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11 November 2026
Issue No 2131



Drones, AI used after fire P3



NZ's soldier of the year P5



Ruapehu College's scholars P7



Patrol phase for Waiouru fire P12

# Ruapehu faces a dozen water consents issues

Ruapehu District Council is dealing with multiple water compliance issues, involving six water supplies and five wastewater plants.

The water supply issues affect Raetihi, Taumarunui, Ōwhango, Ohura, Ohakune, Waimarino National Park. The wastewater plants affect Ohakune, Raetihi, Waimarino National Park, Hikumutu.

One site has been unable to meet its consent for 30 years.

Some of the issues are relatively minor and mostly involve better data collection.

But some issues mean that whole new plants are required, including one for Ohakune's wastewater.

Horizons Regional Council had issued the council with abatement and infringement notices for overdue Raetihi water plans, with one required almost six years ago.

RDC's waters manager Rick Low told elected members at a recent meeting that officers met with Horizons on 9 October and he apologised on behalf of the council for its "lack of movement on these matters in the past".

The council had been unable to meet its consent for the Ohakune wastewater plant for 30 years, he said.

A dual-purpose consent was proposed to Horizons, for summer and winter, with a new plant to be built in five years.

"We'll move forward with putting something in front of them by the end of June [2027].

"I have approval from [Ngāti Rangi iwi].

"We are very aware that in the Long-Term Plan, a fit-for-purpose, modern solution is required."

**Raetihi**

Low's report said the main issue at the Raetihi wastewater plant, which remained subject to a Horizons Section 92 request, was significant wet-weather inflow and infiltration into the wastewater reticulation network.

"Further network investigations are required to quantify the issue and inform the consent pathway.

> 'It would cost hundreds of millions of dollars to solve all of Ruapehu's water issues.'

"Horizons has verbally indicated support for an extension to June 2027."

A Section 92 request is a formal request from a consenting authority for further information.

Water services in Ruapehu and Whanganui will be managed by a joint council-controlled organisation (CCO) from 1 July next year, with ratepayers receiving a separate bill.

Council chief executive Clive Manley said it would cost hundreds of millions of dollars to solve all of Ruapehu's water issues.

"We couldn't even borrow that amount, so forming a larger CCO gave us the extra headroom to be able to tackle it," he said.

"But the water regulator [Water Services Authority – Taumata Arowai] is also saying 'We expect you to continue to make progress now' and that's where Horizons has come in.

"It's not that [district council officers] weren't aware of it in the past, but there was not as strong an emphasis."

Earlier in the meeting, Whanganui

*Turn to Page 2*

## Big boost in numbers for culture festival



***Seventeen schools took part in the Ruapehu Māori Culture Festival 2026 on Thursday – a large increase in numbers from recent years, up from 10 schools and preschools last year. Pictured is the Waiouru Primary School group. Photo: Holly Huriana.***



# Regional council to make 'trade-offs' ahead of rates caps

By Rebecca Hogan

A regional council is warning communities to brace for budget cuts and project changes, even before the Government's rates cap mandate comes into effect.

High inflation and incoming rates capping meant Horizons Regional Council would need to make "trade-offs" to fund new and continued services in Manawatū-Whanganui, chair Nikki Riley said.

Through various workshops for its 2027-37 draft Long-term Plan (LTP), the regional council found that in order to meet the July 2029 2-4% rates cap announced by the Government earlier this year, it would need to apply its own caps in the coming years.

"Council is currently working towards an average rates increase of between 5% and 6% for 2027-28, then between 2% and 4% in 2028-29," Riley estimated.

For the 2026/27 financial year, the regional council voted in a total rates increase of $4.2 million, or 5.9% – initially voting to keep the increase below 5%, but changing this figure due to additional projects in the Annual Plan.

On Tuesday, Riley said the council proposed to increase spending in areas like biosecurity, river management and emergency management, often to meet legislated requirements set by the Government.

But to "balance the books", other operational budgets and projects had to be reduced.

Potential reductions didn't mean the work wasn't important for the region, Riley said, but it reflected a reality where the council had to make trade-offs to deliver what communities required.

Council was proposing to reduce the operational budgets within areas such as climate change, the Sustainable Land Use Initiative (SLUI) to prevent erosion, science and contestable funds.

Riley said they'd also proposed "not to progress the public transport regional services review, and to not fill some vacancies, which would result in a level of service reduction for some areas, including Rural Advice and District Advice".

The public can have their say on 2027-37 LTP proposals during a consultation process next March and April and are welcome to contact Horizons councillors.

Riley said regardless of the outcome of Saturday's general election or decisions made through ongoing local government reforms, the LTP needed to deliver positive results for Horizons residents.

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



***Horizons Regional Council chair Nikki Riley says to "balance the books" and meet basic services, projects within the 2027-37 Long-term Plan must be altered. Photo: Adele Rycroft / Manawatū Standard.***

# Ruapehu faces a dozen water consents issues

***From Page 1***

District Council three waters transition manager Kathryn Stewart said all water assets and debts would transfer from the council's books to the new CCO.

Harmonisation – a single, uniform charge for all customers covered by the CCO – would need to be discussed between the councils, and no other local authorities had agreed to that model, she said.

"Most people are scheduling a review point in five to six years."

In a statement, the Horizons consent monitoring team leader for industry, Pita Kinaston, said it would check in periodically on the council's progress.

"Ruapehu District Council demonstrated that progress is being made in this area, and agreement was reached on the prioritisation of the work required," Kinaston said.

At the meeting, the mayor Weston Kirton asked if the compliance issues were because the bar had been raised in terms of regulation.

"Or is it just wear and tear and it's just outdated technology?" he said.

"I was led to believe, 'Don't worry, because there are going to be new national standards that are going to relieve some of the pressure'."

Low said historically, he understood the council had not been proactive in responding to Horizons notices.

"It would be fair to say that caught up with us over the last six months.

"Compliance has become something of a political matter.

"We are considered low hanging fruit because we haven't been proactive in fixing things. What we're doing is picking the fruit, turning it into juice and being compliant."

Councillor Korty Wilson thanked Low for taking on the job.

"We would have gone another few more years or a few more councils and not known any of this stuff," she said.

"It should have been at the table a long time ago."

**Wastewater issues**

Ohakune's wastewater plant has consent conditions "have been difficult to achieve with the existing plant treatment processes".

Planning for a "modern replacement treatment facility" should continue, stated the report.

The Raetihi plant's main issue is "significant wet-weather inflow and infiltration into the wastewater reticulation network. Further network investigations are required to quantify the issue and inform the consent".

