor David (Rabbit) Nottage is the appointed Council representative.

Appointments to represent the WWCB on outside organisations are: Kariori Hall and Recreation Reserve Management Committee – Colin Pakai; Rangataua Hall and Recreation Reserve Management Committee – Rabbit Nottage; Ruatiti Recreation Reserve Committee – Kay Henare; Horopito Hall Committee – Emma Young; Rae-tihi Community Plan Steering Committee – Kay Henare; Ohakune Community Plan Steering Committee – Rabbit

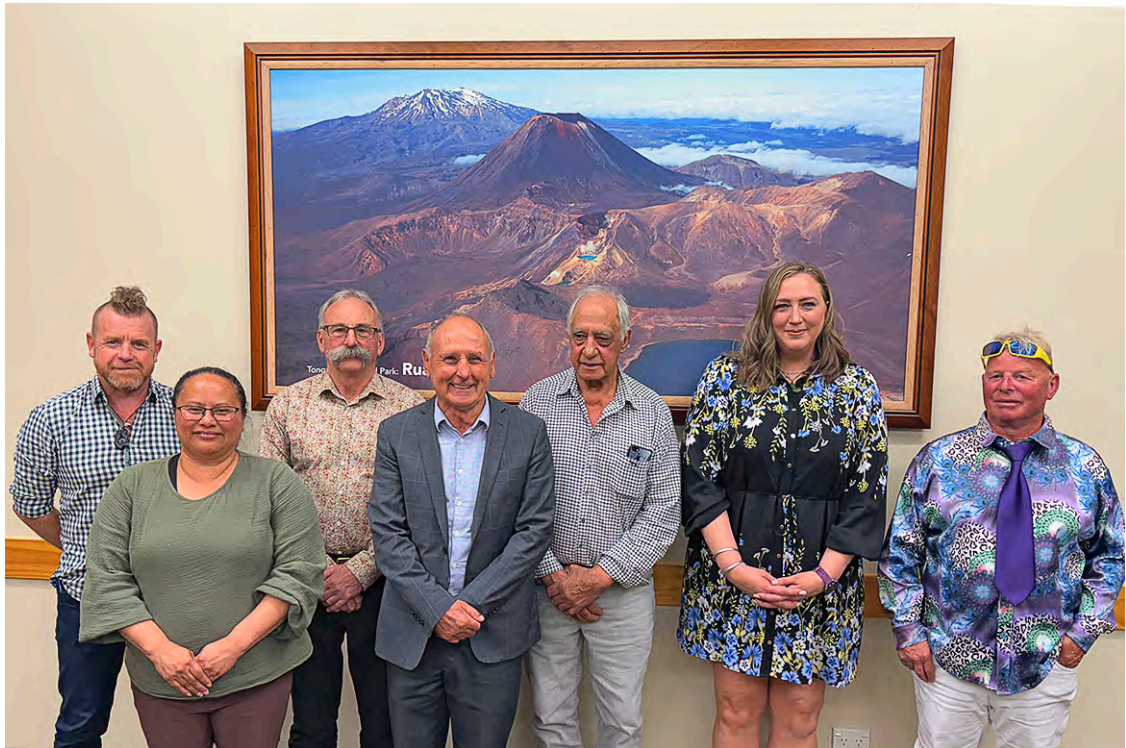
Nottage; Ohakune Carrot Adventure Park Charitable Trust – Stu Robinson.

Ruapehu's mayor Weston Kirton congratulated the WWCB members for their election success, saying that there was a lot of work ahead while noting that it will be a challenge to keep rates down and at the same time deliver wanted services to the community.

"I want to thank you for your commitment and wish you all the best as a Community Board – I'm very happy to be here and support your work," he said.

In reply, chairman Luigi Hotter thanked Kirton for his comments adding that the WWCB was looking forward to working with him and the Council over the next three-years.

WWCB meeting details and elected member contact information can be found on Council's website: [ruapehu.govt.nz](http://ruapehu.govt.nz)



**Waimarino-Waiouru Community Board 2025/28, from left, Stu Robinson – deputy chair, Kay Henare, John (Luigi) Hotter – chair, Weston Kirton, Colin Paki, Emma Young, David (Rabbit) Nottage – appointed Councillor.**

## Hands-on conservation project wins award

Winner of the 2025 KiwiRail Tourism Environment Award, Blue Duck Station, is a working sheep and beef farm dedicated to hands-on conservation to protect and preserve the health of native bush and rivers.

Located adjacent to the remote beauty of Whanganui National Park in the Ruapehu District, Blue Duck Station is one of New Zealand's environmentally significant stations and has maintained a top conservation operation for the past 20 years.

"It was fantastic to see such a high calibre of entries this year, with businesses clearly embracing sustainability in meaningful and innovative ways. Blue Duck Station stood out for its deep environmental commitment and is a very deserving winner of the KiwiRail Tourism Environment Award," says KiwiRail executive general manager of passenger Tracey Goodall.

"My hope is for New Zealand to become the biggest conservation project on earth. Improving the health and well-being capital of the planet is the basis of the best strategy and long-term business plan we can think of," said Dan Steele, owner of Blue Duck Station.

"We believe the environment is the backbone and value behind everything New Zealand is and ever will be. The natural capital of New Zealand is massive,

especially when considered per capita. We must look after it and use it as the basis to make New Zealand the best place to live on earth," adds Dan.

Jo Kennedy, general manager of Visit Ruapehu commends the Blue Duck Station team and all their efforts.

"Visit Ruapehu is so proud of the work Blue Duck Station does, aligning beautifully with our Destination Management Plan and delivering strong tourism product to the region.

"With a relentless passion for farming, tourism, and conservation, Blue Duck Station continues to attract visitors from around the world seeking meaningful travel experiences unique to Aotearoa."

Recently launched is Blue Duck Station's new multi-day adventure walk along with a range of outdoor activities including kayaking, bush safaris, mountain biking, horse treks, jetboating and stargazing.

For a fine dining experience, guests can also book into the award-winning Chef's Table at the top of Blue Duck Station. Only accessible by ATV, helicopter or horse, this intimate 10-seat restaurant offers a refined tasting menu of foraged and sustainably farmed local produce with the option to stay overnight in a luxury cabin adjacent to the restaurant.

## Tuesday fire update

Drones with thermal imaging equipment have begun checking the flanks of the Tongariro National Park fireground for hotspots, reported FENZ on Tuesday morning.

Fire and Emergency's specialist drone crew completed one flank of the fire last night, flying over the containment lines which are up to 30 metres wide. They were to return Tuesday tonight to complete the second flank.

District Commander Nigel Dravitzki says that the information from the drones help ground crews target their efforts to consolidate the containment lines right around the fire ground.

