

Ngongotahā Rallies for Salvation Army as Kick for a Cause Raises \$12.5k

Ngongotahā's community spirit was on full display over the weekend, as the third annual 'Kick for a Cause' event brought together well-known locals for an afternoon of friendly football in the name of a good cause.

Hosted at Ngongotahā Football Club in Stenbridge Road, the charity football event saw more than 50 prominent personalities - including CEOs, school principals, and community leaders - lace up their boots and take to the pitch for two exhibition matches to raise funds for Rotorua's Salvation Army.

While the scoreboard tallied 13 goals across both matches, the biggest win belonged to the Salvation Army, with the event raising just over \$12,500 in cash and canned goods to support their vital foodbank services. Rotorua Salvation Army's community ministries manager, Darnielle Hoods, expressed deep gratitude for the support. "This will go towards

our choice model supermarket, meaning we can provide kai to those in our community who really need it."

The event drew its largest crowd yet, with around 300 enthusiastic spectators waving homemade banners and cheering from the sidelines. For Alan Cobby, one of the organisers, this community spirit was the highlight of the day.

"The players gave it their all for a great cause and had a lot of fun on the field. The crowd was with them and got behind it, creating an amazing atmosphere and sense of community," Cobby says. For those unable to attend in person, the entire event was captured on camera and streamed live online by the event's sponsor and broadcaster, Local Gecko Productions. (Team photo courtesy Grace Klava Photography.)

Through this event, and previous editions in both Ngongotahā and Hamilton, Kick for a Cause has now raised over \$30,000 for the Salvation Army. Organisers extend their heartfelt thanks to everyone who has supported them. They look forward to bringing the event back to the community again in early 2026, and welcome expressions of interest from anyone who may like to be involved.



1st Ngongotaha Scout Group – An Awesome Few Months!

Achievements:

Late last year, we were thrilled to see two of our Cubs, Ariki Matehaere and Aiah Kortequee (pictured) achieve their Rata, Capstone Award. This prestigious award is the highest award in the Cub section (ages 8-11) and reflects their dedication, hard work, and commitment to Scouting values. This year Duncan Harding also achieved his Rata Award, making us all incredibly proud. At a recent event, we also presented Charlotte McKay, one of our Keas (ages 5-7), with her Kowhai, Capstone Award. This award is a significant milestone for our youngest Scouts and showcases Charlotte's enthusiasm and dedication at such an early age.

Additionally, some of our Kaiarahi completed the Scouts NZ Woodbeads training course, highlighting the opportunities Scouting provides not only for youth but for leaders as well. Well done to Mamaku, Kowhai and Kumara.

Activities:

The Scout section (ages 11-14) embarked on an adventurous overnight tramp and camp in the Mamaku

Ranges. Another highlight was our Founder's Camp. This brought together 30 of our uniformed members from 1st Ngongotaha and over 100 other Scouts of all ages from around the Volcanic Zone, at Te Teko Racecourse. This camp was a fantastic opportunity for our youth to bond, learn, and celebrate the legacy of Scouting.

The Cubs recently visited the Coast Guard in Rotorua, learning about water safety and rescue operations. The Scouts were visited by Hato Hone (St John), where they gained valuable first aid knowledge and skills. Looking ahead, we are excited to head to Napier late in March for two nights with our Cubs and Scouts.

Our Venturer section (ages 14-18) has been hard at work earning funds for their big AdVenture early next year by helping a past member family with a big garden project. Congratulations again to all our award recipients, and a huge thank you to our dedicated Kaiarahi, and supportive families who make these experiences possible. Here's to more fantastic Scouting adventures in the coming months!



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(No service at St Barnabas)
Good Friday, 18 April 2pm service at St Barnabas
Easter Sunday, 20 April 9.45 Eucharist at St Barnabas
All are welcome.

Can you help?

Predator Free Rotorua are giving out free backyard rat traps to locals as part of the Predator Free movement to help bring native birds back. Is there a business or organisation in Ngongotaha that would be interested in supporting the programme by being a collection point where the public can self-register and pick up a free trap?

Thank you, Lucy - lucy@envirohub.org.nz

Roaming dogs

We have spoken to Karen Barker (Rural Councillor from RLC) about dog attacks in Mamaku and Hamurana. She is aware of the issue which is being followed up by Animal Control. She asks that if people see dogs roaming that they take photos or get good ID's of the animals and report it to the Animal Control team. This builds a picture of any animals of concern and can help the AC team to better understand the local landscape. Good information can ultimately lead to prevention or even prosecution in the event of an attack.