Similar issues are faced at the Waimarino National Park plant.

**Water supply issues**

The Raetihi supply issues include outstanding information requirements.

A planned water restriction regime for the upcoming summer period has been approved.

RDC is also investigating an additional groundwater source to complement the existing river supply and is engaging with affected landowners regarding the rural water supply pipeline and restricted-water management arrangements.

Uenuku has expressed support for the work to secure an additional source.

The Ōwhango plant is facing a reduced water abstraction volume, with the regional council seeking the reduction – opposed by RDC until future supply requirements are known.

Ōhura water is facing constraints on its allocation, with current demand approaching that limit.

At Ohakune, RDC is working with Ngāti Rangi to "finalise outstanding Section 92 requirements and intends to progress the existing application once iwi engagement is completed".

RDC is preparing a new water-take application for Waimarino National Park.

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**Budget Advice** – Email waimarinobudgetservices@gmail.com or phone 027 259 5285.
**CCS Disability Action (Whanganui)** – Sheryl Brightwell 0800-789-654
**Child, Adolescent and Sexual Health Nurse** – 06-385-5019
**Child Youth and Family Service** – 0508-326 459
**Churches: Anglican,** 06-385-4957. **Baptist,** 027-206-1874. **Catholic,** 06-385-8858 or 027 606 5186. **Gospel Chapel,** 06-385-8453. **Presbyterian,** 06-388-0675 or 06-385-8708. **Waiouru – duty chaplain** 06-387-5599 ext 7031 or 021-493-692
**Civil Defence** – Simon Osborne, Emergency Management Officer (EMO), RDC – 07 895 8188, or 027 220 0569. Simon.Osborne@ruapehudc.govt.nz
**CLAW community free legal advice:** Whanganui 06-348-8288, 0800 00 36 36
**Doctors: In an emergency call 111.** Ruapehu Health Ltd 06-385-4211
**Information Centres** – Ohakune 06-385-8427, Raetihi 06-385-4805
**Mountains to Sea – Ngā Ara Tūhono –** Lynley Twyman, Trail Manager, +64 21 403036
**Ngati Rangi Community Health Centre** – 06-385-9580
**Plunket Society** – Plunket Nurse 06-385-5019
**Police and Search & Rescue Emergency, call 111**
Ohakune 06-385-0100, Raetihi 06-385-4002, Waiouru 06-387-6884, Military Police 0800-50-11-22
**Red Cross** – 0800 RED CROSS (0800 733 27677)
**Rotary Club Raetihi** - Ohakune – 027-344-5669
**Ruapehu Budgeting Service Ohakune.** Budgeting License No 119423. Email: Ruapehubudgetingservice@gmail.com or call Justin on 0211-735-767
**Ruapehu Maori Wardens** – Email: ruapehumaoriwardens@gmail.com
**Ruapehu Neighborhood Support Groups** – Email: Ruapehuneighborhoodgroup@gmail.com or call Justin 0211-735-767
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**Taumarunui Counselling Services:** For confidential counselling in Waimarino phone 07-895-6393
**Victim Support Contact Centre** – 0800 842 846
**Waimarino Cancer Society:** Co-ordinator 06 348 7402
**Waimarino Health Care Centre** – Raetihi 06-385-5019
**Waimarino Community Toy Library** – waimarinotoylibrary@gmail.com
**Women's Refuge** – 0800-REFUGE 0800 73384

**Ruapehu Mayor – Weston Kirton,** enquiries to 06-385-8364 or 07-895-8188.
**Owhango-National Park Community Board:**
Peter Zimmer - Chairperson 027 479 1926;Gail Gray - Deputy Chair 027 434 6599; Anthony Gurr 021 487 742; Eddie Marsters 021 108 0279; Murray Wilson 027 542 9079; Luke Pepper - (RDC Rep) 027 329 2849
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## Ruapehu Events & What's On

**NOVEMBER 2026**

**Cross Hills Gardens Country Fair** **21 Nov**
For details phone: 0800 RHODOS or email info@crosshillsfair.co.nz

**DECEMBER 2026**

**Raetihi Christmas Festival** **12 Dec**
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# Drones AI helping regeneration efforts after destructive fires

By Jimmy Ellingham, Radio New Zealand

Drone and AI technology is helping regeneration efforts in the central North Island's Tongariro National Park after two fires tore through.

The first, most damaging, blaze flared a year ago and closed the popular Tongariro Alpine Crossing track for more than a week.

A smaller blaze a month later caused further damage to the same area.

**Keeping out invasive weeds and animals**

Look closely into the dull grey colouring of the charred Mangatepopo Valley and some green shoots are visible.

Department of Conservation (DOC) principal ranger Dan Van Der Lubbe is leading the recovery efforts there.

"It took out 3000 hectares of tussock grassland and regenerating alpine scrub. What we can see now is the natural regrowth after one year," he said.

Red tussock and flax are coming back, while larger celery pines were dead, their black outlines slowly rotting.

A 10-year restorative rāhui introduced by Ngāti Hikairo ki Tongariro is in place on the damaged land, with the hope it will prevent people from unwittingly bringing in invasive weeds. DOC also asks Tongariro Crossing trampers to check their gear so they're not bringing any seeds in.

Stopping gorse and heather from spreading, as well as keeping out rabbits, hares, deer and even wallabies, would allow the land to recover naturally, Van Der Lubbe said.

There are all sorts of programmes to help achieve this, including managing mites that eat heather and broom in the wider area.

"These fires have happened here repeatedly over the last thousands of years. In the last 150 years there have been about three fires in this area, so it's just natural regeneration that occurs."

RNZ had a look around the fire damage at the Mangatepopo end of the Tongariro Crossing. The colour of the untouched vegetation is in contrast to the fire-damaged land, which leaped over the access road.

He was part of the firefighting efforts last year and helped bulldoze fire breaks.

**Tech at the forefront of recovery**

After the fire the government announced $3.5 million of funding for the recovery.

The work that came out of that was at least a silver lining, Van Der Lubbe said.

For this, DOC used iwi contractors where possible, and brought in specialists when needed.

"Funding from this project has allowed us to investigate new technologies to make our work more effective and more efficient.

"We've started using drones to monitor gorse and broom and wilding conifers. The drone comes in, takes photographs and then they use their AI platform to find all the plants.

"Rather than me sending a helicopter into a block and saying, 'Just search the whole area', I can give them a pinpoint of where the weeds are and they just go and hit those."

The company behind that is Rotorua-based company Interpine. Its chief technology officer Dave Herries also volunteers for firefighting efforts and was on the ground last year.