There were 35 crews of Department of Conservation firefighters working on the fireground on Tuesday. One helicopter is on standby, but conditions have been too misty with extensive low cloud to enable a visual flyover of the area.

"The weather is perfect for fire suppression, no good for getting an aerial view of the ground," Nigel Dravitzki says.

"Once we are able to get airborne, we will fly around the full perimeter and get an accurate measure of the size. Indications are that the size has not increased since Sunday night but I won't be confident about that until we have seen it."

The last estimate was 2800 hectares.

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Chateau Tongariro petition referred to a minister for response



Chateau Tongariro – the petition to save the iconic hotel is now in Parliament’s hands.

The petition to Save the Chateau Tongariro Hotel – led by the Ruapehu District Council – has now been formally referred by the Parliamentary Petitions Committee to a Minister for response.

The Cabinet Office will now determine the most appropriate Minister to provide the response, which is due by 11 February 2026.

“Having the petition referred to a Minister is a significant step forward,” said Ruapehu’s mayor Weston Kirton.

“It brings us closer to having a plan to resolve any issues and unlock the \$100 million-plus in private redevelopment funding needed to restore the Chateau and reopen this iconic landmark.”

Following the presentation of the 15,500-signature petition at Parliament in September, Council was invited to provide a written submission.

This was lodged in mid-November and set out the background, the opportunity, and the action Council is seeking.

“In our submission we asked Government to recognise the scale of opportunity,” said Kirton.

“A redevelopment of this size would bring new jobs, training and skills development, regional growth, iwi partnership opportunities, and protection of one of Aotearoa’s most significant heritage hotel buildings.”

The Council also highlighted that reopening the Chateau aligns strongly with the Government’s tourism goals for a high-value, sustainable and regionally dispersed visitor economy.

“With credible investors already at the table – investors with the vision, capability and financial capacity to restore the Chateau and revitalise Whakapapa Village – what we need now is Government leadership,” he said.

Council’s submission calls on Government to commit to a five-point plan:

- Run a clear, time-bound process to identify a suitable investor with the vision and capacity to restore the Chateau.
- Put in place the necessary policy and lease settings to make redevelopment viable.
- Work alongside iwi and investors to co-design governance arrangements that honour Treaty partnerships and mana whenua aspirations.

• Champion the project at a national level as a model for heritage protection and regional economic development.

• Act with urgency so restoration can begin before further deterioration or loss of opportunity occurs.

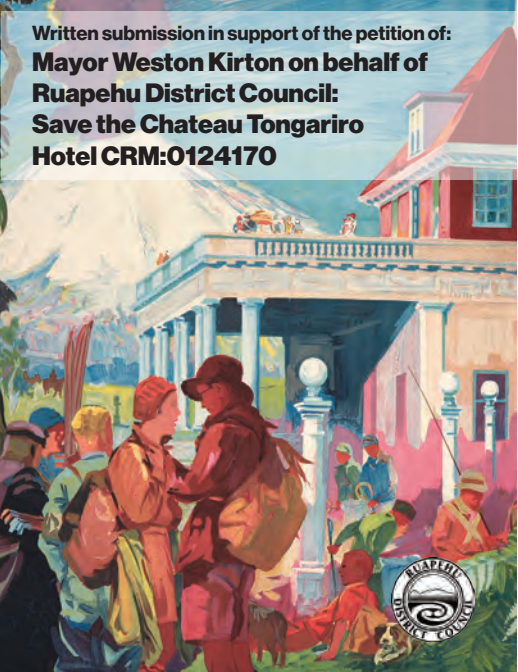
Kirton said the case for action is compelling.

“Chateau guests typically stayed longer and spent more, supporting hospitality, adventure operators, transport services, and retail across the Central Plateau,” said Kirton.

“The Government’s recent \$10.8 million investment toward completing our cycle trail network was fantastic news that provides yet another reason for international tourists to come to Ruapehu.

“Restoring the Chateau will help us to accommodate the international tourists these trails will attract locally and realise the tourism growth opportunities the region and the country are seeking.

“It will allow us to not only regain high-value markets but sustain the year-round jobs, on-going investment, and the many other opportunities this will bring,” he said.



A copy of the written submission has been published to the Parliament website and can also be viewed on Council’s website: ruapehudc.govt.nz.

Letters

Green thanks

• We, the Ruapehu neighbourhood support group – Moore Street, Rata Street and Clyde Street Ohakune, would like to thank the Green by Nature team for cleaning the rubbish over the fenceline alongside the river side.

We as a group believe in playing our part by keeping mother earth clean, making sure our river ways are clean maintaining a sense of value to upheld what’s left of our environment.

Much respect to the environmental employees by Green by Nature contracted by the Ruapehu District Council.

Thank you thank you thank you

Justin Bishop and the 36 members of the RNS group Moore Street Ohakune

Swimming harm

• With regard to your headline “Horizons dives into swim spot monitoring season”, I would like to ask the question ‘are there any recorded cases of serious harm to human health from swimming in rivers in the Horizons region?’

I am in my 84th year and cannot recall any cases of serious health consequences of swimming in our rivers (hypothermia was the greater risk) but stand to be corrected.

Why then do Horizons spend considerable amounts of ratepayers’ money on what is essentially a virtue signalling exercise. “Horizons does not close swim spots” says Ian Hurst the Horizons environmental person so clearly it does not consider any of the waterways to be all that dangerous to human health.

In writing this letter and calling into question the expenditure of ratepayers’ money on monitoring with no measurable outcome in terms of human health, I’m inviting closer scrutiny of my own farming activities by Horizons staff of a different viewpoint to my own. This has already happened.

My wish is that with the new chair and councillors, the Horizons Regional Council can forge a new relationship with its ratepayers and confine with its activities to flood control and a consenting process where the cost of the consent doesn’t outweigh the benefits to the consent holder. Irrigation consents in the Ruapehu district fall into that category.