NAU MAI HAERE MAI - WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AT OUR ANZAC @ AWAHOU MARAE HUI

Ka maumahara tonu tatou ki a ratou – we will remember them.

On behalf of the Ngati Rangiwewehi war veterans committee I would like to invite you all to our ANZAC @ AWAHOU MARAE day starting at 10am on Friday April 25th 2025. This is a public event that we look forward to hosting you at. The main purpose of our hui is to remember those from Ngati Rangiwewehi who served in armed forces.

Please spread the word in our communities as the best advertising for these types of events tends to be word of mouth. Our day will commence with a welcome from Ngati Rangiwewehi kaumatua. We will have formalities including the laying of wreaths, the reading of the Flanders Field poem and the remembrance reading of those from Ngati Rangiwewehi who have served. Our day will end with everyone having a kai in our wharekai followed by socialising at our Awahou activities club behind the marae if you choose to do so.

This is a whanau event and children are most welcome to attend.

How has 2025 started for you?

This has been a particular busy one for my wife and I. We were invited to the Netherlands and UK for business events in January. This saw us staying in the Utrecht, the Netherlands and travelling to places such as Manchester, London, Ghent and Brugge. It was an excellent way to start the year although it was a bit cold for me. A bit like when I used to stay in the Awahou river a bit longer than I should have.

The lakes did not quite freeze over enough to ice skate on them during our time there, but the waterways had ice over six inches thick on them. It felt a bit strange wearing my thickest jersey and coat in January, especially knowing you were all sunbathing and swimming in rivers back here in

Aotearoa. My saving grace was the warm interiors of the cottages and accommodation we stayed in which had triple glazing and awesome heating.

Having said all of that, my wife loved being in the cold and was hoping it would snow! I guess opposites really do attract.

We then went from the highs of travelling to the UK to having to do a trip to Melbourne for the funeral of our friend's daughter aged 35 who had been murdered. It was a very sad occasion which highlighted the terrible stats of domestic violence in Australia where 7 women had been murdered in 4 weeks through domestic violence. It was good to be able to attend the tangi at their home alongside other friends from Aotearoa who had made the trip to support them.

The whanau had their daughter at home for a few days before the funeral which gave us and them space to mourn in semi-privacy. There were many tears shed as well as laughter as people remembered the precious life that had been terribly taken.

I have attended many funerals in homes over the years and it has certainly become an accepted practice here in Aotearoa. I especially like how whanau are able to have that first night together on their own in their home sharing their farewells and grief before the many arrive over the next few days. Funerals are never easy. But farewelling our loved ones is



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important for all involved.

We stayed in Melbourne for a week before coming home and going to Taranaki for a week to attend the national Te Matatini Kapa haka competition in New Plymouth. The real added bonus was seeing our mokopuna who now live in New Plymouth. However, it was nice to attend such an amazing event in such a beautiful place after the Melbourne funeral.

The Kapa haka event was made even more awesome when our Kapa haka team from Ngati Rangiwewehi, based at Awahou came second. Our whanaunga (relatives) did our tribe proud and upheld the mana of Awahou.

Congratulations to Ngati Whakaue from Ohinemutu who won the event. In all a very successful event for Te Arawa Kapa haka and all of the teams who travelled. Na mihi ki a koutou katoa.

Last weekend consisted of travelling to Kihikihi for the National Rodeo champs, returning home for the Bay of Plenty Superstock champs before sneaking down the lakefront to watch the fireworks. The next day saw us sitting in the sun at the lakefront (without jerseys and coats on) watching the same Kapa haka groups from Te Arawa perform for their home crowds. Awesome weekend. I hope your year and weekends have been awesome in 2025. Whether it has been travelling, sunbathing, swimming, comforting others or watching sports and Kapa haka. All the very best for 2025 to you and your whanau.

Nau mai haere mai ki ANZAC @AWAHOU MARAE.

It will be our Rangiwewehi pleasure to host you.

Ngahihi o te ra Bidois is a Motivational Speaker, Professional Director, businessman, author, husband, father. Koro and MBA. A Maori Boy from Awahou. See <https://thefaceofnewzealand.com/>

Te Waititi Stream Mouth Wetland Project 2025

Before Christmas 2024, two volunteers, Tracey and Chris came to help with clearing willow, alder, and wattle from the wetland.