He led an intelligence team, which used drones to identify hot spots. Firefighters use an app through their phones to see where these are, so they can put them out.

It's similar for the weed identification efforts.

"After the fire had settled we came in to take imagery of the fire ground for the recovery process and subsequently have been back on a regular basis, capturing snapshots over time."

The company had undertaken three large aerial surveys of the fire zone, and would do another one in December, Herries said.

These provided a visual record of changes to the site.

The AI tech made for efficient use of time.

"[It lets] the Department of Conservation, their contractors and their rangers to be able to identify those weed invasions and target them specifically.

"When we're talking about a fire ground which reached over 3000ha we do need to optimise the use of those ground resources."

**Tourism impact**

In nearby Waimarino tourist-reliant businesses initially lost bookings.

Tongariro Crossing Lodge owner Louis van Wyk said last summer quickly returned to normality, although he fielded calls from overseas for a while asking if the crossing was closed.

This year lodge guests who walked the track didn't even mention the fire damage.

Van Wyk is a volunteer firefighter, who helped with last year's efforts to contain the blazes. He's still relieved that a change in weather helped avert a bigger disaster last November.

"I'm grateful, but at the same time quite apprehensive that something like that could happen again.

"It just showed with the dry spring we had – and that's in the forecast again for a dry summer – that with a little bit of human error and carelessness those kinds of things can happen again, and that makes me a little bit nervous."

Ruapehu mayor Weston Kirton said the fire took a toll.

"The figures are always difficult to work through, but any disruption with people coming into the area is quite significant in terms of accommodation and cancellations of activities and the like," he said.

"So, people are scared off by just the image of fires, for example. There was certainly an impact on the economy, there's no doubt about that."

Kirton said various agencies learnt a lot from their responses to the fires, which would help for future events.

Last year's fires started through sparks flying – from a vehicle losing its rear wheel in November and a broken axle in December.



*DOC principal ranger Dan Van Der Lubbe is in charge of the restoration efforts. Photo: Jimmy Ellingham.*



*Interpine's Dave Herries uses drone and AI tech to find weeds, so they can be removed easily. Photo: Jimmy Ellingham.*

# Visitor numbers almost double at Tūroa in 2026

Skier days at Tūroa Ski Area in 2026 nearly doubled from 2025, improving in-season commercial performance and driving an increase in pre-season pass sales for 2027, reports Pure Tūroa.

Three seasons on from the liquidation of RAL, the operating company says increased visitor numbers and operational efficiencies have delivered a surplus, which it intends to drive into infrastructure and snowmaking capacity.

James Simpson, Tūroa's head of brand and marketing said they had a great product right through winter.

"(This) contributed to an uptick in 2027 pre-season pass sales. That shows me confidence is returning to our North Island base.

"With a profitable season and a palpable shift in momentum, we have the confidence to invest in modern snowmaking to further strengthen our product. This will again improve our commercial performance, resulting in yet more investment, an increasingly better product, and so-on. It's a bit of a snowball effect, if you will."

"We had an amazing run of fine weather through spring and the team worked hard to maintain top-to-bottom skiing right through the second school holidays. We also had the longest-running season in the country and were the last commercial area to close.

"There's maybe a bit of a perception that the North Island doesn't get the snow that the southern fields do, but our length of season shows that's not actually the case. I'd further argue that with our volcanic terrain, Tūroa has some of the best skiing in the country and, in spring, when the southern fields are closing for the season, it's a genuine world beater.

"People are starting to remember why skiing the North is so good."

At the current advertised adult price of $599, Tūroa says its 2027 season pass remains "by far the best value in the country".




# Letters

**1972 warning ignored**

• I have been asked to explain what I meant by the Greens greenwashing the Titanic's deckchairs. (*Ruapehu Bulletin* 4 November)

By 1972 I had been teaching life science for five years. We taught that life at all its levels depends on homestasis, on feedback systems that always maintain a balance. Always. You seek more water when your body's cells increase osmotic pressure, farmers keep their sheep numbers down to match the food available, seabirds feeding their chicks in this district brought back the nutrients washed away by rainstorms, thus re-fertilising the forest that hid their chicks. The carbon gases produced by animals and fires were absorbed and stored by trees and wetlands.

By keeping in harmony with their environment, tribal peoples the world over maintained human life for millennia.

Then empire builders invented steam and petroleum engines. These allowed much more food to be grown and transported. By 1972 our world population had grown from 1 billion to 3 billion as we turned more and more forests and wetlands that absorbed carbon gases into money-making farmlands that produced carbon gases. The more that people consumed forests, fens and fossil fuels, the more money they made. Money, money, money!

Just as the Titanic's captain was warned about icebergs early in his voyage, computer scientists at MIT in 1972 warned the world that if they did not stop their consumer society population explosion, homeostatic feedbacks would start reducing the human population when it reached 6 billion in 2050.

But you ignored MIT's calculations and have already multiplied to 8.3 billion. Capitalism relies on constant economic growth and is a Ponzi scam already fraying at the edges. But you are still steaming at full speed into a field of icebergs. The MIT population-prediction computer now says our constantly-growing civilization will crash and start sinking in about 2040. (tinyurl.com/tanuku2040)

We did warn you.

*John Archer*

**For everything Ohakune, visit**
**www.ohakune.info**

# Swim spot monitoring gets underway across the Horizons Region

With summer around the corner, Horizons Regional Council has kicked off its contact recreation water quality testing programme this week.

Horizons environmental monitoring team leader Ian Hurst says staff began sampling water and surveying riverbeds on Monday. The team will monitor more than 80 popular swimming spots each week until 30 April 2027.

"We test for E. coli at freshwater sites and enterococci at coastal sites, as high amounts of these bacteria can suggest faecal contamination of a waterway," says Hurst.

"If we find high levels of these bacteria at a site, it suggests other pathogens, which can make people sick, might also be present.

"Because E. coli and enterococci can't be seen with the naked eye, regular monitoring of swimming sites provides valuable information for people deciding where to swim."

Water samples are taken once a week before being analysed at an independent lab, with results uploaded to the LAWA website, www.lawa.org.nz, says Mr Hurst.

"If results on LAWA suggest your usual spot is unsuitable for swimming, you can check out the water quality of monitored sites nearby that might be suitable. While it's not ideal when your favourite spot isn't at its best for playing in, it does provide a great opportunity to explore somewhere new."

People should also keep an eye out for cyanobacteria, also known as potentially toxic algae, at waterways this summer, says Hurst.