Ron Frew

THE WEEKLY WORKOUT answers for each puzzle are included on this page 828

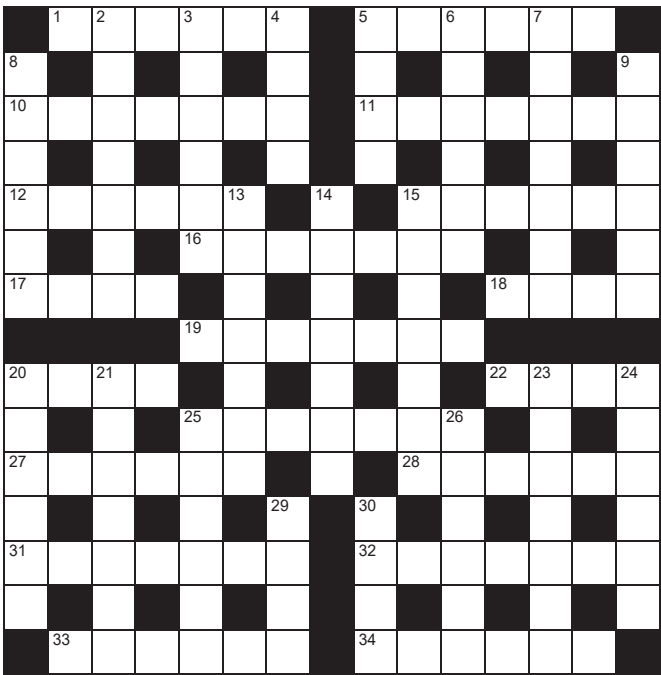
QUICK CROSSWORD

Across

- 1. Diminish (6)
- 5. Surplus (6)
- 10. Insensitive (7)
- 11. Illness (7)
- 12. Straight, honest (6)
- 15. Beginner (6)
- 16. Repulsive (7)
- 17. Professional cook (4)
- 18. Liability (4)
- 19. Fan (7)
- 20. Join (4)
- 22. Exploited (4)
- 25. Non-religious (7)
- 27. Make worse (6)
- 28. Find (6)
- 31. Small dog (7)
- 32. Late (7)
- 33. Peek (6)
- 34. Come to rest (6)

Down

- 2. Expand (7)
- 3. Stoop (6)
- 4. Bird home (4)
- 5. Whirlpool (4)
- 6. Universe (6)
- 7. Beach (7)
- 8. Bitter (6)
- 9. Current (6)
- 13. Undersized fish (7)
- 14. Entourage (7)



- 15. Digit (7)
- 20. Evasive (6)
- 21. Clothing (7)
- 23. Disgraceful event (7)
- 24. Further down (6)
- 25. Ape-like (6)
- 26. Rat or mouse (6)
- 29. Hillside (Scottish) (4)
- 30. Intimidates (4)



Puzzles © The Puzzle Company

THE TOP 10

- 1. Palate, 2. Basketball, 3. Davy Jones, 4. 16, 5. France, Belgium, Netherlands, 6. Sherlock Holmes, 7. Low, 8. Vladimir Lenin, 9. L’oreal, 10. Four.

SUDOKU

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

		7	4	6			5	
				3				
6		5			7	4		
9		3	1	8				
	8					7		
				5	9	3		8
		9	3			1		4
				9				
	1			4	5	8		

1 MEDIUM 2

3								4
8				4	7	3		
	4							6
		6	1		5			
5	2						6	7
			6		9	8		
6							8	
		2	9	5				3
	5							1

1 HARD 2

The Top 10

- 1. What name is given to the roof of the mouth, divided into hard and soft parts?
- 2. The Raptors, Nets, Suns, and Pelicans are all US teams playing what sport?
- 3. Which former apprentice jockey was the British member of The Monkees?
- 4. How many regional councils in New Zealand: 16, 20, or 24?
- 5. Name two of the three countries that border Luxembourg.
- 6. The Baker Street irregulars are children who assist which fictional character?
- 7. Does a cryometer measure extremely low or extremely high temperatures?
- 8. Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, 1870-1924, was better known as . . . ?
- 9. ‘Because you’re worth it’ is a slogan associated with which cosmetics company?
- 10. In music, how many quavers equal a minim?

CROSSWORD

- 25. Simian, 26. Rodent, 29. Brae, 30. Cows. Shift, 21. Apparel, 23. Scandal, 24. Deeper, 13. Tiddler, 14. Reptile, 15. Numeral, 20. Cosmos, 7. Seaside, 8. Acidic, 9. Recent, 6. Down, 2. Enlarge, 3. Slouch, 4. Nest, 5. Eddy, Glance, 34. Settle.
- 28. Locate, 31. Terrier, 32. Overdue, 33. 20. Seam, 22. Used, 25. Secular, 27. Impair, Hideous, 17. Chef, 18. Debt, 19. Admirer, 11. Disease, 12. Direct, 15. Novice, 16. Across: 1. Lessen, 5. Excess, 10. Callous,

SUDOKU

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3	1	2	4	5	6	7	8	9
7	4	2	8	9	1	6	3	5
8	5	9	3	7	6	1	2	4
2	6	1	7	5	9	3	4	8
5	8	4	6	1	9	7	1	2
6	3	7	3	1	8	4	5	6
2	7	1	8	6	3	4	5	9
4	5	8	9	3	7	1	2	6
8	6	1	2	4	7	3	9	5
3	9	7	5	6	1	2	4	8



# Councillor salaries jump by up to 30.5% in Ruapehu

By Moana Ellis, Local Democracy Reporting

The mayors of Whanganui, Ruapehu and Rangitikei will receive pay increases of between 3 and 6.5 percent, while councillor salaries will rise by as much as 30.5 percent.

The independent Remuneration Authority has set pay for elected members across Whanganui, Ruapehu, Rangitikei and Horizons Regional councils.

The new rates reflect updated size indices for each council and revised governance remuneration pools that account for workload increases in some areas.

Horizons Regional Council (Manawatū-Whanganui)

The new regional council chair Nikki Riley will earn \$164,237, up just over 3% from the previous chair's salary of \$159,193.

For councillors, there is no pay rise, with minimum councillor remuneration remaining at \$52,756. The council's governance remuneration pool rises from \$742,963 to \$792,985.

**Ruapehu District Council**

Ruapehu mayor Weston Kirton's pay will rise about 5.9% from \$129,703 to \$137,377.

Minimum councillor remuneration will increase about 30.5% from \$25,778 to \$33,664 and Ruapehu's governance remuneration pool will lift from \$387,132 to \$403,969.

Community board payments will also rise.

Ōwhango-National Park Community Board: chair \$7149 (up from \$6874); members \$3574 (up from \$3437).

Taumarunui-Ōhura Board: chair \$16,194 (up from \$15,571); members \$8,097 (up from \$7,786).

Waimarino-Waiouru Board: chair \$16,194 (up from \$15,571); members \$8,097 (up from \$7,786).

Whanganui mayor Andrew Tripe will be paid \$166,304, up about 3.25% from \$161,075.

Rangitikei mayor Andy Watson will receive \$138,375, up around 6.46% from \$129,977.

Minimum councillor remuneration will rise about 6.7% from \$27,538 to \$29,389, and the governance pool will increase from \$389,163 to \$411,443.

The Remuneration Authority completed a full review of its framework this year and found the current system



was working well.

The Authority noted variable increases in governance pools across the country, driven by updated data and some evidence of rising workloads, but confirmed no structural change to how local government pay is determined.

All councils were consulted during the review. The Authority noted that while not all councils provided information on hours worked by elected members, workloads had increased in some cases.

Since 2019, the Authority has used a system of size indices to rank councils according to their population, economic activity, expenditure and other factors.

