

the Ōākura Post

MARCH 2023

2.5m
possum
project

*What's
on?*

Frisbee
CLASSIC

People in our
Community

NEW
teachers
at School

CENSUS
2023

COVER PHOTO: Ōākura Tennis Club's - Jack Husband, Noah Lash, Ryan Waite and Charlie Bridges

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Kaitake Community Board

With the holidays a lingering memory for the majority, most of us are back at work and kids are back at school.

I had the privilege of attending the Ōākura School Block C Grand Opening, and the pōwhiri that welcomed new pupils (and their families) into the school fold and welcomed back tamariki who were moving up a level on the first day of the new school year. The new block is a stunning addition to this amazing school, and is a testament to years of lobbying, planning and fundraising on the part of school staff, Boards of Trustees and whānau, and also to the many hundreds of hours of work on the part of designers, tradespeople and a raft of support folk. There is a lovely kaupapa surrounding the various spaces within the block, and I would recommend taking the time to pop in for a look when you get the opportunity.

One 'downside' to the end of the holidays is the increase in pedestrian, cycle and vehicular traffic in and around the village, particular during school start and end times, and the associated dangers to those on and around the roads. The completion of the upper Wairau Road improvements will help alleviate some past safety concerns. However, growing traffic volumes, and the questionable driving habits of some on the road, results increasingly as a clear and present danger.

Waka Kotahi has been consulting on a draft Interim State Highway Speed Management Plan; a plan that sets out proposed speed limit changes and safety improvements in the current 2021-2024 National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) period, and that precedes the full state highway speed management plan that will cover the next NLTP period. The Kaitake Community Board has prepared and presented a submission highlighting significant areas of risk in our part of the district, and has made a number of recommendations to mitigate those risks. These recommendations include moving the Northern Ōākura 50kph to 100kph speed restriction transition to north of the Victoria Road/SH45 intersection, and reducing the speed limit to 40kph (preferably 30kph) in the Ōākura "CBD" area between

the Donnelly Street-The Outlook/SH45 intersection and the Dixon Street-Butlers Lane/SH45 intersection.

I have little doubt that recommendations for this section of the highway, and for other areas of the Kaitake part of SH45, will raise the ire of some. However, with as many as 15,000 vehicle movements on many days in and through Ōākura and with the village's growing population, they are logical, relatively inexpensive, and (hopefully) easily attainable solutions to a very real problem whose primary intent is to protect the vast majority.

You may have seen or heard via the variety of media platforms that the New Plymouth District Council is working on the development of the 23/24 Annual Plan and preparation for the drafting of the next long term plan. As I alluded to in last month's column this will be the first of an unknown number of significant challenges for both Council Officers and Elected Representatives, as the impacts of inflation, high interest rates, skilled labour shortages, global material shortages and the associated cost escalations for key provisions, environmental effects, and central government policies affect every decision that has to be made at every step of the way. Given the volatile state of the financial world at present it is unlikely the final plan outcomes will be any more attractive to the rate payers of the district any more than today's grocery or fuel costs. The media profile of this process and the recommendations that come out of it will no doubt become more evident as the weeks roll on.

On a more positive note, the long awaited replacement village community notice board is in its final design stages with the new sign being double sided, with one side having a lockable area for notices and the other with a layout of the key features of Ōākura.

The final positioning of the notice board has been highlighted and recognised as being almost as important as the design of board itself, with a need to remain mindful of (in no particular order) safety, aesthetics, ease of use, and its fit with the rest of the area.



APPROXIMATE LOCATION & APPEARANCE

Please feel free to pass on any concerns, recommendations or thoughts regarding the new notice board and placement proposals to me or to any other Community Board Member. Those living in, and those spending much of their time around this part of the village, are best placed to recommend where the notice board might be best placed.

This same rationale applies to elements that should be included in the forthcoming Kaitake Community Plan review; whether it be parking problems, footpath, curb and channel or roading issues, playgrounds or recreational area deficiencies, lighting, signage, or any other of the plethora of assets and services that the District Council is responsible for but may be remiss in their delivery. You who live here are the ones who are 'in the know' regarding these issues, so again you are best placed to get this information to board members so we can ensure it is detailed in the final plan.

The next meeting of the Kaitake Community Board will be held at 5pm on Monday 3 April at the Hempton Hall in Ōkato.