"Cyanobacteria can appear as black or brown mats on rocks in a river or washed up on the riverbank. In lakes, cyanobacteria float freely in the water, causing the water to become murky, or they form green scums on the lake's surface.

"Contact with cyanobacteria can cause illness in both people and animals. Dogs are particularly vulnerable because they like the musty smell of the black mats, but ingesting them can be seriously harmful.

"Be sure to keep an eye on your pets around waterways, especially if you see exposed mats of black or brown algae in the area. As we're expecting dry weather this summer, river levels might be lower, exposing more of these mats."

Hurst says people should also consider wider water safety issues before heading out for a swim.

"Please stay out of water if it has rained heavily within the last 72 hours, as this can create faster-flowing water and contribute to higher levels of faecal contamination.

"It is also important to check a site carefully before entering the water, especially after heavy rain. Check for submerged hazards each time you visit, as conditions may have changed since you were last there.

"Rivers and beaches across Aotearoa New Zealand can be unpredictable, and their power is easy to underestimate. Do not enter the water alone, actively supervise children, and stay out if you are not a confident swimmer.

"Avoid swimming near unstable banks or cliff faces, and call 111 if an emergency occurs at a waterway.

"We want everyone to enjoy the region's waterways safely this summer. By checking conditions before you leave home and making sensible decisions once you arrive, you can help keep yourself, your whānau, and your pets safe.

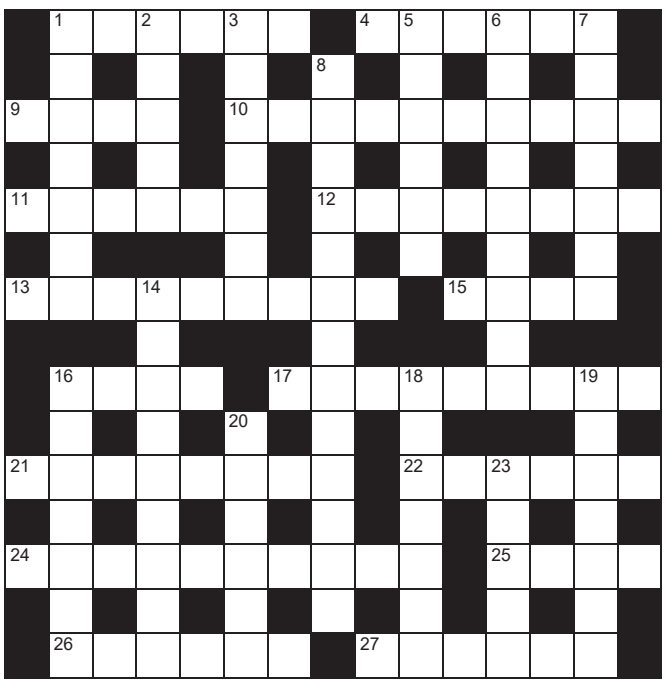
"More information about how to stay safe in and around rivers and beaches can be found at www.watersafetynz.org."



## THE WEEKLY WORKOUT

answers for each puzzle are included on this page — 876

## QUICK CROSSWORD



**Across**
**1.** Violent exhalation (6)
**4.** Deplorable (6)
**9.** Duo (4)
**10.** Juvenile (10)
**11.** Newspaper reporter (colloq) (6)
**12.** Extend (8)
**13.** Opponent (9)
**15.** Boxing match (4)
**16.** Metropolis (4)
**17.** Owned (9)
**21.** Notorious (8)
**22.** Dodges (6)
**24.** Hooligan (10)
**25.** Distant (4)
**26.** Lose one's temper (3,3)
**27.** Arrival (6)

**Down**
**1.** Kaimoana (7)
**2.** Mistake (5)
**3.** Fervent (7)
**5.** Seas (6)
**6.** Flippant (9)
**7.** Tolerant (7)
**8.** Fairground attraction (6,7)
**14.** Repatriate (9)
**16.** Own up (7)
**18.** Perfumed (7)
**19.** Stylish (7)
**20.** Twisting force (6)
**23.** Wide open (5)

**THE TOP 10**

1 Che Guevara, 2 A Remarkable Place to Die, 3 Silver, 4 Yellow Submarine, 5 The name of the country, 6 1990, 7 Jean-Claude Van Damme, 8, Earth, 9 Constantinople, 10 Pole vault.




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## SUDOKU

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

**1** MEDIUM

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

**2** HARD

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

## The Top 10

**1.** Which revolutionary fought alongside Fidel Castro and was killed in Bolivia?
**2.** Which Queenstown-based TV crime series features detective Anais Mallory?
**3.** What is The Lone Ranger's horse called?
**4.** Which Beatles song begins: "In the town where I was born"?
**5.** What do British stamps not have on them which most other stamps do?
**6.** In what year was New Zealand's first Smokefree legislation passed: 1990, 1995 or 2000?
**7.** Which Belgian-born actor played the title role in the 1989 film *Kickboxer*?
**8.** Which planet orbits between Venus and Mars?
**9.** Which city was capital of the Eastern Roman Empire?
**10.** Ukrainian athlete Sergei Bubka broke the world record 35 times in which event?

**CROSSWORD**

**Across**: 1. Sneeze, 4. Woeful, 9. Pair, 10. Adolescent, 11. Journo, 12. Lengthen, 13. Adversary, 15. Bout, 16. City, 17. Possessed, 21. Infamous, 22. Evades, 24. Delinquent, 25. Afar, 26. See red, 27. Advent.
**Down**: 1. Seafood, 2. Error, 3. Zealous, 5. Oceans, 6. Facetious, 7. Lenient, 8. Roller coaster, 14. Extradite, 16. Confess, 18. Scented, 19. Elegant, 20. Torque, 23. Agape.

**SUDOKU**

**1**

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# Deploying is NZDF Soldier of the Year's 'biggest buzz'

The New Zealand Defence Force Soldier of the Year is firmly centred on where he wants to be – a soldier in Waiouru, following in his family's footsteps, and ready for deployments.

Corporal Gabriel Dewes, Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment, Ngāti Porou, is this year's Soldier of the Year after demonstrating exceptional leadership, professionalism, and sustained excellence over the past 12 months.

His citation notes his consistent performance at a level that distinguishes him among his peers and exemplifies the very best qualities of a New Zealand Army soldier.

A regimental training Non-Commissioned Officer at Waiouru Military Camp's The Army Depot, Corporal Dewes is a recruit instructor working on the development of NZ Army recruits, the professional growth of fellow instructors, and the capability of the wider training establishment.