Since Christmas we have had two working bees, 8 volunteers on the first occasion, 4 on second occasion, the conclusion of which is that we are getting older and maybe the best thing we can do is to clear the overgrown track which exists, somewhere in the thicket, clear it of bramble etc so that the peninsula can become an easy stroll.

We started this wetland project back in 2016, now we are all 9 years older ie we are in the mid 70s and above, the best that we can hope for is to clear the track, open it up for all to enjoy. George from EnvBOP came on our first outing. George was full of knowledge of wetland plants and had a very handy App on his phone which identified plants with ease. George and I spent a good 2 hours cutting and poisoning willow, alder and wattle.

On the second outing, Graham and I finished off the willows that George had cut and we cleared 2 clumps of willow along the edge of the water to keep the path dry. Whilst Graham and I were busy down the water's edge, Kevin turned up but didn't see us, that's how dense the wetland has become. The sun being its usual hot self, shone down hard on us and we managed to do a good couple of hours before knocking off. Graham has spent a few evenings pulling out the broom, the more we remove, the more we find to remove. With our limited resources we are best to focus our effort on opening up the path around the peninsula.

We will have a working bee the ANZAC weekend of April 26 & 27, Saturday and Sunday mornings with a view of clearing the "coastal" path around the peninsula. Any assistance is most welcome. As for the birdlife, swallows are in abundance especially in the early evening, the pukeko come and go strutting their stuff. The seagulls and dotterels play their game of "Not in my Space", they are not there every night. As for the mouth of the Waititi, EnvBoP have dug out some of the tree stumps with a view to improve the flow.

I recently met with Lucy from Predator Free BoP, signed up and have one rat trap to test out down amongst the wetland plants. We'll see how things go.

Martyn Evans.

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Authorised by Todd McClay,
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Hon Todd McClay

Member of Parliament for Rotorua



Delivering a stronger economy to help Kiwi families.

There are growing signs that the economy has turned the corner with Rotorua seeing an increase in visitors and business activity.

Stats NZ has recently announced that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 0.7% in the December 2024 quarter, with New Zealand's economy starting to grow.

Our main focus as a government is to deliver economic growth, because when our economy grows, we have more opportunities, more jobs, higher incomes and ultimately more to invest in better health, education, and public services.

Since the last election we have focused on reducing wasteful Government spending to get inflation and interest rates down and have moved quickly to invest in better public services.

We've delivered tax relief through adjusting tax bands for the first time in a decade and with FamilyBoost helping thousands of families put their kids through Early Childcare Education.

And we're focused on cost of living with inflation falling to 2.2%, down from 5.6% when we came into Government.

Falling inflation has allowed for successive cuts to the OCR – which now sits at 3.75% enabling banks to cut interest rates on mortgages – this means you can expect to see more money in your bank account if you renegotiate your mortgage.

We know that people are still struggling and that there is more work to do – but with economic forecasts projecting further growth ahead, things are looking up.

Economic growth is the key to getting New Zealanders ahead. It is how we lift incomes, create more jobs, deal with the cost of living, and invest in the high-quality public services Kiwis deserve.

Hon Todd McClay

Member of Parliament for Rotorua

Authorised by T. McClay, Parliament Buildings, Wellington



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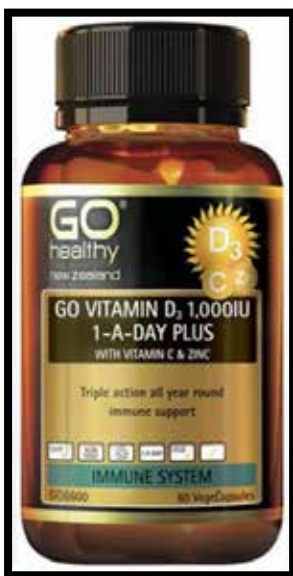
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WHY WAIT?

Kaharoa School

Tēnā koutou whānau

The fabulous fine weather has continued into autumn, and we have been making the most of this with visits to local food forests for our gardening and trapping groups, the seniors camping at Maketū, swimming continuing for classes in our well-heated pool, and a pool party to help fundraise for this awesome pool heating.

Team Tōtara: Maketū Beach Camp: Our senior students had a fantastic camp in March, staying at Whakaue Marae in Maketū. A huge thank you to all of our whānau who attended to support and encourage their tamariki, and to the kaiako for their work in organising and helping things run smoothly.