Ka mutu taku korero mo tenei wa – that's all I have for now!

Mā te wā – till next time

Graham Chard - KCB Chair
(027 220 4549, thechardz@gmail.com)

On behalf of Teresa Goodin, Renee Hohaia, Paul Lobb and Anneka Carlson.

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The 7th annual Ōākura Frisbee Beach Classic.

Over the first weekend in February the Taranaki Ultimate Club held the 7th annual Ōākura Beach Classic.

80 frisbee players came from far and wide to test their fitness and skills on our black sands, making up 10 teams.

Day 1 of competition had perfect conditions for both players and spectators, with basically every game ending with a dip in the ocean to cool off.

Day 2 saw stronger winds, testing the focus of throwers and receivers, or perhaps the previous night's party was catching up.

Team Renagades became known as the giant killers as they handed out losses to both the Prospectors and the Diamondbacks, who held the two best records at the beginning of day 2.

The finals were set. After besting them once during a slightly hungover first game on the Sunday, the Prospectors faced the Diamondbacks once more in windier conditions. The Diamondbacks punched a break in early and staved off the late Prospector rally.

A big thank you to our main sponsors, Aggreko, Burgerfuel, Taranaki Sound House and Vertigo, and of course our amazing volunteers such as the Ellington family for helping us put on this tournament!

Lastly another thank you to Kelby and LeAnn Clements for organising this amazing tournament and sharing our little slice of paradise with ultimate players from around the country.

Josh van Bergen

Starting the year with purpose

It has been an exciting return to school in 2023 for our Green School New Zealand whānau. We feel very fortunate to have welcomed 17 amazing new families to the local community, while we've also introduced our NZQA Level 3 and 4 qualification programme into our high school curriculum.

To be the first high school in Aotearoa to offer the New Zealand Certificate in Study and Employment Pathways is something we are so excited about and know it will ignite our learners' creativity and entrepreneurial thinking, while enabling their future tertiary study or employment dreams to become reality.

We are fortunate that this accredited certificate will be integrated into our unique approach to education that seeks alternatives to traditional, high-stake exams. This offers us more curriculum time so we can take learning further, allowing knowledge and skills to be developed in areas of real purpose and passion. With this

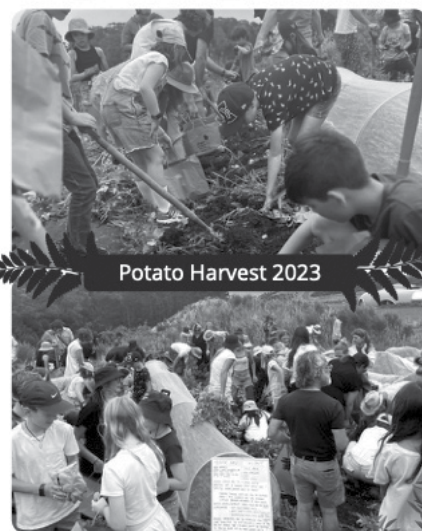
comes opportunities of authentic, real-world learning.

Our high school team are working tirelessly to ensure our curriculum offers the most relevant, innovative and inspiring secondary school programme in New Zealand. One that will ignite our students' individual passions and open doors that allow them to move onto local and global universities or employment.

If you'd like to find out more about our high school programme, please feel free to contact me.

Caroline Rennie

GSNZ Head of School / caroline.rennie@greenschool.nz



Potato Harvest 2023



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Ōākura, Taranaki

OBC - what a great place to be.

Waitangi weekend played host to the senior club champs down at Stent Road, with contestable waves club members shredded in the surf. The hotly contested Un18 Boys saw Kalani Watts sneak past Nate Florence; Skylar McFetridge dominated in the open women's; and Tom Butland went back to back pipping Bach Tipene in the opens men finals.

Overall it was an amazing day and each division produced amazing performances, special mention to the old boys slugging it out in the grandmasters division and Ricky Fox for winning the Achievement Award for his outstanding performance in the open mens division.

The Ōākura Boardriders Club would like to extend its gratitude to its sponsors and members. Without their support and commitment, the club would not have been able to provide the many opportunities and

experiences that have made a positive impact on the lives of so many.

A big shoutout to all our amazing sponsors and individuals who have generously donated their time and resources to OBC! Your contributions have helped us become a hub for our community.