While his family is from the East Cape, he was born in Palmerston North, growing up in the Manawatū, before joining the NZ Army in 2014.

"It was something of a family thing," he says. "I've had family members serve in the 28th (Māori) Battalion. My dad is still in the NZ Army and I've had a couple of uncles in the NZ Army."

Both his peers and recruits have commended him for his instructional ability, professionalism and commitment. Beyond the classroom, he regularly coaches and mentors fellow instructors to improve training delivery and maintain the highest standards across the instructor cadre.

The biggest "buzz" is being deployed, he says, whether instructing or on operations.

Last year he was selected to deploy to Fiji as an instructor with the Republic of Fiji Military Forces, a role reserved for highly capable soldiers with proven leadership, technical mastery, and professional credibility.

While there and during a major field training exercise, Corporal Dewes assumed command of a section following the unexpected evacuation of a staff member, ensuring training objectives were achieved while safeguarding the welfare of personnel under difficult conditions.

Out of uniform, Corporal Dewes is an enthusiastic hunter and revels in the opportunities afforded to him in the Central Plateau.

His citation describes him as "outstanding role model…a highly deserving recipient of the 2026 NZDF Soldier of the Year Award".



*Corporal Gabriel Dewes, New Zealand 's Soldier of the Year. Photo: NZDF.*

# Whakapapa season a positive, despite low snow



*As the sun set on the Whakapapa snow season, the company reflects on an improving year, thanks to snow management in a low snow year.*

Whakapapa operators have reflected on promising ski season despite weather challenges

Whakapapa wrapped up its ski season on the weekend of 17-18 October.

Whakapapa Holdings chairman and chief executive Dave Mazey said the skifield did "surprisingly well", considering the amount of snowfall.

"That was one of the lightest natural snow years in the last 40-odd years that I'm familiar with," Mazey said.

"A big difference in today compared to five or 10 years ago is the scale and efficiency of snowmaking systems."

Mazey said the continued development of the school group business was a highlight this season.

"It's a lovely way to engage your future skiers with different midweek programmes," he said.

He said the emphasis on adaptive skiing and snowboarding, which catered for people with disabilities, was successful.

Mazey said Whakapapa was focused on restimulating the demand that existed before the uncertainty around operation, following Ruapehu Alpine Lifts liquidation in 2023.

"Without a doubt, skiing in the North Island slowed, or the numbers were a lot less, through the three years of administration, receivership, liquidations and the uncertainty associated with whether both skifields were open for the next season," he said.

"The key thing for us has been to trying to restimulate that demand that used to traditionally be there."

The "price point" regarding season passes was an area that could be controlled and delivered, Mazey said.

Whakapapa had released its October promotion 2027 season passes at the "lowest price point" for the last 25-30 years.


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View By appointment

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# Local newspaper advertising is alive and well right here in Ruapehu

There is a lot of talk about the demise of newspapers, following the explosion of on-line media. But local community newspapers like the ***Ruapehu Bulletin*** reach as many people as they always did. With the cacophony of information through electronic media, our readers like to pick up their ***Bulletin*** and read about the people and places in their community.

You can by-pass the confusing and eye-watering number of websites (last count, well over half a billion) and talk directly with your customers by advertising each week in the ***Ruapehu Bulletin***.

**Your stories, your people, your community, your newspaper, your place to reach your customers**




Ruapehu Bulletin

**Contact Jude today for details of our *Starter Pack on 06 385 8532**

**Email ads@ruapehubulletin.co.nz**

# Ruapehu College senior special awards 2026

Year 13 student Hannah Pettman Swift is the 2026 dux – the award for the top academic student for the year.

"This exemplary student has already achieved NCEA Level 3 with an impressive credit profile of 55 Excellence and 10 Merit credits, a feat that requires consistent dedication and sacrifice. The upcoming external results are expected to further enhance this outstanding achievement," states the prize list from Friday's senior prize giving at the school.

Connor Anderson was awarded the Proxime Accessit trophy, which is for the student who is runner-up to the Dux in academic achievement.

"This student has already achieved NCEA Level 3 with a strong internal credit profile of 24 Excellence and 30 Merit credits, which is a clear indicator of hard work and commitment. We are confident the upcoming external results will contribute to this already successful achievement."

Connor Anderson also received the Principal's Award.

"This student lives our college values every day. They are consistently respectful and demonstrate incredible determination with all things Ruapehu College, giving an honest, consistent effort with their schoolwork, their sporting endeavours and their leadership duties. Their commitment to our college motto, Rapuhia kote Matauranga, is evident in their successes and their willingness to push themself to improve their learning."

Nikora Richards Henare is awarded the Waimarino Shield, donated by the Māori community of the district "for an all-round student in academic, sporting and social areas including Māori culture and values".

Bishop Hodge received the Loftus Shield, for services to the College, including providing a good example and reliability in all areas – academic social and sporting.

Drew Moore received the Ruapehu Anglican Parish Award for being "generous in their contribution to school life, displaying a growth mindset to overcome difficulties".

The Maungarongo Trophy was presented to Manaia Scarrow, for showing leadership, dedication and initiative in the promotion of kapa haka during the year in school.

The Brian Eades Trophy, for perseverance and endeavour went to Hannah Pettman-Swift.

The Robin Rowles Memorial Award, for a student who shows leadership and kaitiakitanga in te taiao, Connor Anderson.

The Andrew Beggs Memorial Trophy, for a student who upholds the values that were upheld by Andrew Beggs: a good work ethic, respect for the environment and concern for others, Nikora Richards Henare.

The award for the top Year 11 Student 2026, went to Paige Drinkwater.

"This year, we have one recipient of our top Year 11 award. Having achieved outstanding results in her internal assessments, and previously received the Top Year 9 and Top Year 10 awards, she now deservedly receives the Top Year 11 Academic Trophy."

The Top Year 12 Student 2026 is Rebekah Pettman-Swift.

"This year, we recognise an outstanding student who has consistently received awards throughout her college years, including the Top Year 10 and Top Year 11 awards. She has achieved outstanding results in her internal assessments, and we are confident she will do well in her exams."

Trades academy awards: Most consistent in carpentry, Shiah Gavegan. Outstanding achievement in carpentry, Chase Tutemahurangi. Outstanding achievement Carpentry Level 3 and 100% attendance in carpentry, Ford Kumaroa Ponga. Ruapehu College Vocational Excellence Award, Jay Learmonth.

### Scholarships

Several scholarships were announced at the prize giving, including existing ones as well as new ones.