Campers participated in a variety of fun activities, including:

Rock climbing and using the vertical slide and leap of faith at Rocktopia;

Swimming, jumping, sliding, and climbing at Waimarino (water adventure park in Bethlehem);

Learning life-saving skills - how to identify and escape from rip currents and experiencing what it is like to be swimming in and against a strong current;

Exploring around and swimming in the estuary;



Climbing to the top of the Pā in Maketū (and listening to some of our local stories shared by a kaumātua from Whakaue Marae); And of course, playing different versions of spotlight in the evenings! The camp provided opportunities for our students to spend time building relationships, challenging themselves with new skills, developing knowledge of our local histories, and exploring outdoor environments.



Pool party: Our amazing PTA held a pool party on 20th March to raise funds for heating the pool from November through March each year, and for pool running costs. There were jibbitz and food available, including American hotdogs, pizza, sweets, and ice blocks. A wonderful time was held by all. Thank you Kaharoa PTA!



Food Forest visits: Kaharoa School has a gardening club - with Whaea Lisa's support, they help our caretaker keep our food forest and other gardens in great shape. We also have a trapping club to try and keep pests out of our kura. Recently, our students were invited to visit Kai Rotorua's shared gardens in Kaharoa, as well as a syntropic food forest near Te Teko. We would like to thank Kai Rotorua and those who helped support these trips with supervision and transport.

Kaharoa Fun Run and Rotorua Mini-Marathon: As part of our school's focus on fitness in term 2, we will once again be taking part in the **Rotorua Mini-Marathon** on Friday 2nd May. We are excited about the Mini-Marathon, as we think it is a great opportunity for our students to further develop our school values and embody our school motto: Tā Mātou Pai Ake - Our Best Always. This run provides a chance for our students to set and achieve a long-term running goal. Also, the running and fitness focus of the Kaharoa Colour Fun Run and Rotorua Mini-Marathon both support and lead into our school cross-country later in term 2.

We are fundraising to take the whole school to the Mini-Marathon via the "**Kaharoa Colour Fun Run**". Students will get sponsorship for the number of laps they run, which they can do individually or in a team with other students from their house. This year, we will be including a colour run into the event (last lap). Students need to wear a white/light coloured top that they do not mind getting coloured, and a change of clothes. Whānau are welcome to attend and support their children.

When: Friday 11th April, 11 am - 12 pm (last day of term 1)

Where: Kaharoa School Field

Distance: 400m per lap

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Parent-Teacher Interviews: On 8-9th April, we will be conducting parent interviews to discuss each child's progress and achievement so far this year. This is a great opportunity for our kura and whānau to work together to support every student's learning journey.



We have space for new students. Kaharoa School is 13 minutes from Ngongotaha and open for enrolments now and for 2025 for both primary and intermediate students (Year 1-8). Our pre-school transition visits are held fortnightly on Thursday afternoons with our new entrant teachers (contact the school office for more information if interested).

Please refer to the Kaharoa website for further information and school newsletters. www.kaharoa.school.nz

Ngā mihi - The Kaharoa Team

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LAKEVIEW GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB

The temperatures are certainly telling us it is Autumn! A bit more rain has kept the green tinge on the fairways although a lot more is needed to return to fully green fairways. With winter just around the corner we know the rain will come soon enough. The course has been very busy with visiting players which is awesome.

Club competition saw the Match Play champions being crowned. CONGRATULATIONS to Mailau Skudder Seniors, Paul Cooper Intermediates, Shane Motley Juniors and JR C grade. Vice Captains Trophy and Anniversary Trophy competition runs through April.

With the end of daylight saving, twilight has also ended. Twilight was very popular this year with increased numbers which is fantastic. The burgers produced by our super chefs Shane, Des, Dan and Benny were well received and we thank them for their volunteering efforts in the kitchen!

She Loves Golf was very successful this year with a huge increase in numbers. This is a great trend as the sport of golf lacks female participation nationally. To have more ladies trying the sport is awesome! PHOTO COMPETITION- We are running a photo competition. Entries close end of May. It is open to all amateur photographers with three categories View, Nature and Golf. Come up to the course have a wander and snap some great pics! Great prizes to be won and the winning entries will be displayed in the clubhouse. Dawn and dusk are amazing times to be at the course if you want that special light! Email entries to Rach events@lakeviewgolf.co.nz

With the conference season on the way we remind everyone that we not only have the large main lounge space but also two meeting rooms. These are ideal for the smaller meetings but of course have access to the beautiful outlook from the main lounge for break outs and recess activities. Contact Rach to book your meeting/conference or celebration event. Email events@lakeviewgolf.co.nz

The first quiz night in February after a long hiatus was a great evening! Kelvin the quiz master as always managed to ask some curly brain teasing questions and with the bigger space, we were able to accommodate more teams. The next quiz will be Friday 30th May. We are skipping April as our quiz master is away. We look forward to receiving your team registrations for May.