A special thank you to BTW, Boon Architects, Talyor Patrick, Geosearch, Kate Whittaker Design, Wild Ideas, CMK Accountants, Ōākura Beach Holiday Park, South Coast, Blacksand, Surfside Electrical, R and Co Skin and Beauty, Coastbrew, Eli Smith, McDonalds Real Estate, Raceway Cycles and Mowers, Cleggs, and Luke Florence Builders, and the continued support from Craigs Investment, Lawn whanau, and The Virtue for the Wahine Waves initiative supported by Simon Deken Waves and Vertigo Surf Shop. Your contributions make a huge impact and we're grateful for your support!

We would also like to extend our appreciation to our members. Their passion and dedication have made the Ōākura Boardriders Club

the thriving community that it is today. Our members have participated in countless events, volunteered their time and skills, and have created a supportive and inclusive environment for everyone.

The Ōākura Boardriders Club is a community of people who share a love of the ocean and the thrill of riding waves. It is a place where people come together to improve their skills, make new friends, and create memories. OBC is growing and we are seeking your support and sponsorship.

Please contact oakuraboardriders@gmail.com for information on how you can support the club.

We look forward to continuing to work together to make the Ōākura Boardriders Club an even better place for years to come.



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People in our Community



The Monley Family

"We have to pinch ourselves each day to know this is real. It's so beautiful here."

There was a knock on my door and when opened I saw the Monley family, my new neighbours. Parents, Katie and Nate, and their four children, Finn 17, Selah 14, Serin 11, and Cal 8 — each holding a plate of biscuits ("cookies") that they were taking around to meet the neighbours. They arrived from the Sacramento area of California only two weeks prior.

In 1990 Katie's father was a high school physics teacher on a teacher exchange at Ōkato College (Coastal Taranaki) and he brought his family of five with him. Katie lived in Ōkato for a year and attended Ōkato College when she was 13 years old. Raeleen Luckin, not much older than Katie, taught a dance class in the school gym and Katie was one of her dance students back then.

Nate's family also did an overseas experience. His father was on a Rotary scholarship and they went to Sweden, but Nate was too young to remember it though he heard lots of stories. Katie has always dreamt of returning to New Zealand.

Katie and Nate met and married (that's another story) and after the birth of their third child they decided it was time to plan the family adventure in New Zealand. The five year plan, interrupted by several things, turned into a nine year plan.

In Spring of 2020 Nate was offered a job at St Joseph's Primary School in Ōpunake. They purchased their plane tickets, arranged a rental van, and were all set to go when Covid hit. Everything got put on the shelf until now — 2023 we've made it happen. "We kept that dream alive," says Katie.

Nate now has a job teaching at Ōpunake Primary. He thanks Ōpunake Primary School Principal, Lorraine Williamson, for her steadfast perseverance dealing with NZ Immigration that made it actually happen.

Because of social media, Katie was able to reconnect with classmates from her early days at Ōkato College, many who work in education and live and work in the Coastal area. They were helpful with getting the family acquainted to the school system and enrolments for the

children. Katie says, "They offered their extra furniture and anything else we needed. They really stepped up, and it was a game changer for our family of six."

The children say they "always kinda knew" they were coming to New Zealand some day. Finn recalls when he was in 4th grade (US) telling his friends, "We're going to New Zealand." That was at least seven years ago. Serin says, "I've known since I was a baby."

It was hard to say goodbye to their old dog, "Sierra" (left in the care of a family friend), friends and teachers. Finn and Selah are attending Spotswood College and Serin and Cal go to Ōākura Primary. Some of the things they have noticed right away is that "nobody wears shoes to school", "there are two recesses", and "there's a pool and swimming at school." Ōākura students were welcomed with a powhiri, something very new to Serin and Cal.

The parents are pleased about our 'swim between the flags' approach to swimming safety. They love the green rolling hills and the Mountain. Katie is a fitness coach and wants to explore and become part of the fitness community. She's a long distance trail runner and typically does a marathon or two each year. Nate, when not teaching, likes DIY projects and running marathons. Finn likes running, playing guitar, and geography; Selah sculpts faces in the beach sand; Serin enjoys reading; Cal likes football. They all agree that the people in Ōākura have been so welcoming and friendly.