Dr Nicola Jordan $500 award in honour of her grandfather, Dr Lewis Jordan, a GP in Ohakune and Raetihi. It recognises resilience, diligence, and passion for learning, with the goal of giving back to the community through knowledge and education: Jordi Demchy.

Tiana Kumeroa receives the Lila Pakinga scholarship.

Connor Anderson is awarded a $30,000 University of Waikato Vice-Chancellor's Scholarship – a highly competitive honour, awarded by direct nomination from university leadership to top school leavers who have demonstrated stellar academic performance.

Maia Allen has been awarded the $18,500 University of Otago Māori Entrance Scholarship, celebrating academic excellence and cultural diversity and are awarded to students who have contributed positively to their communities.



*Ruapehu College Dux for 2026, Hannah Pettman Swift at left, and Proxime Accessit Connor Anderson.*

Drew Moore has been awarded the $18,500 University of Otago 150th Entrance Scholarship, for students who have demonstrated academic ability and the potential and motivation to succeed at university.

The Lines Company $200, for Excellence in a STEM subject: Physics, Maia Allen.

Ohakune New World has offered two $2000 scholarships for 2026: going to Jay Learmonth and Grace Rowe.

Hungry Rush has offered $1000 in scholarship funding, this year shared between Paretuarangi Wilson and Nikora Richards Henare.

Several trophy winners also received $100 or $200 scholarships from the Laurenson Trust.

# Cars impounded after repeated burnouts

Ohakune and Raetihi Police have recently impounded three vehicles in relation to sustained loss of traction (burnouts).

"This type of offending continues to be a nuisance to the community and danger to those involved, along with vandalising parks and roads in the process," says Sgt Bruce McLeod.

The first vehicle was responsible for offending on Seddon Street, Raetihi in the evening of 24 October and again on Seddon Street and Thames Street, Ohakune in the afternoon of 25 October.

The 20-year-old female driver is to appear in court in relation to this, advise Police.

The further two vehicles were responsible for offending on Goldfinch Street and Mangawhero Terrace, Ohakune and Seddon Street, Raetihi in the early hours of 1 November.

Enquiries are ongoing to identify the drivers.

There is a mandatory 28-day impoundment for all thee vehicles with a towage and impound fee approaching $1000 each before a car is returned to the owner.

If convicted for sustained loss of traction, drivers can face a maximum three months' imprisonment, $4500 fine and a minimum six months' disqualification in addition to impound fees.

Police ask anyone witnessing a car doing burnouts on a road or public reserve to call 111. If possible and safe, obtain a registration number, photo or video.





*Cars impounded by Police after the drivers were caught doing burn outs. At right, one of the burout sites. Photos: Police.*

Ruapehu Bulletin

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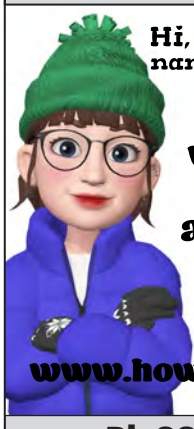
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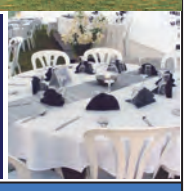


**PARTY HIRE:** floodlights, tables & chairs, heaters, spit roasters, wheelie bins, chafing dishes, crockery & cutlery, dehumidifier, flute & wine glasses, universal food cooker, portaloos & showers, 3-section marquee, horse float.

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# Big boost in numbers for Ruapehu culture festival

***Schools – and Kaumatua – taking part in this year's Ruapehu Māori Culture Festival were: Ruapehu College, Rangitekura Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Ngāti Rangi, Nga Uri o Te Wharetoka, Orautoha Kura, Ohakune, Waiouru, Kaumatua, Manu Korero Te Kohanga Reo, Mo Te Whanau Te Kohanga Reo, Taihape, Nuku-whenua-kura Te Kurakaupapa Māori o Ngāti Ra, Moawhango, Nancy Winter, Nga Morehu o Uenuku Te Kohanga Reo, Ohakune Kindergarten, Raetihi Teina, Waimarino National Park. Photos: Holly Huriana.***



***Nancy Winter Early Childhood Centre.***



***Raetihi Tuakana.***



***Ohakune Primary School.***



***Ruapehu College.***



***Kaumatua.***



***Raetihi Teina.***

## FOR SALE

**FIREWOOD 4 SALE.** Summer special, $100 per cube, fresh split pine. Delivered local, out of town loads will have delivery costs. Call/txt Jock 0273 602 700.

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

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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

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### ĀTIHAU-WHANGANUI INCORPORATION
### NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 2026

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of shareholders of the Ātihau-Whanganui Incorporation will be held at the Whanganui Racecourse, Purnell Street, Whanganui on **Friday 4th of December 2026 commencing at 9.00 am.** Registration from 7.30am and closing at 10.30am.

**AGENDA**

1. Karakia
2. Mihimihi
3. Apologies – written
4. Committee of Management
   *To fill 2 (two) vacancies:*
   *Kemp Dryden and Rāwiri Tinirau have retired by rotation and seek re-election.*
   *Nominations have been received from Charles Chadwick, Lisa Chase and Arama Wakefield.*
5. Board and CEO Report
6. Financial Report
7. Te Āti Hau Trust Report
8. Dividend
   *To adopt the recommendation of the Committee of Management: That a dividend of 85 cents a share be paid in December 2026 pursuant to section 259 (1) (c) of Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993.*
9. Appointment of Auditors
   *Silks Audit are re-appointed pursuant to section 277(2) of Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993.*
10. Appointment of Share Valuer
    *Silks Audit Ltd be appointed Share Valuer, pursuant to s278 of the Act.*
11. Kaumātua Grant
    *Kaumātua grant of $50 to kaumātua for travel costs associated with the Annual General Meeting. Payment to be by direct credit*
12. Te Āti Hau Trust Grant
    *That pursuant to s259(1d) of the Act a grant be made to Te Āti Hau Trust of $350,000 for the 2026/2027 financial year for its charitable purposes.*
13. Minutes: 5th December 2025 Annual General Meeting

**Postal Voting**
Shareholders may cast a postal vote by completing and sending the Postal Voting form to the Secretary. Postal Votes must reach the Secretary no later than 9.00 am on Wednesday 2nd of December 2026.

**Proxies**
The Constitution permits shareholders who are unable to attend the meeting to appoint a proxy. No person shall vote as attorney or proxy at the meeting unless a copy of the power of attorney or notice of appointment of proxy properly completed is lodged at the office of the Incorporation no later than 9.00 am on Wednesday 2nd of December 2026.