We had a great day at the Mamaku Car show on Saturday 22nd March. Rach and Sue had the Lakeview Gazebo up with a putting game and Guess the number of golf balls comp going. The weather was beautiful with lots of awesome cars on display and plenty of stall holders which is just fantastic for the Mamaku Community! It was well supported with lots of families having a great day out.

Rotorua Archery Club hold club days on Sundays from 9.30am – 11.00am. Set up is from 9.15am so come up and give it a go everyone is welcome! Until next month enjoy the Autumn and remember to start stocking up the firewood boxes!

Golf shop phone number is 07 357 2341.

.....

On sport

What does a basketball player do once he loses his sight?

Become a referee.

My partner just split up with me because they think I'm obsessed with football. I'm a bit gutted about it – we'd been going out for three seasons.

If procrastination was an Olympic sport, I'd compete in it later.

What's the difference between England and a teabag? A teabag could stay in the cup for longer.

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Donald Trump is visiting a school. In one class, he teaches the young students about a new word: 'tragedy'. Then, he asks them to use it in a sentence.

One brave girl raises her hand and offers, "If a school bus carrying 20 people drove off of a cliff and killed everyone in it, then that would be a tragedy."

"No," Trump responds. "You're close, but that isn't a tragedy. That is what we would call a great loss."

A few seconds later, a boy raises his hand and says, "What about if my friend was at a farm, and a farmer drove over him with a tractor? That would be a tragedy."

"No," Trump repeats. "That is what we would call an accident, not a

tragedy. Anyone else?"

The entire class is stumped for a while. Then, finally, another boy raises his hand and says, "I know what a tragedy would be! If Donald Trump was flying in his private jet and got hit by a missile, that would definitely be a tragedy."

"Exactly!" Trump says, pleased. "Now, can you tell the class why, exactly, that would be a tragedy?"

"Well," The boy replies. "It definitely wouldn't be a great loss, and it probably wouldn't be an accident either."

As a Year 7 biology teacher, I was teaching my class about the flow of blood in the body.

After my lecture I asked the class the following:

"Why is it that if I would turn upside down, my face would turn red since the blood would flow to my head, but when I stand upright my feet don't turn red?"

I was taken aback when a boy blurted out: "That's cos your feet aren't empty!"

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Age Concern

Age Concern has begun most of the new Health Promoting Programmes that we have been funded for;

Steady as you go is the balance class and is well patronised with two classes now being held at the Hindu Heritage Centre on Malfroy Road. **Walkers with Walkers** has attracted a smaller number of members and had their first walk on the Lakefront. They meet here and are transported to various venues with their walkers or wheelchairs. **Just Cook4 Healthy Ageing** takes place at Linton Park and is mainly designed for those who have difficulty cooking a cheap, nutritious meal for themselves.

The free to all, seminar series started this week with 15 attendees learning about SCAM AWARENESS. The next one is on the 19th of May and is on Wills and Enduring Power of Attorney. Phone Parksyde to enrol. Upcoming Seminars include All you need to know about Strokes, How to keep Living Independently in your own Home, Keeping Safe in Your Community, Grief and Loss, Signs of Dementia, Support from MSD, Macular Degeneration, Elder Abuse.