These indices determine total remuneration pools for councillors, which councils then divide based on governance roles such as deputy mayor or committee chair.

The Authority said it would continue to use this approach for the 2025-2028 triennium.

Community board remuneration remains more complex, with significant variation between boards in population, responsibilities and size.

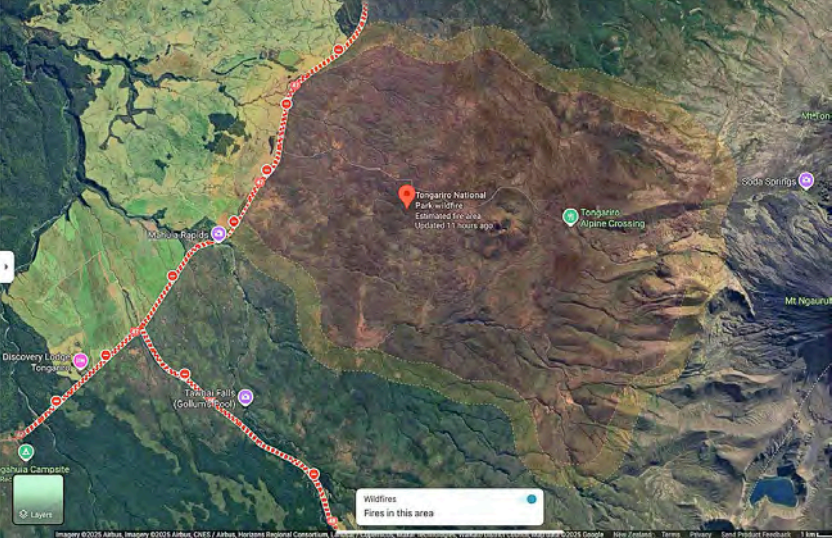
The Authority said developing a single consistent formula for board pay "remains problematic" and it will continue to raise concerns with the Department of Internal Affairs, the Local Government Commission and Local Government New Zealand.

Mayors and regional council chairs are treated as full-time positions, and their pay is set directly by the Authority rather than through council remuneration pools. The Authority's pay scales are benchmarked against parliamentary salaries, reflecting the leadership and governance responsibilities of the roles.

The new pay rates came into effect after the October 2025 local elections.

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

# Fire damage mapped



The extent of the damage from the fire that started on Saturday. Image: FENZ.

## Waimarino Health Shuttle

**Need to get to a health appointment?**

The Waimarino Health Shuttle is provided as a community service, and is koha based. We take people to appointments in Whanganui.

Booking requests do need to be made at least 24 hours before your appointment. You could be eligible for travel assistance so talk to us.

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Contact us between Monday to Friday 8:30am and 3:00pm.

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**Clyde Street cutie**

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## Time to talk Taihape gardens

By Gordon Collier  
Last time I talked about our annual fund raising plant auction. Well, it's been and gone. If you missed it let me say it was the most fun ever experienced in the club.

Yes, there were a few members missing but a full house had the time of their lives.

Under the direction of our able auctioneers a seemingly endless number of plants were sold off. Bidding was spirited. A record price was paid for a single plant of primrose (*Primula denticulata*) bearing a lone flower. It was a seedling wild collected last year in Sikkim. This was just one of the plant rarities on offer – pine trees from Mexico and a mass of garden plants, many rarities too.

Under the care of our club chairperson, Cate McCartin, her team had transformed the hall for the occasion to make it easy for the plants to be found at the end of the evening.

Needless to say club finances had a field day also.

This is the only night of the club's year when the bloom table and other displays, all competitive, were not available. These are always a feature and provide a learning opportunity for all, newcomers or not, showing just what can be grown in Taihape.

It is always surprising the range of plants and flowers on display. Membership is quite wide coming from places north to places like Mangaweka, Ohingaiti, Hunterville and Kimbolton. Mangaweka is a degree or two warmer and in one instance grows a wider range than Taihape.

The Garden Club shows what can be grown and where.

Driving around the district with a visitor from Kerikeri yesterday it was surprising to see so many magnolias in bloom. There are many species. These can be shrubby like *Magnolia stellata* or veritable trees like *Magnolia Campbelli*. It can be hard to distinguish one from the other as many have been hybridized. Colours range from deep red, to pink, to white and all shades in between. Hybridizers are working on a range with near yellow blooms. Out Dixon Way there is a *Magnolia stellata* with deep pink flowers; further along there is a lone plants of a magnificent *Magnolia Black Tulip* in full bloom; it's a sight for sore eyes.

Garden Centres have for sale plants in full bloom. Keep an eye out if you want a plant that will give you a great display every spring.

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ADVERTORIAL

## Are you prepared for 2026?



**Catherine Renwicks in her Taihape bookshop – wall to wall stock.**

The year is nearly over – time to get prepared for 2026, says Catherine Renwicks from My Bookshop Taihape.

“We have a large range of business or personal diaries, calendars and wall planners.” She said they have Christmas stock arriving every week, so “start planning and avoid the stress”

They offer Afterpay and Layby for purchases.

New releases are now in store for both adults and kids. Fiction authors include Dan Brown, Ken Follett, Rick Riordan with more arriving daily including the new Nadia Lim cookbook.

“Come check out our top 20 picks for adults and kids if you are looking for ideas. These books are both new and what's hot.”

There's a 1000-piece puzzle deal currently on, with over 50 new puzzles having just arrived. Two for \$35.

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### EVENTS

#### DECEMBER 2025

**Marton Market Day**

**6 December**

**Christmas Parades & Celebrations**

**13 December**

**Taihape Community Christmas Lunch Christmas Day 25 December**

#### JANUARY 2026

**Marton Country Music Festival (ticketed)**

**16 – 18 January**

**Kiwiburn Hunterville (ticketed)**

**21 – 26 January**

**Turakina Highland Games**

**24 January**

**The Taihape Shears**

**24 January**

The event will be held in Taihape and is a key part of the selection process for the New Zealand team for the 2026 Golden Shears World Championships in Masterton

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# TAIHAPE

## Bayleys expands regional presence with new office in Taihape

Bayleys Real Estate has announced the opening of a new office in Taihape, further strengthening their connection across the region.

"With established offices in Ohakune, Whanganui, Marton, Feilding and Palmerston North, this new location cements

Bayleys' commitment to providing exceptional real estate service and deepening our presence within local communities," says regional general manager Rachel Thompson.

"The Taihape office marks an exciting milestone for Bayleys as we continue to grow our regional network and ensure our clients

receive the very best local knowledge backed by national strength," says Thompson.

"Whether buying, selling, leasing, or property management, our team is focused on delivering results that make a real difference in our communities."

Rachel Thompson says the Taihape open-

ing represents more than just expansion, it's about supporting the people who live and work here.