*Paul Maguire, Secretary*

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### BEE HIVE PLACEMENTS

We are seeking additional sites to lease on bona fide rural properties. December to February in the Central Plateau and surrounding areas. 10 years' continuous operating in the area.

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Lead conservation, community and connection in the heart of the Central Plateau.

Project Tongariro is seeking an experienced and values-led General Manager to guide our operations, people and programmes and help deliver meaningful conservation and community outcomes across Tongariro National Park and the wider Central North Island.

This is a hands-on leadership role for someone who can turn strategy into action, support staff and volunteers, manage budgets and programmes, strengthen partnerships, and build trusted relationships with iwi, hapū, funders, councils, landowners and community organisation's.

Based in Tūrangi, or Taupō by agreement.

If you bring at least five years' experience in operational leadership, programme management, people and volunteer leadership, budgeting and stakeholder engagement and a genuine passion for conservation, we would love to hear from you.

Find out more: **www.tongariro.org.nz**

If you have any questions, please phone Mark Davies on 0274 746 330

To request a copy of the **Role Description, Application Form and Information Pack please email: chair@tongariro.org.nz**

Applications close Saturday 28 November @ 5pm

**Applications to be emailed to:**
**Mark Davies, chair@tongariro.org.nz**

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### RUAPEHU Rugby & Sports Club

### Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 25 November 2026, 6.30pm

Ruapehu Rugby Clubrooms, Rochfort Park Ohakune

All Welcome

Contact ruapehusportsclub@gmail.com for further information.

### Paraweka Marae
### Notice of Annual General Meeting

Saturday 12 December at 1:30pm - 3pm
Paraweka Marae, Pipiriki and Zoom online

If you're feeling unwell or have cold/flu symptoms,please attend via Zoom only.

**Agenda**:
- Mihimihi/Karakia
- Apologies
- Registration verification
- Minutes of previous AGM
- Annual & Financial Reports
- Karakia Whakamutunga

Inquiries to the Secretary, Shineal Hohepa, including request for Zoom link to:
paraweka.marae.secretary@gmail.com

### TŪWHARETOA MĀORI TRUST BOARD

### Annual Hui-a-Tau

**Saturday 5 December 2026**
**Hirangi Marae, 39 Hirangi Rd, Tūrangi**

9:30am Registrations open
10.00am Hui-ā-Tau commences
12:00pm Hui-ā-Tau concludes
12.30pm Join us for Whānau Day, celebrating 100 years of TMTB

Lunch will be provided, and all Ngāti Tūwharetoa beneficiaries and their whānau are warmly invited to attend an afternoon of celebration, connection, and entertainment.

A digital copy of the Annual Report 2026 which includes the Financial Statements for Year End 30 June 2026, and Hui-ā-Tau Minutes 2025 will be available online at **www.tuwharetoa.co.nz/publications** from Wednesday 18th November 2026.

A comprehensive report and presentation will be provided at the hui. Printed copies of the report will also be available at the hui.

Apologies can be registered by:
Email: annualhui@tuwharetoa.co.nz
Phone: 07 386 8832

*Rakeipoho Taiaroa, Chief Executive Officer*

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WAIMARINO
# BULLETIN
**VOICE OF THE RUAPEHU REGION**
Tuesday 11 November 1986. Volume 4 No. 24

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# Forestry fears confirmed

**The worst fears of local forestry workers have been confirmed.**

It had been hoped that the remoteness of Karioi and surrounding forests in the central North Island may afford some protection from staff cut-backs when the new Forestry Corporation takes over from the New Zealand Forest Service on 1 April 1987 (see last week's *Bulletin*).

But those hopes were dashed when the new Corporation outlined its proposals in a glossy 56-page booklet published last Friday.

Forests throughout the country will be divided into regions which will in turn be divided into districts.

Karioi, Tongariro, Rotoaira and Erua forests will come under the control of the Turangi District Office which is itself under the control of the Central Region Office in Rotorua.

The four local forests have a total area of 30,110ha (74,400 acres) and a total stocked area of 19,410ha (47,961 acres).

The NZ Forest Service presently employs 23 wage workers and 11 salaried staff at Karioi State Forest.

Under the new Corporation the number of salaried staff will be cut to five ... a loss of six jobs among experienced key personnel.

These five — a forestry technical supervisor, a forestry superintendent, a logging supervisor, a weighbridge supervisor and a workshop supervisor — will each have to negotiate individually with the Corporation their terms of employment and compete with other applicants.

What will happen to the other forestry workers — the wage earners — is not yet certain. Under the new Corporation it is expected that about 1,000 staff throughout the country will be declared 'surplus to requirements' and will be offered job transfers, re-training, early retirement or voluntary redundancy.

The impact of these job losses on the businesses in Ohakune and Raetihi will be considerable, said a local forestry spokesman.

"We have six staff houses and 20 single men's units in Ohakune and another two houses at Karioi alone. If these non-seasonal workers and their families were to leave, all the retailers and tradesmen in the Waimarino will suffer because there would be that much less business to keep things ticking over between ski seasons," he said.

"It will remove about a quarter-of-a-million dollars a year in salaries and wages from the town."

"I'm worried about those guys at Tongariro and Erua State Forests too. These are largely indigenous forest with a very small area of exotics and instead of going over to the Forestry Corporation next year they will become part of the Department of Conservation."

"What will happen to the eight wage-workers and two salaried staff presently employed by the NZ Forest Service there no-one can yet tell."

Forestry staff from all over the region who attended the 3-hour meeting in Palmerston North last Friday, at which the Corporation's proposals were outlined, staged a symbolic walk-out at the end of the meeting as a form of protest about the new conditions and resolved to go on strike this Thursday.

They will travel to Wellington and hold a demonstration on the steps of Parliament.

# NEW COUNTY COUNCILLORS

**Waimarino County has two new councillors to fill the vacancies left by the sudden death of Cr. Malcolm Whale and the recent resignation of Cr. John Martin.**

When nominations closed last Friday only two names had been received — those of Kay Wallis from Karioi and Bill Harding of Waiouru.

Since there were only two nominees for the two vacant positions on Council both Kay Wallis and Bill Harding were automatically appointed councillors. No by-election was required.

Kay Wallis is the first-ever woman to serve on the Waimarino County Council in its 83-year history.

While she has had no previous experience with local authority administration she is well known in the Waimarino having been the district's public health nurse and chairman of the Ohakune Primary School Committee for a number of years.

Kay Wallis with her youngest son William farms an 1100 acre farm (800 freehold/300 leasehold) on Ngamoki Road off the Wangaehu Valley Road at Karioi. Two of her daughters are journalists.