Out and Abouters are off to Maketu today with a van full of members who



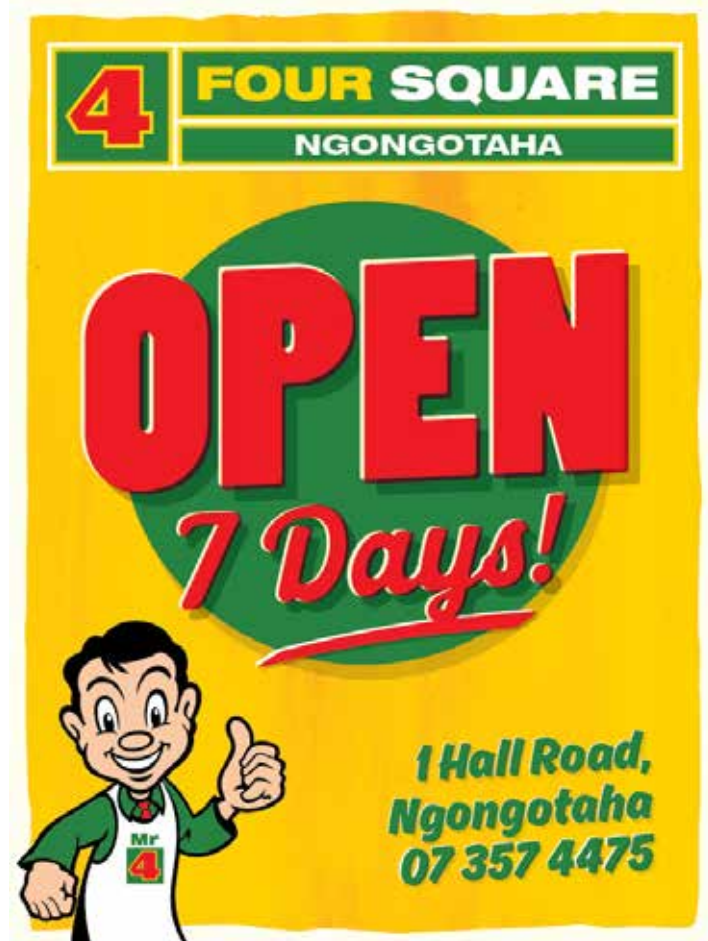
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will enjoy a Fish and Chip lunch before coming home. In our Boardroom today is one of our discussion groups and they are talking about world news.

We have formed a partnership with LOVE SOUP and we are able to provide frozen meals to any members who come in which for some of our members is a godsend as they struggle from day to day to make ends meet.

Have you been driving for years and feel confident behind the wheel? Are you due for a license renewal? We are proud to offer FREE STAYING SAFE refresher courses. These friendly, classroom based workshops help to keep experienced drivers keep their skills sharp and stay confident on the road.

When was the last time you brushed up on your driving knowledge? Roads and rules change over time and even most experienced drivers can do with a refresher. Whether you want to stay on top of the latest updates to the Road Code, understand how age might affect your driving, or simply check in to ensure you are the best driver you can be, this course is here for you.

Age Concern, in partnership with New Zealand Transport Agency offers these FREE courses. They are designed specifically for older drivers and supply a supportive space. You do not have to be a member of Age Concern to enrol in one of these courses, but you need to be over 60. If you are interested phone 07 347 1539 and ask for Karyn.

Housing remains a huge problem for many of our members as can be shown by the latest research results. Almost 50,000 pensioners are also receiving an accommodation supplement to help cover their housing costs, and there's a warning that the bill is going to keep growing.

The accommodation supplement is paid according to a person's income, assets and accommodation costs, and is designed to cover rent, board or home loan payment. The amount paid varies according to location but the maximum a single person with no children can get is \$165 a week.

Data from the Ministry of Social Development shows there were 48,789 people receiving NZ Super and an accommodation supplement in December, up from 47,223 in December 2023 and 34,279 in December 2019.

There were 928,029 people receiving NZ Super in total. The share of pensioners also getting an accommodation supplement was steady at about 5 percent but as the number of retirees increased, so too did the number receiving that extra support.

For people who are poor and old they get not just NZ Super but a myriad of other support services, as they should because they need it. But it was something that could be left out of modelling of the future cost of an ageing population.

When NZ Super was designed, people were more likely to own their own home and increasing home ownership was expected to diminish housing pressure as a source of old age poverty. We are dealing with the opposite, an ageing population with more people reaching old age with a mortgage or no homes. The burden on social assistance from housing is going to increase.

Right now, housing assistance totals around \$2.5b which includes support provision to seniors. This may well grow over the longer term as the aged population grows. It doesn't seem especially material in its own right but we assume the Treasury will look at this when they do their statement on the long-term fiscal position of the NZ government, which is due for publication this year.