"We're thrilled to provide a dedicated base for our local agents, Elisabeth Bunn and Peter Stratton, right here in Taihape," Rachel says.

"This office reinforces our commitment to serving the wider Rangitikei region and ensures we can meet our clients' real estate needs with the professionalism and care Bayleys is known for."

Sales consultant Elisabeth Bunn adds that the new office has already become a hub of activity.

"Since opening about a month ago, we've had fantastic foot traffic," Elisabeth says.

"It's great to have a space where locals can drop in, chat about property, or just learn more about what's happening in the market. Having a visible presence in town really helps us connect with our community."

With the Taihape office now open, locals are encouraged to visit the team to discuss their next move or find out more about what's happening in the property market. Bayleys continues to live its ethos of being Altogether Better, bringing expertise, energy, and trusted service to all corners of the region.



Bayleys Real Estate's new office in Taihape. Insets: Elisabeth Bunn at left and Peter Stratton.

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For business owners Bryce and Rawinia Kaka, this philosophy is central to everything they do.

Leaving school at a young age, Bryce planned to spend his days gaming. His mother, however, had a different idea, encouraging him to find a trade and begin his working life. Bryce found his calling in the plastering trade, recognising he had the practical abilities and personal qualities necessary for a trade like plastering.

Today, 21 years later, Manawatū Drywall is a growing, family-run business committed to excellence in every project. Bryce handles the on-site operations and client-facing aspects of the business, while Rawinia manages the office administration and daily operations.

Based in Taihape and servicing the wider

Rangitikei/Manawatū, Ruapehu, Hawkes Bay, Taranaki and Horowhenua/Kāpiti regions, Manawatū Drywall’s point of difference is consistency — combining skill, reliability, and strong communication to achieve top-quality finishes that builders and homeowners can trust.

Manawatū Drywall offers free quotes on all jobs and will take on projects ranging from small wall repairs to larger full-scale renovations. No job being too big or too small.

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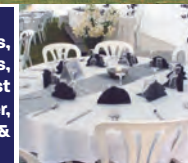


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# Major recognised for 50 years of military and firefighting service

Major David Ackroyd has achieved the rare distinction of being recognised for more than 50 years serving both in Ngāti Tūmatauenga, the New Zealand Army, and as a volunteer firefighter.

Major Ackroyd was recently presented with a 50-Year Service medal for his volunteer work with Fire and Emergency New Zealand, a first for a serving member of the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF).

In 1974, the 15-year-old enlisted in the military as a Regular Force Cadet in the Army steward trade straight from Christchurch's Hagley High School. That same year he joined the Waiouru Camp Fire Brigade as a volunteer.

"At the time my dad said to me, join the army and you've got a job for life. I don't think he quite meant my whole life."

The following year he started his apprenticeship as a supervisory steward. From then on, at every camp or base where he served, Major Ackroyd joined the nearest volunteer fire brigade. His postings took him through Auckland, Burnham, Linton, Trentham and three times to Waiouru.

**Serving the Queen**  
From his current base at Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand, Major Ackroyd reflected on the past five decades and reckoned one of the highlights was stewarding for and meeting Queen Elizabeth II in 1990 at Linton. "It was a buffet lunch and I remember serving quail eggs, which were more delicate and more appropriate for a royal to eat than chicken eggs. The Queen came through and spoke to us afterwards – she was a very lovely lady and very short, like my mum."

Major Ackroyd's military career has taken him around the country and to Timor-Leste, where he helped establish the country's military band.

Major Ackroyd also completed two tours of Timor-Leste in 2004 and 2010 as a logistics advisor.

On the second day of his second

stint in Timor-Leste, Major Ackroyd was asked by the Chief of Defence to work on a complete audit of the NZDF's weapons in the country, alongside an Australian officer and a Portuguese colonel overseeing the activity.

"We pretty much found them all bar two pistols. It was a personal achievement by the time we finished."

**Marching band**  
He also helped form Timor-Leste's military marching band – which wasn't a challenge for Major Ackroyd who played the trombone and had previously played in the Ellesmere Brass Band.

By the time he left, a group of 15 Timorese marched in formation on the parade ground for the first time for a parade for Timor-Leste independence. Now they are a fully accomplished band.

"When you talk about achievements that's probably one that's right at the top. The band did the hard work, I just shaped them and kept them on focus. This, and my work as the Logistics Advisor to the Falintil – Força de Defesa Timor-Leste, earned me my Distinguished Service Decoration."

Being part of the volunteer fire service offered its own memories – many of them tragic, Major Ackroyd said.

"The worst is children being harmed and killed in vehicle crashes. Those memories sit with you a little bit. The fatal fires also sit in your mind."

A significant incident was the Silver Fern railcar crash at Waiouru in 1981, where four people were killed and 16 injured.

Major Ackroyd spent the aftermath in Waiouru's Fire Station watchroom, helping the duty watchperson coordinate headquarters, police and the Army firefighters.

"All in all I've had an amazing career, met some amazing people both in the Army and with the Fire Service. It's not over yet though as I still believe I have more to offer."



Major David Ackroyd receives his 50-year fire service award from Megan Stiffler, FENZ deputy chief executive operational response. Photo: NZDF.

## On the lookout for Old Man's Beard around Ohakune

By Kelsi Hoggard, Biosecurity Officer, Horizons Regional Council

Horizons Regional Council is beginning the annual Old Man's Beard surveillance and control around Ohakune township.

Originally from Europe and Southwest Asia, Old Man's Beard (*Clematis vitalba*) is an invasive vine that can smother and displace native species. Between December and May, Old Man's Beard produces creamy white, scented flowers followed by grey, hairy seeds with distinctive white plumes in dense, fluffy clusters, hence its name 'Old Man's Beard'.

Seeds are spread by water or wind and both seeds and stem fragments are spread in dumped vegetation. Common sources are forests, roadsides, hedgerows, vacant land, and willow swamps.

Old Man's Beard looks like native clematis, but there are a

few key differences: Old Man's Beard has more leaflets per stem; it flowers later – between December and May; has lines and grooves in its stem; and it loses its leaves in autumn.

The relatively low density of Old Man's Beard in the Ohakune area means Horizons can actively control plants on private land to reduce spread and infestation levels.

This season, the Horizons pest plant team will be conducting control at known sites on properties in Ohakune across a week in December. The main control method used will be cut and paste (cutting stumps off at ground level and applying a herbicide paste to stop regrowth) or applying herbicide to the leaves/lower growth.

If you think you've seen Old Man's Beard around Ohakune, give Horizons a call on 0508 800 800 or take a photo, noting the location and date, and email it to help@horizons.govt.nz.