Bill Harding and his family farm Waiouru Station. The Hardings have had a long association with the area being one of the first farmers to introduce aerial top-dressing into New Zealand. Two of his brothers, John and Richmond, are owner-managers of Rangitikei Air Services and Wanganui Aero work.

# Bike race leaders



**The first group of three riders to reach Ohakune included Jack Swart and Allan Miller, both of New Zealand, together with Omar Palov of Czechoslovakia.** *(For story see back page)*

# WAIMARINO BRIDES PARADE



**Of the 17 entrants for the Bride of the 80's competition, the six semi-finalists were from left: Rhonda Perkins; Debbie Alabaster; Erin Marnoch; Shirley McGahan; Donna Moore and Leigh Berry.** *(More pictures p17.)*

**A night of flowers, frills and finery was the recent 'Bride of the 80's' competition held at the Ruapehu College hall.**

The evening was organised by the Waimarino Plunket Society and the estimated $1300 raised from ticket sales and raffles will be put towards the purchase of a new car for the area's Plunket nurse.

Seventeen lovely ladies took to the stage in their wedding dresses, most looking more than a little nervous.

The brides were escorted by members of the Ohakune Volunteer Fire Brigade who stepped out in dress uniform.

The judges of the competition who had the unenviable task of choosing a winner were Corrine Johns, Gwen Doble, Elizabeth Penny, Godfrey Harvey and Jim Goldfinch.

Contestants were awarded marks on the suitability of their dresses and their bouquets, veils and hair styles.

The original seventeen contestants were reduced to six in the semi-finals with Debbie Alabaster, Leigh Berry, Erin Marnoch, Shirley McGahan, Donna Moore and Rhonda Perkins.

The three final placegetters were Leigh Berry (1), Donna Moore (2), and Shirley McGahan (3).

They were escorted onto the stage by their husbands to receive their winning sashes, and received resounding applause from the 350-plus crowd packed into the hall.

Mrs Berry received a fabulous prize including a trip for two over the mountain by helicopter, sponsored by Wanganui Aero Works; a dress outfit and accessories from Factory Fashions, Ragtime and Ohakune Shoes, and dinner for two donated by Jocelyn Fannin.

Second place-getter Donna Moore received a clothing voucher from Littles Clothing in Ohakune; a jewellery box from Ohakune Photo Pharmacy and a visit to colour consultant Carol Wilson.

Third place-getter Shirley McGahan received a voucher for Images Hair Salon; a hat and scarf from the Sheepskin Shop; a voucher from Robin's Nest in Raetihi and a pair of flannelette sheets donated by Bennetts Furnishers.

The flowers that adorned the hall, and those used in the Brides' bouquets were donated by Alpine Flowers.

Flower girls for the evening were Anna Frazer, Jennifer Griffiths, Danielle Spencer and Catherine Crowe.

A group of local young ladies modelled 'pastimes' — a collection of wedding gowns from yester-year, belonging to past brides of the region. The oldest gown was 41 years old and was modelled by the original bride's grand-daughter.

It is hoped that a similar competition may be held for future brides, married in the Waimarino.


FOR YOUR CHRISTMAS PARTY
The SUNBEAM will be open for Christmas functions as from 19 Nov. Wednesday to Sunday weekly, or any other night by arrangement.
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The news, 40 years ago. The other pages and other Bulletins can be found at the Papers Past website, paperspast.natlib.govt.nz

# Waiouru fire now in patrol phase after 'outstanding team effort'

After many days of intensive firefighting in the Waiouru Military Training Area, operations are transitioning into a mop-up, patrol, and recovery phase following a major multi-agency effort, reports NZDF.

The scrubland fire, which started on 25 October during live-fire training, initially appeared extinguished before reigniting the following morning.

**More work**

While active spread of the fire has been managed, there is still more work to do with dedicated crews monitoring the perimeter, targeting hotspots, and managing ongoing risks, says NZDF Fire Master and Operations Commander, Staff Sergeant Matthew Anker, who commended the multi-agency response to date.

"The efforts of everyone involved have been outstanding. Crews faced extremely demanding conditions with strong winds and difficult terrain, making the response particularly challenging.

"With air support, heavy machinery, drones, and specialist vehicles, the combined crews from the NZDF, Fire and Emergency New Zealand, and the Department of Conservation have successfully protected key infrastructure, culturally significant sites, and native bush.

"A huge thank you to everyone involved for their professionalism, determination, and teamwork throughout this challenging response."



*Fire fighters at one of the borders of the fire area.*

While the main firefighting effort has shifted, crews will remain on site over the coming days to maintain patrols of the area and ensure it remains secure.


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**Deadline Sale** closes Friday 4th December, 2026 at 11.00am, (unless sold prior)

**View** Sun 15 Nov 2.00 - 2.30pm
Sun 22 Nov 2.00 - 2.30pm

**Web** pb.co.nz/OHR239801



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# Slight increase in tremor but no other changes at Crater Lake

Volcanic tremor at Mt Ruapehu has fluctuated at low to moderate levels since 11 August, with a gradual upward trend in recent weeks, reports Earth Sciences NZ (formerly GNS).

"There has been minimal change in measured gas emissions as well as the temperature of Te Wai ā-moe (Ruapehu Crater Lake). Volcanic activity remains within the range typical for minor unrest, therefore the Volcanic Alert Level remains at 1," says duty volcanologist Oliver Lamb.

Since early August 2026, seismic tremor at Ruapehu has fluctuated in intensity with a gradual increase to moderate levels since early October.

"In the same period, we have occasionally detected small numbers of low-magnitude earthquakes beneath the volcano."

Te Wai ā-moe / Crater Lake temperatures have remained in the range 19–22°C, and the output of volcanic sulphur dioxide ($SO_2$) gas has been low-to-moderate compared to long-term ranges. During recent sampling visits, persistent upwelling was observed at several locations in the Lake, with sulphur slicks visible across the water surface and around the lake shores. Analysis of the lake chemistry have indicated a slight change in chemical content in 2026, but values remain well within range typical for minor unrest at Ruapehu.

"Altogether, our observations are consistent with a dynamic volcano hydrothermal system experiencing intermittent but slightly elevated input of volcanic gas and heat. Current activity at Ruapehu is within the range expected during minor volcanic unrest."

He said the Earth Sciences New Zealand Volcano Monitoring Group and National Geohazards Monitoring Centre will continue to closely monitor Ruapehu 24/7 for any changes in activity.


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