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Rory O'Rourke, Manager

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 - ❖ You are pregnant
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Happenings

- 9 April Kaharoa School Parent-teacher interviews
11 April Kaharoa Colour Fun Run 11 am to 12 pm Kaharoa School
25 April ANZAC day e.g. at Awahou Marae 62 Gloucester Rd, 10 am
Drive slowly up Gloucester Rd and the marae is on the right.
2 May Rotorua Mini-Marathon 10 am to 12 pm
19 May Free Seminar on Wills and Enduring Power of Attorney.
Phone Parksyste to enrol
30 May Next Quiz night at Lakeview Golf and Country Club

Regular Events

Monday Indoor Bowls 7.00 pm Ngongotaha Community Hall
2nd Monday Mamaku Garden Circle 1 pm at Fire Station. New members welcome.
Tuesday Vets Golf 9.30am, Junior golf after school at Lakeview
Talking Tech on Tuesdays at Parksyste
2nd Tuesday of the month: Lions Club of Ngongotaha Business meeting at 5.30 pm in the Ngongotaha Hall.
4th Tuesday of the month: Lions Club of Ngongotaha Social meeting at 5.30 pm at venues to be advised. Contact Jamie Ph: 07 3322818
2nd Wednesday Rotorua Collectibles Club: Do you collect anything? Come and share your passion at St Barnabas ph 0272923579
2nd Wednesday Friendship Club 9.45 am St Barnabas Church Hall
4th Wednesday Ngongotaha Garden Circle, Ngongotaha Hall 1 p.m.
Every Thurs Junior Golf after school Lakeview Golf & Country Club
Drop-in technology 10 am with SeniorNet: Age Concern Tarewa Pl.
Thursdays 5pm Twilight Lawn Bowls, Clubhouse Domain Rd
Last Thursday of the month 2.00 pm Poetry Appreciation Society.
Contact Kay myfairykay@gmail.com or 0274 982 787
3rd Saturday of each month The Care Village Market Day Tauai St
Sunday 9.30 to 11.00 Rotorua Archery Club at Lakeview.
Last Sunday Farmers Market at the Agrodome.

Ngongotaha School

It has certainly been another busy and exciting month here at Ngongotaha School. The standout event over the past few weeks has undoubtedly been our incredible gala. It was a huge success, and it was clear to see that both our students and the wider Ngongotaha community had a wonderful time.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed to making the gala such a memorable occasion—our parents, staff, local businesses, and everyone who came along to support us. Thanks to your generosity, we raised funds that will go toward buying new construction and imaginative play equipment for our senior students, similar to the fantastic resources our junior students already enjoy.

In addition to the gala, we also have some very special news to share. Our very own Whaea Mackenzie has recently welcomed a beautiful baby into the world! Both Whaea Mackenzie and her little one are doing wonderfully.

In sporting news, our netball and touch teams are off to a strong start, and our basketball and hockey teams are preparing to hit the ground running after the school holidays. We are also thrilled to share that six of our students participated in the Waikato/BOP Mountain Bike Championship: Maddie Oswald, Eli Christie, Lewis Thompson, Niko Hewson, Archie Dredge, and Finn Condie. They represented the school with pride, and we're especially proud of Maddie, who placed 3rd in her age group!

Our golf academy continues to thrive, with our students working alongside Josh at Lakeview Golf Club. Their development has

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been impressive, and they'll soon be competing in a tournament early next term. Additionally, all of our senior school students have participated in cricket coaching, and our Rumaki unit is working closely with Te Papa Takaro o Te Arawa to learn the sport of Ki o Rahi.

As many of you know, next week will be my final week at Ngongotaha School. Although I've kindly declined the BOT's offer for a formal farewell, I am looking forward to one last special moment with the children—playing a game of rugby with my "wee mates" on Friday lunchtime, and sharing some high fives and hugs as the children cross the pedestrian crossing on the last day of term.

I want to extend my sincerest thanks to all of you for your incredible support. Over the past few weeks, I've been truly touched by the phone calls, emails, visits, texts, and letters of thanks I've received. I am deeply grateful to each and every one of you. It has been an absolute privilege to be a part of this wonderful community for the last six and a half years. Watching the children grow, getting to know each of you, and being part of Ngongotaha School has been a journey I will always cherish.

I leave with nothing but fond memories as Tumuaiki o te Kura o Ngongotaha.

Craig and the team at Ngongotaha School

NGONGOTAHA INDOOR BOWLS

Monday 24th February Trophy It was just a normal night of bowling. The winners were Bruce Wiggins and Greg Chase. Bruce and Greg were in top form all night.

Monday 3rd March Graded Triples We saw a bit of competition happening tonight as most players wanted to win but there was only one lot of winners and they were Richard Mills. Greg Chase and new player Trevor Powell.