The Monley family have also been extremely friendly to those of us who already live here. The biscuits they took around to the neighbourhood are a family favourite and are called 'Cowboy Cookies'. The story goes that Finn likes to bake cookies late at night ("so he can eat half the batter"). He made the biscuits they brought around to the neighbours and I can attest to how delicious they were.

Elayne Kessler

NEIGHBOURS AOTEAROA

Across the country, Neighbours are getting together to celebrate their place, support one another and share.

From small, local get-togethers, like street parties, to bigger, organised events, like repair cafes and clothes swaps, everyone in Aotearoa is invited to reach out in their communities this March. The first step might be just smiling or waving to a neighbour.

Neighbours Aotearoa (formerly Neighbours Day Aotearoa) is a community development initiative dedicated to growing, connecting and strengthening neighbourhoods across the country.

Each year in March, everybody is invited to do something small - or large! - that lets them know a neighbour that bit better. From the 1st to the 31st of March 2023, Neighbours Aotearoa encourages people to organise an activity or event around the theme Let's Share!

The theme Let's Share! offers an opportunity for people to practice aroha (generosity) and manaakitanga (hospitality) with people they want to connect with. It also includes sharing whakaaro (knowledge) and pūkenga (skills).

To get involved, visit the Neighbours Aotearoa website at neighboursaotearoa.nz, like or follow them on Facebook and Instagram, register your event on the website to get support (resources, event packs, editable posters etc) and spread the word in your local community.

Contact in Taranaki:
elayne@neighboursaotearoa.nz

FINN'S COWBOY COOKIES RECIPE

1 cup salted butter, softened
3/4 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup granulated sugar
3 large eggs
2 tsp vanilla
2 3/4 cup flour
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp baking soda
1/2 tsp salt
1 1/2 cups chocolate chips
1 cup quick or rolled oats
3/4 cup chopped nuts (any kind)
3/4 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
1/2 cup flakey cereal of your choice

Preheat oven 200

Line two baking sheets with baking paper
In a large bowl, cream butter with both sugars
Add eggs and vanilla, and mix until just combined
In a smaller bowl, combine all the dry ingredients
Gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, mix until combined.
Fold in the chocolate chips, nuts and shredded coconut
Drop by tablespoons onto prepared baking sheets
Bake 7-8 minutes, until tops are golden brown.

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ŌĀKURA LIBRARY

WHAT'S ON:

Join us for pre-school story time at 10am Thursday 2nd March.

We've had some interest in an adult Scrabble Club meeting at the library, let us know if this is something you'd enjoy.

For any other programmes and suggestions feel free to get in touch. We are a safe place for all to visit.

Our library was a thriving, vibrant place this summer. A typical day saw families leisurely coming in to stock up on more books, get out of the summer sun and catch up with friends. Adult customers were devouring those recommended books they've been meaning to read all year.

Our children's summer reading programme was a success. Weekly visits with the librarian was a highlight for us.

Plus, our native birds have been a popular topic of study and enjoyment. 'Kuwi the Kiwi' series of picture books is a favourite. In 'Kuwi and Friends Māori Picture Dictionary' our diverse

wildlife is beautifully illustrated and named in English and Māori.

For adults we have 'The 50 Best Birdwatching Sites in NZ' by Liz Light.

Dr Seuss:

The more that you read
The more things you will know
The more that you learn
The more places you'll go.

Happy reading,

Ōākura Library Team



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L-R: David, William (Max's brother), Max and Seamus.

Lights, sirens, lunchbox, pencil case?

Fortunately not every trip out in the truck is an emergency, sometimes it's for far more important things... like the first day of school!

We were delighted to be able to offer Max, his Mum and brother a ride to his first day at Ōākura school in our big appliance with DCFO Dave Rielly and SFF Seamus Breeze.

Max's Mum was lucky enough to win the bid for the ride to school at last year's Toast On The Coast fund raiser for the school.

Nice work firefighter Max, hope to see you in 13 year's time for training night!

No Callouts for the Fire Brigade during Cyclone Gabrielle

While some properties in our area suffered storm damage in their gardens and others lost power for a time, from a fire brigade perspective it was very uneventful. "We didn't get a single call out, we were very pleased that the public took the warning seriously and didn't put themselves in harm's way or in situations that may have required rescue."

