



OUR PLACE

Ko Konei

Your Whakatane District Council
Community update - September 2014

Molly Morpeth Canaday 3D Award

Ben Pearce of Napier has won the 2014 Molly Morpeth Canaday 3D Award.

Mr Pearce was presented with the \$5000 winner's cheque by Molly Morpeth Canaday Trustee Gaye Murphy at the opening of the exhibition in the Opus Gallery at Te Kōputu a te whanga a Toi – the Whakatane Library and Exhibition Centre – on Friday, 15 August 2014.

Judge Andrea du Chatenier says his entry "asks us to look at it because it's beautifully made and lacks an absolute meaning, which allows us to be creative in our interpretation".



Molly Morpeth Canaday 3D Award winner, Ben Pearce, and Judge Andrea du Chatenier.

Around 70 people attended the opening, including eight of the selected artists, who travelled to Whakatane for the event. This year's award, which focused on three-dimensional art in any media, attracted 72 entries from throughout the country, of which 29 were selected for exhibition.



New visitor guide

Whakatane is gearing up for a busy tourist season with a brand new visitor guide and a new team leader at its award-winning Visitor Centre. Whakatane District Council Promotions Officer Nicola Burgess says that the new visitor guide will be available in September and highlights the best the Eastern Bay has to offer.

"30,000 guides will be printed and distributed throughout the Bay of Plenty, Waikato and Taupo regions, as well as through the national i-SITE network," Ms Burgess says. "The whakatane.com tourism promotion website is also being redesigned and will be launched in late-September."

Ms Burgess says total guest nights in local accommodation outlets have increased by 11% over the last year - to 220,513 - and she expects this summer to be particularly busy for tourism providers. "We've seen a significant improvement this year as the economy has recovered, with Kiwis travelling more and international visitors staying in New Zealand longer."

To capitalise on this, the Visitor Centre's new team leader Bruce Erasmus says a redevelopment of the facility will be undertaken in the near future. Bruce has joined the Council from the Agrodome in Rotorua and is looking forward to the challenge of revitalising the Centre and the services it offers.

"We are planning to turn the centre into a showcase for our District which will highlight the best of what we have to offer," Mr Erasmus says. "Tourism is one of the best opportunities to attract spending to our region, and this will contribute to employment opportunities, especially for our young people."



Whakatane District Council Promotions Officer Nicola Burgess, Visitor Centre Team Leader Bruce Erasmus and Visitor Information Officer Kelly Waterson with the new visitor guide.

Your right to demand a poll on electoral systems

Under section 28(1) of the Local Electoral Act 2001, electors in the Whakatane District have the right to demand a poll on the electoral system to be used at the next two Whakatane District Council triennial elections (2016 and 2019).

The choice is between the current First Past the Post (FPP) system and the Single Transferable Voting (STV) electoral system. Unless a poll determines otherwise, FPP will continue to be used for Whakatane District Council elections.

In addition, electors have the right to demand a poll on the introduction of separate Māori representation. Currently, the Whakatane District Council has resolved not to create separate Māori seats on the Council for the 2016 and 2019 triennial elections.

Each of these two issues requires a separate poll. For further information on how to make a valid demand for a poll, please contact Janie Storey, Administration Officer Community (phone 306 0530 or email janie.storey@whakatane.govt.nz), or visit the Whakatane District Council website (www.whakatane.govt.nz).

General election polling

A polling booth is now available at the Civic Centre in Commerce Street, Whakatane for voting in the upcoming general election.

Early and special votes can be cast on Saturdays from 9:30am – 1pm, Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10am – 4pm, and on Wednesdays from 10am – 6pm.

The booth will be open on Election Day, 20 September 2014, from 9am – 7pm. Ballots can also be cast on 20 September 2014 at the Ōhope Hall from 9am – 7pm.

For further information, please go to www.elections.org.nz for details.



Council ends year in strong financial position

Continued financial management discipline has seen the Whakatane District Council achieve a rating surplus for the third consecutive year. The surplus of \$645,000 for the 2013/14 year is just over 1% of the Council's overall operating budget and Mayor Tony Bonne says this indicates that the Council is managing its budgets and work programmes prudently.