Monday 10th March Buttons It sure was a fun night to be had. I didn't realise how grown-up men were getting excited to try and get the buttons off the other team because they wanted them so badly. Three teams lost the buttons which meant teams were really trying if they were challenging for the buttons. The three teams were John, Eddie and Chris. Grahame, Martin and Cheryl. Richard, Nicole and Colin. Bruce, Pete and Robyn retained them.



Friday 14th March Umpires Open Triples It was a good night of bowling. One Ngongotaha team got the booby prize. That team was Bruce Wiggins, Robyn Campbell and Martin Burtling. Not sure what happened to the other Ngongotaha players.

Sunday 16th March Championship Pairs Three Ngongotaha members took part. Greg Chase, Helen White and Nicole Ruthe. Greg and Helen both played well but not well enough. They only just missed out by one point to qualify for play off. We played in the plate but were able to win the first game but not the second. Nicole enjoyed her day playing as a skip. If I may say so, well done to those players.

Monday 17th March Graded Pairs Curry Cup A very interesting night of bowls. The first time I have never won an end in a game. But it was not just my team, another team never scored against us. Some good battles were going on but the winning team was John and Chris. Runner up was Eddie and Colin.

Anyone looking at playing bowls can contact:

Richard Mills 07 3323623

Kevin Whyte

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First Quarter House Observations

Well, we're well past the 2023 elections and change in Government, Christmas and New Year has been and gone, hot cross buns are in the supermarkets, and apparently the economy is 'turning a corner' as it crawls out of the worst slump since 1991 according to politicians and media. So, what does that look like at grass roots for the housing market?

Well, the Government made changes to tenancy laws recently which has increased confidence in private landlords coming back into the market. I've seen a few deals in recent months under the \$400k mark and more people indicating their purchase is for a rental investment or family member, so the lower to mid-price housing is definitely there. The other thing the Government has done is move the brightline test back to 2 years freeing people up to buy and sell more regularly if they want without fear of being stung for property tax on their sale.

Driving round Rotorua and surrounds there is certainly a huge number of town houses being built, which reminded me of a recent visit to Christchurch where the private townhouse concept has taken off in leaps and bounds. Sure, the ones we are seeing locally are likely Kainga Ora builds but, at some point, people are going to have to realise higher density is the living style that is the way of the future and we'll be seeing more and more private developments all over the place as they become more accepted.

The Government has changed the rules around minimum lot size, too, so that means the ability to better utilise and infill the existing city residential land footprint. Also, those building projects need sites, houses removed, sections cleared and prepared, contractors and staff to do all of that and the build, and building products, too. All of that positively contributes to the economy one way or another.

I've also seen confidence in the local market with the launch of a permanent Rotorua office at The Redwoods Shopping Centre by large national real estate chain, Property Brokers. And Mike Pero Real Estate recently announced it had been sold with a national re-brand to Raine & Horne which has already re-branded and launched locally. I've also had a few private sales across my desk already this year, so that avenue is definitely worth looking at if it's the right property or sales method for you.

And what are banks doing? Well, they still seem to be lending cautiously with obvious concerns that inflation and the impact of what's going on in the world right now could impact the cost of money (meaning people could end up with mortgage interest rates they can't afford). Interest rates are unlikely to revert back to the low rates we've enjoyed in the last few years, with higher rates certain to be the new normal.

A few Banks have reportedly recently cut interest rates to under 5%, so that is positive for homeowner cashflows. Banks are also competing for both new and existing customers with very good cash-back incentives for taking out new lending, too. I always tell my clients to ask their bank or mortgage broker for a cash contribution from the lender if they've not already.

Overall, what I've been seeing this year already is a lot of positive anticipation in the housing market as sellers take the plunge and get back in the market because they've held off long enough. Buyers on the other hand are taking their time and looking for good deals. Even though contracts are definitely taking longer for conditions such as finance, LIM, Building report and so on, the contracts that are signed up do seem to stick. Overall, things do really seem to be feeling much more positive locally, and all that filters down into the local economy and community and makes us all feel more positive and confident in our city.

This article has been prepared for Ngongotaha News by Ros Morshead, solicitor at Lawbox Rotorua

School!

Father: When Abe Lincoln was your age he walked 9 miles to school and did homework by candlelight.

Son: When Lincoln was your age, he was President.

Why can't you hear a pterodactyl in the bathroom? Because it has a silent pee.

Geology rocks, but geography is where it is at!

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