Our thoughts are with the family and crew of the Muriwai Volunteer Firefighters who lost their lives during the storm.

Ōākura Bowling & Social Club



CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS

The duo of Allan Bridgeman and Don Hinton will face Tony McAlevy and Andy Shearer in the final of the championship pairs. The guys have played great bowls in reaching the final and both teams are worthy contenders to be crowned champions.

INTERCLUB COMPETITIONS

The midweek tournaments of the Gilmour Cup and Avery Shield are nearing conclusion with Ōākura holding 1st place in both of the competitions. Well done to all bowlers and good luck over the last 2 rounds.

Inclement weather cancelled the penultimate round of the Saturday shield competition, leaving Ōākura's title chances in a precarious position. Ōākura is currently running 3rd and would need favourable results from other clubs to secure a famous victory.

CLUB NEWS

The Taranaki Open was a resounding 'thumbs' up for the Ōākura club with all visiting players lavishing high praise on the club for its magnificent green, picture perfect surrounds and friendly hospitality. Such lofty praise could not be reached without the volunteers who generously give their time throughout the week. The club would not be able to service events such as the open without your support and

assistance. Well done to all. A special mention goes to green keeper Wayne Robinson and his team in providing a world class playing surface. The bowling gods were not so kind to the Ōākura boys, with all three teams failing to qualify for post sectional play. Jim Priest and Pat Walklin did manage to carry the Ōākura flag in reaching the quarter finals of the Open pairs. Good bowling guys.

Th Ōākura Classic Bowls tournament is to be played on Sat 18th March. It is Ōākura's first foray into holding a major competition and is attracting great interest around the province. Bayleys Real Estate and Summit Refrigeration are sponsoring the event and all members of the community are welcome to come on down and enjoy the hospitality of the club while watching some of the Taranaki's finest bowlers in action.

The club hosted two social tournaments over the summer break, the Summit Refrigeration Bowl3five tournament and the Morgan B Dance Trust fund raiser bowls evening. Both events were a tremendous success with full rinks on both occasions.

It is also great to see the wider community utilising the bowling club facilities with numerous groups and companies hiring the venue and enjoying the fun and entertaining aspect of playing bowls. It is especially encouraging to see the social and new bowlers enjoying this great game. Viva la bowls.

The Underarm Bowler

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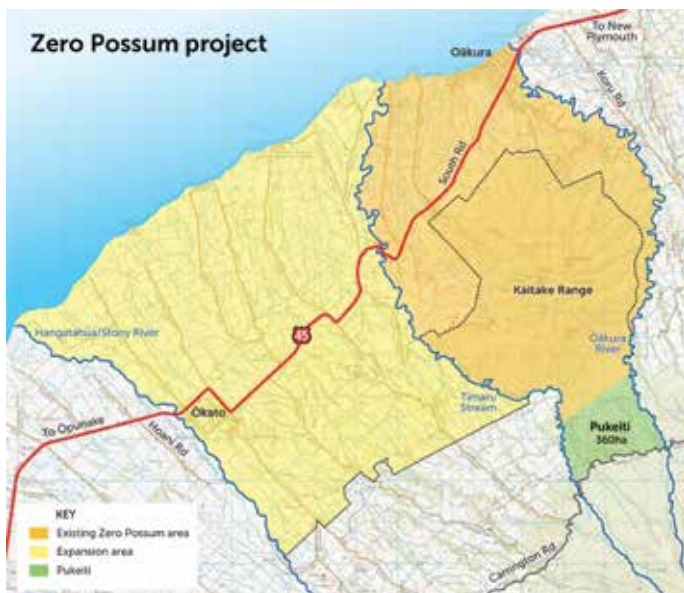
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\$2.5m boost for possum project

for the duration of the project. We are also in the process of talking to Ōkato residents, as the extension includes the village itself.

The 2,000ha of farmland in the original eradication area has not had a resident possum population for about 20 months now (bar the occasional intruder that we swiftly deal with) and we are confident we can remove these pests from the extension area too.

The project began in 2018 and it hasn't always been easy – it was the first time possum eradication (as opposed to control) had been attempted on this scale and in this type of landscape in New Zealand. Four years down the track the Taranaki environment is benefitting, but just as importantly in the wider context of the Predator Free 2050 goal; we've shared valuable lessons with predator control projects around the country.