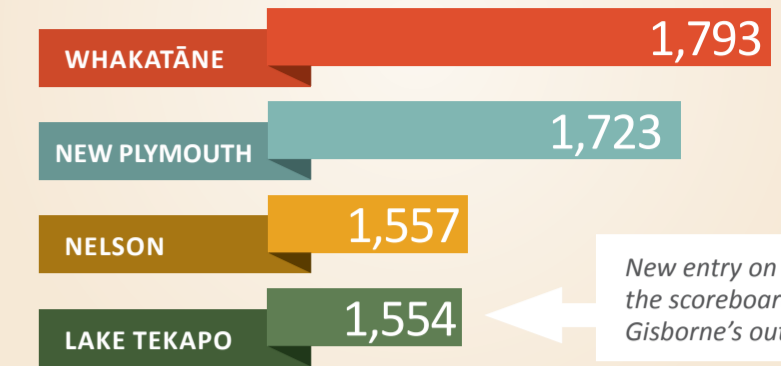
"This result is particularly positive, given the unexpected costs during the year arising from the work undertaken to avoid drinking water salinity issues caused by the summer drought, as well as the impacts of the Easter weekend storm," Mayor Bonne says.

A number of factors contributed to the rating surplus, including savings made as a result of improved procurement processes, reprioritisation of work, undertaking work in-house rather than through consultants or contractors, and favourable interest rates.

The surplus has allowed the Council to move into the 2014/15 year in a strong financial position, which means the Policy Committee can now to consider the best use of the available rating surplus funding.

The great New Zealand SUNSHINE RACE 2014

Whakatane has been the country's sunshine capital for three of the last four years and is well on the way to making it four-out-of-five...



New entry on the scoreboard, Gisborne's out!

Hours of sunshine as at 31 August

CIVIL DEFENCE SIREN TESTING NO ACTION REQUIRED

Sunday, 28 September
at 10.15am
Warning Systems Test



On Sunday, 28 September at 10.15am, EBOP Civil Defence will test the fixed siren warning system. Sirens will sound in Mataā, Coastlands, Whakatane, Ōhope, Ōhiwa, Waitohi, Ōpōtiki and Waihou Bay for three minutes with a constant tone. No action is required.

Stinger mobile units will also be tested in northern Whakatane, Ōhope, Ōpōtiki and Kawerau, and Radio 1XX will make a short broadcast on what to do in a real emergency (FM 90.5, 92.9 AM 1042).

Shortly before the siren test, email and text alerting systems will also be tested. To receive these messages go to www.bopcivildefence to sign up.

Agewise Driver Refresher Course

Will you or someone you know benefit from a refresher driving course aimed for the 60+?



NEXT COURSE
Friday, 26th September
ENROL NOW
IT'S FREE!



FOR MORE INFORMATION - Collect a form from the Whakatane District Council Customer Services or call the organiser Chris King-Hazel - Whakatane District Council 07 306 0500

Geotechnical investigation of Whakatane town centre to proceed

The Council has appointed Ian Brown Associates Ltd of Lower Hutt to undertake a geotechnical survey of the Whakatane town centre. This project will provide a better understanding of the area's underlying geology and allow owners to make informed decisions about the seismic strengthening requirements of their buildings.

Six tenders were received for the ground study and the successful tenderer was identified through an extensive evaluation process. The successful tenderer has a long association with the Whakatane area, including a 2004 presentation to the Australia-New Zealand Conference on Geomechanics examining the seismic response of soft ground at three sites in Whakatane using data from the 1987 Edgecumbe earthquake.

The geotechnical survey will commence in October and will involve a series of drill holes and cone penetration tests to provide information on the subsoils beneath the town centre. This should create significant cost savings for building owners, who are being encouraged to complete detailed seismic assessments of their buildings using the geotechnical information provided.

Young Achievers



Applications are now open for coaches, teachers and clubs to nominate young people for special recognition who have excelled in sports, youth or community service, cultural or academic pursuits, or other fields.

Application forms, which include eligibility criteria, are available from district libraries, the Whakatane Civic Centre and Murupara Service Centre. Applications can also be made online at www.whakatane.govt.nz. Nominations close at 5pm on 26 September 2014.

For further information, email anne.reid@whakatane.govt.nz.

In late-October, young people who meet the criteria will be notified and invited to an awards ceremony to receive their certificates. The event is hosted jointly by the Whakatane District Council, Whakatane West Rotary Club and the Whakatane Community Board.