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**VEHICLES FOR SALE**

**2011 TOYOTA HIACE VAN,** high mileage but runs very well, new WoF and Registration for a year. Sell \$10,000. No offers. Phone Ken 027 217 6161.

**TUFF TANDEM BRAKED TRAILER,** with cover, only 1 week old, cost \$6500, will sell for \$5000. Phone Ken 027 217 6161.

**SITUATIONS VACANT**

**KNAPSACK WEED SPRAYING CASUAL,** flat farm near Ohakune need 1 to 2 fit people like walking with backpack. Email brief bio to Andrew at cactuscreek25@gmail.com

**WANTED TO BUY**

**LAWSON CYPRESS LOGS.** Buying Lawson Cypress logs in any quantity. Local and surrounding districts. Fair prices paid. Ph 027 631 9100

**BUSINESS NOTICES**

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**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](mailto:kay.kidd@ruapehudc.govt.nz)



**Bennett's Tank  
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Septic tanks, water tanks, grease traps.  
Call us for fast efficient service.  
Phone Chris on 06-388-0452.

**PUBLIC NOTICES**

**Book Now for Angel's  
21st FREE Christmas  
Community Dinner**

3 December, 6pm  
at The Centre Baptist Church  
with a drive through hangi & steam pudding

Booking are essential on 027 4316327.



**Annual General Meeting**

Thursday 13th November 2025 at 6pm  
Ruapehu Rugby Clubrooms  
Rochfort Park, Ohakune

All Welcome

Contact [ruapehusportsclub@gmail.com](mailto:ruapehusportsclub@gmail.com) for further information.

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**HUI HAPORI  
COMMUNITY MEETING**

Living Waters Medical  
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Monday 17th November  
10am - 12pm  
28 Queen Street, Raetihi



**Nau mai, Haere mai!**

**BUSINESS FOR SALE**



**PUBLIC NOTICES**



**Manu Korero Te  
Kohanga Reo**

**Notice of AGM**

Wednesday 19 November, 5.30pm  
Manu Korero TKR, 36 Burns St, Ohakune

Election of Officers

Nau Mai, Haere Mai

**Maungarongo Ki Koriki  
Notice of AGM**

Wednesday 3 December – 5.15pm

Kokiri  
Maungarongo Marae



**PROPRIETORS OF PIPIRIKI  
TOWNSHIP NO.1  
AND OTHER BLOCKS INCORPORATED  
NOTICE OF HUI**

The Annual General Hui for 2025  
will be held at Paraweka Marae, Pipiriki

**Saturday 6 December 2025 at 10am**

Transport to the hui in Pipiriki will be provided by a bus which will leave from Ohakune at the Osteria Restaurant on Clyde St at 9am and a further pickup in Raetihi at the Medical Centre on Seddon St.

For more information, documents and any updates, go to the website [www.pipiriki.co.nz](http://www.pipiriki.co.nz)

To provide numbers please contact Robert Spicer on 06 3451166.

Shareholder registration opens at 9am on the day.

**Ruapehu College  
senior sports  
prizes 2025**

**Sporting Awards**

Athletics: Intermediate Girl Champ - Woodward Cup Rebekah Swift; Senior Girl Champ - Turners & Growers cup Maia Allen; Senior Boy Champ - Turners & Growers Cup Sam Rowe. Cross Country: Senior Female Champion (ECNZ Trophy) Rebekah Swift; Senior Male Champion (Dillon Shield) Connor Anderson. Swimming: Senior Female Champion (John Evans Trophy) Macy Anderson; Senior Male Champion (John Evans Trophy) Sam Rowe. Rugby Boys: Most improved Senior Player - Trophy Rico Pakai; Best & Fairest Senior player - Trophy Moses Hodge. Girls Rugby: Most Valuable Player (DA Doyle Cup) Malena Hawira. Volleyball: Most Valuable Player Gerrard Osborne. Best team Player Moses Hodge. Basketball: Contribution to Basketball, Shaquarn Perkins-Teki; Most Improved, Shakur Ratu-Bellamy. Netball: Qualities of Sportsmanship (Kapai Enterprises Trophy) Atahu Henare. Squash: Best Male Squash Player (Triggell Trophy) Liam Burnard; Best Senior Female Player Grace Rowe. Grace Also receives the Integrity & Dedication - squash award, commitment to coaching juniors after school for two terms this year. Integrity & Dedication – Squash, Olivia Gray. Football, Senior Soccer – Service & Skill award, Jason Young; Most Valuable Player Wren Drayton; Integrity & Dedication - Football Rafael Gonzatti; Integrity & Dedication - Football Caleb Larsen. Skiing, Senior Boy Champion (Mangaturuturu Cup) Emerson Lark. Snowboarding, Senior Girl Champion Zoe Wallace–Southall. Waka Ama, Senior Girls Kaihoe - M & KJ Allen, Whanau Trophy, Zoe Wallace-Southall. Senior Boys Kaihoe- Maunga Sports trust trophy Moses Hodge. Equestrian, Most Conscientious Dedicated rider - Waimarino Pony Club Trophy, Bella Drayton.

Sport Blues Awards: symbolising sporting excellence: Emerson Lark - Gokart racing, for his success in Superkart Drivers Club NZ. Club Camps 2025, 3rd place Rotax Light category, Liam Burnard – Squash, the Blues Award for his outstanding achievement in Squash and being part of the Squash Central junior boys team that won the NZ National Junior Teams Championship. Mica Hoyle – U/18 Freeride, Blue, for winning gold at the Whakapapa event. Bella Drayton - Dressage/Equestrian, for her hard work and success within the Equestrian sport arena. Bella has had a successful year with the NZPCA Dressage Champs - where she qualified and then competed winning the following titles: she NZPCA National Dressage Champion junior, she won the collegiate division, Champion first competitor, Reserve champion team where she was the highest contributing team member. She also won all of these titles for the North Island. She also competed at Horse of the Year, - placing well in many of her tests. She attended the North Island Secondary at Taupo, 10th over all for jumping.

Interwhanau Awards for 2025: Weka 4<sup>th</sup>, 3rd Athletics, netball, badminton, basketball and cross country 4th Kapahaka, Swimming, Volleyball, Ki-O-rahi and Squash. Huia 3<sup>rd</sup> – 1st Swimming, Badminton and Squash 2<sup>nd</sup> Athletics, Basketball and Volleyball, 3<sup>rd</sup> Kapahaka, Ki-o-rahi 4th Cross Country and Netball. Kiwi 2<sup>nd</sup> – 1st Cross Country, Volleyball, Netball and Basketball. 2nd Kapahaka, Ki-o-rahi and Squash 3rd Swimming and Badminton 4<sup>th</sup> Athet-

**Turn to Page 11**

**Waimarino golf**

Waimarino Golf Club held their haggie on Sunday – “an awesome day to be out on the course enjoying a great round of golf and good company”.

The haggie format was nett, with a good turnout with 22 players hitting the fairways.

The competition was tight, with the top three being: 1st – Donni Allum with a nett 70; 2nd – Piha Smith also on 70 (countback); 3rd – Aiden Gilbert on 71. Nick Jefferies claimed the only two of the day.

Nearest to the Pin went to Gavin Smith.

Eclectic Results: The day also marked the final day of the Eclectic Competition: Eclectic Nett: 1st – Tom Spry (51 pts); 2nd – Graham Lind (55 pts); 3rd – Gavin Smith (56 pts). Eclectic Gross: 1st – Geoff Leahy (67 pts); 2nd – Taipoto Edmonds (68 pts); 3rd – James Turipa (69 pts). Nett Medal Results: 1st – Taipoto Edmonds (224 pts); 2nd – Gareth McGuigan (227 pts); 3rd – Aiden Gilbert (228 pts).

“Congratulations to all our winners and a big thank you to all club members for your participation and support throughout the season. Our regular competitions will start back up again in the New Year,” says Darnell Watling on behalf of the Club.

She also wished the Club Champions all the best as they head to Castlecliff Golf Course to compete in the District Regional Championships: Senior Men – Taipoto Edmonds; Women – Eileen Gotlieb; Intermediate – James Turipa; Juniors – Aiden Gilbert.

Upcoming event: — the Christmas Cheer event is on 20 December. Everyone is welcome, so bring your friends along for a great day on the course to wrap up the year in style.

**Deadline  
for all  
advertising  
bookings  
and copy  
is  
5pm  
Fridays!**

*It's important  
that we get your  
ad booking and  
copy in on time,  
so that we have  
time to check  
it, plan the best  
layout and work  
on producing a  
better paper for  
you!*



# Trampers dig in with Park work

The amount of work to keep tracks open in the Tongariro National Park can be huge, but the Department of Conservation has been getting some help, including from members of the Whanganui Tramping Club, who have been working to restore part of the Round the Mountain Track.

“We’re incredibly fortunate that Tongariro National Park is a place people feel deeply connected to and are eager to support,” says principal ranger Stu Smith.

“The park has a proud history of volunteer involvement, and some of the earliest huts here were built by volunteers many decades ago.”

He said the tradition continues.

“We see some wonderfully dedicated volunteers playing a vital role in supporting not only huts and tracks, but also protecting our special biodiversity.

“Countless individuals and community groups have given their time and energy to help care for this place. Everyone who spends time in Tongariro National Park

forms a connection with it, and we’re so grateful to those who choose to give back.

“Our Tongariro Heritage and Visitor team looks after tracks and huts across Tongariro National Park and surrounds, and volunteer support helps us keep these special places in great condition. The team genuinely enjoy the days in the field with volunteers, getting to know people who are passionate about this place, and sharing a good laugh along the way.

“At DOC we know we can’t do it alone – that’s why we were so grateful to have the support – and epic skills – of the Whanganui Tramping Club helping us out on the Round the Mountain track.”

Recently, five “ultra-fit trampers”, some in their 70s – gave rangers Stu and Shaun a run for their money as they smashed out track repairs, box steps and rubbish disposal for a 100m section of track that had been washed out, below Whanganui Corner near the Ohakune Mountain Road.



**Whanganui Tramping Club volunteers, from left, Johnny Channon, John Mellon, Barry Francis, Graham Bevan and Viv Dawson. Photo: DOC.**

## Christie fun back: volunteers put swings back

A small team of volunteers have been working to reinstate some of the play equipment that was removed from Christie Park in Ohakune.

The playground was removed earlier, in part because some of the equipment was unsafe and plans have been drawn up for a replacement playground area in another part of Christie Park.

However, funding issues have meant the new playground is likely to be delayed for some time.

The volunteers offered to reinstall the equipment that did not have safety issues, also promising to remove the equipment when necessary, when work starts on the next stages of the Christie Park redevelopment.

Council chief executive Clive Manley said the Council and the Community Board would like to thank the dedicated volunteers whose koha of time, skills,

and resources made the temporary playground reinstatement possible.

“Without these amazing local people stepping up, it simply would not have been possible to bring the old equipment back into use,” he said.

“In addition to donating their mahi, they have ensured the equipment is safe and have committed to removing it again when the redevelopment project resumes – all at no cost to ratepayers.”



**A volunteer crew have resintated some of the Christie Park playground equipment. They are Rabbit Nottage, Alan Whale, Matiu Wilkie, Danny and Wayne Mochan. Photo: Jude Chevin.**

## Sports

### awards

**From Page 10**

ics. Tui: House champion – 1st Kapahaka, Athletics, Ki-o-rahi 2nd Cross Country, swimming, Netball, Badminton, 3<sup>rd</sup> Volleyball and squash, 4th Basketball.

Top Sports awards - Contribution to Sport – awarded to a student who has contributed highly to the running, organizing and facilitating of sport within Ruapehu College – Gerrard Osborne.

Work Hard Play Hard – Leigh Hynes Trophy awarded to a young wahine who achieves well in sport for the college and also works hard in the classroom, thereby opening up more opportunities for their success in life, Malena Hawira.

Sports Allrounder of the Year – Toki Trophy, awarded to a student who has the best overall sports participation in the school with a high level of participation across numerous codes competing for Ruapehu College and club sports. Liam Burnard.

Best Overall Senior in Sports, awarded to the student who has the highest level of sporting achievement and participation – Karaitiana Horne.




# Community Impact SURVEY



Help Shape the Future of Your Library!

Have your say. Share what you love most about your library.

Love your Library  
www.loveyourlibrary.org.nz

**Ruapehu District Council libraries** are taking part in a **Community Impact Survey** to better understand local needs, measure the value we provide, and identify opportunities for growth and improvement.

Please take a quick minute to **scan the QR code and complete the survey** to help us provide the library services you want. **If you need help or would prefer to fill-in a hardcopy drop by your local library** and ask one of the staff.



## Community Update: Progress on the Waimarino Wellness Centre

We’re pleased to share an exciting update on the development of the Waimarino Wellness Centre, a project that continues to grow through strong community collaboration and shared vision.

### Community Model of Care

A Steering Group has been established to co-design a community-led health services. This group is working to shape services that are responsive, culturally grounded, and inclusive of the diverse communities across Waimarino, Raetihi, Ohakune, Pipiriki, and Waiouru and surrounding districts.

The goal is to:

- Create a model that supports wellbeing across the lifespan—from pēpi to kaumātua
- Strengthen connections between health, social services, and whānau
- Provides sustainable on-going care to our communities

Over the past 18 months the Waimarino Wellness Centre Development Group has been busy with community engagement and a report confirming the needs and aspirations of the community has been completed. This report, alongside the Manawanui, Manawaroa, Manawaora E! document, will provide the foundations to designing a system that meets the needs of the community. The Steering Group would like to acknowledge the work of the Development Group, which will now be disestablished following the completion of their role.

Members of the Steering Group are from across the system – primary care, secondary/hospital care, community providers, iwi and Te Mātuku, our Iwi Māori Partnership Board.

### Building and Facility Development

In parallel, a second Steering Group has been formed to guide the planning and development of the current Waimarino Health Centre into the Waimarino Wellness Centre. This group brings together local leaders, health professionals, and community representatives to ensure the facility reflects the needs and aspirations of our region.

Their focus includes:

- Site planning
- Design – ensuring the centre is flexible and future proofed
- Ensuring the centre is welcoming, accessible, and fit for purpose

We are committed to keeping you informed and involved as this kaupapa progresses. Your voice matters, and we’ll be ensuring that the input of the community is captured in the service design and model of care.

**Thank you for your ongoing support and enthusiasm.  
Together, we’re building something truly special for our region.**



# Tongariro National Park fire in photos



The fire as seen from Whakapapa Village on Saturday. Photo: Liz Brooker.



At right, DOC area maager Damian Coutts flew over the area on Sunday to assess the damage.. Photo: Liz Brooker.



Sam Clarkson from the Skotel at Whakapapa Village discusses the fire with Police before evacuating. Photo: Liz Brooker.



National Park Volunteer Fire Brigade volunteers were very active in the campaign right from the start. Photo: NPVFB.



The fire early on – Saturday night. Photo: Shannon Barrett



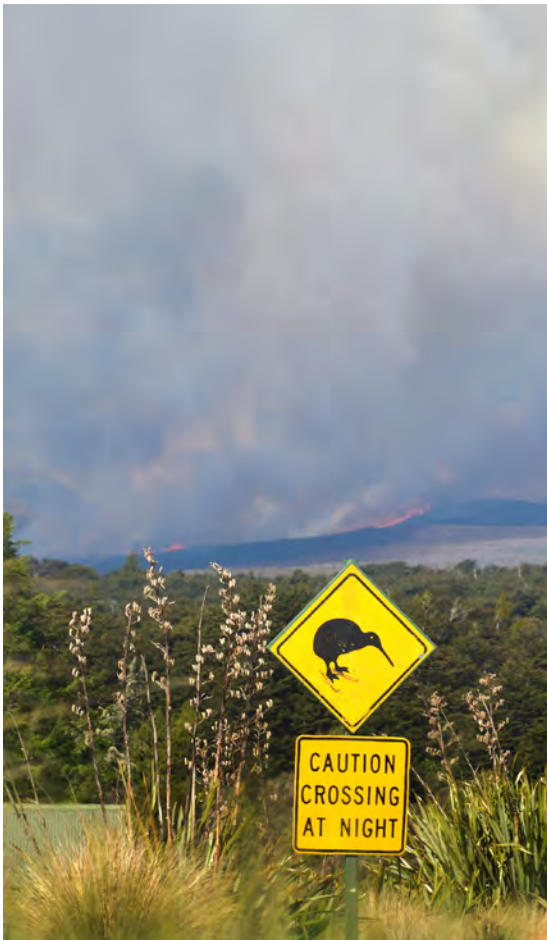
# Tongariro National Park fire in photos



*The small amount of damage to the Pou at Mangatepopo.*



*Just some of the huge clouds on Saturday. Photo: Liz Brooker.*



*The fate of Flora and fauna following the devastating fire is of major concern. However, it is understood there were no kiwi in the area. Photo: Liz Brooker.*



*An aerial shot of the fire and its multiple fronts. Photo: FENZ.*



*National Park Volunteer Fire Brigade volunteers worked to refill the water bombing planes. Photo: NPVFB.*





# Kids ahoy! Ohakune pirate Ship makes a splash

A sea of excited pirates of all ages descended on Ohakune on Saturday to celebrate the official launch of the new Pirate Ship at the nationally-renowned Carrotland Adventure Park.

Park Trustee Dave Scott said he was thrilled to see the reaction to the facility.

“What a great sight after the ribbon cutting,” said Dave. “To see the stampeding of kids surging forward to board the pirate ship – that was my highlight of the day”

As well as Dave Scott, speakers at the opening were Trust chair Ron Frew and John Laurenson, representing his family as major donors towards the project.

John Laurenson explained how he had been speaking with Dave Scott about the Trust’s application for Lotteries funding, offering to help if that did not come through. The next morning, Dave turned up at their house and soon after, he had agreed to donate well over \$20,000, including \$1000 per grandchild.

John said that, at the time, the latest grandchild was due to be born, adding another \$1000 to the donation. He claimed that Dave was disappointed that it wasn’t twins.

Ruapehu’s mayor Weston Kirton said the new attraction would further cement Carrotland Adventure Park as a must-visit destination for families across the country.

“The Ohakune Carrotland Adventure Park is already one of the most distinctive and loved playgrounds in New Zealand,” said Mayor Kirton.

“The addition of the Pirate Ship is going to take the experience to another level.

“You could see from the huge turnout on Saturday just how much this park means to both locals and visitors. It was a great day for pirates of all ages.”

Kirton acknowledged the extraordinary dedication of the volunteers who have driven the creation and ongoing development of the park over many years.

“Ohakune is incredibly lucky to have community champions like Dave Scott and the wider team of volunteers who have poured their time, energy, and heart into bringing Carrotland Adventure Park to life,” he said.

“It is their vision, hard work, and passion for their community that continues to make this such a special place.

This is community-led pride and creativity at its finest, and it deserves to be celebrated.”

At the entrance to the pirate ship area is a board listing the numerous donors and helpers who have made the project possible.

The Pirate Ship is the latest addition to the ever-evolving adventure park, which continues to grow through local fundraising, donations, sponsorship, and countless volunteer hours.

“This park has become part of Ohakune’s identity – a place that makes people smile, play, and come together,” said Kirton.

“Long may the adventures continue.”

**It’s all about the kids: after the ribbon cutting, the children attending the opening of the Ohakune Carrotland Park were invited aboard to inspect their gift. Below: cutting the ribbon are ship builder Wayne Gunnell, lifeboat donor Annie Scarf and two children representing the families of the main donors. In the background are Park trustees Dave Scott (obscured) and Peggy Frew.**



**Let’s tell our visitors what to do ... in Ruapehu!**  
Out for the summer School Holidays  
Deadline for bookings is 21 November – call Jude 0274 993697  
or email: [ads@ruapehubulletin.co.nz](mailto:ads@ruapehubulletin.co.nz)

**True Team Promise means our whole team works for you.**  
Contact your local Ohakune Consultant today!



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