As we move into the Ōkato extension, we will put those lessons into practice. For example, instead of using detection dogs at the end, we'll use them at the start to tell us where to focus the traps and toxins. We've also honed the technology, e.g. remote sensor traps, to do exactly what we and landowners need it to do. So it's an exciting time.

To Ōākura and Kaitake – the 'originals', thank you for your incredible support and efforts. The job is not over, if you see or suspect a possum between Ōākura and Timaru please report it immediately so we can remove it.

To those in Ōkato and surrounds – great to have you on board. We will keep you updated about the project but if you have any questions don't hesitate to contact me.

Towards Predator-Free Taranaki is a Taranaki Regional Council (TRC)-led programme. The Zero Possum project is a collaborative effort with Taranaki Mounga Project, which carries out predator control on the maunga.

**By Hayden Kinraid,
Towards Predator-Free Taranaki**

Great news! You may have heard Towards Predator-Free Taranaki recently received an additional \$2.5 million in Government funding to extend the Zero Possum project western border from the Timaru Stream to the Hangatahua/Stony River (see map). That's an extra 5,000ha on top of the original 4,500ha.

We've started visiting the roughly 120 farmers in that extension area and, with their agreement, we'll take over their possum control



Taranaki Taku Tūrangā

**Towards
Predator-Free
Taranaki**

SEEN A POSSUM?

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*Original Zero Possum area only - between
Oakura River and Timaru Stream.

Census 2023

Every five years, the New Zealand government conducts a census of the population. It's the biggest survey that takes place in New Zealand, and it's designed to get the most up-to-date snapshot available of the nation as it currently exists.

As a wise person once noted, "If you don't know where you've been, how do you know where you're going?" Very true, and that's why completing the census is required by law.

But, and more positively, the census is the key to understanding where people choose to live, how they choose to work, how they travel to work, where they go to school, where they seek health advice and treatment, and even how they choose to recreate. Oakurans involved with the Kaitake Sports Hub will know all about that, because it attracted government funding.

Let's cut to the chase: this year's focus is expressed in the phrase: "Tatau tatou- All of us count" and we're looking for a minimum 95% turnout in Taranaki. With your help, Ōākura can lead the way.

TIMETABLE

FEBRUARY 7-11:

Mail-outs of census forms. They can be completed ON PAPER or ONLINE

FEB 13-MARCH 6:

Collectors also distribute forms door-to-door, meet people, help fill out forms, ON PAPER or ONLINE

TUESDAY MARCH 7:

Census day (officially)

MARCH 8-APRIL 5:

Collectors visit door-to door, collecting forms as necessary, helping fill out late returns as necessary, ON PAPER or ONLINE

We encourage as many online returns as possible because it's quicker to do, and the information gets where it needs to go--immediately, securely and privately.

Not everyone is comfortable with completing the census, but we hope we've got an answer for every concern. Let's have a look, eh?

WHAT IF I'M...

Not good with forms?

Collectors will read them to you; help you fill them in; explain bits that might worry you. You can also answer sensitive questions yourself once they've been read to you, so that the collector need not see nor hear the answer.

Impaired of vision, hearing or otherwise challenged?

Collectors carry equipment that can get round such problems.

A migrant whose English isn't the best?

Again, collectors can either work with you on the forms OR provide you with a translation service in 9 languages, plus the help of Google Translate. Something for everyone!

Not happy with some of the questions asked?

You can use the "Prefer not to answer" option rather than leaving the question out.

Concerned about my privacy:

Census data is guaranteed by law to be used only in connection with the purpose for which it's gathered. This means that it is ABSOLUTELY NOT SHARED with any other government agency or department.

Not prepared to trust the government?

Census information is rendered ANONYMOUS as part of the number-crunching process. Census is concerned with 'how many' and not with 'whom'. Names and addresses are two of the FIRST THINGS removed and scrapped, so you CANNOT be identified.

If you'd like a personal visit to help complete your forms, please ring 7527 501.

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Glen Bennett – MP for New Plymouth

What a start to the year!

I was in the room when Jacinda Ardern announced that she was stepping down as Prime Minister. Audible gasps came from around the room. I was sad to lose her as our leader, yet happy and grateful that she did what was right for her and her family. For me, this huge decision reflects the integrity and servant leadership that is Jacinda. I've been blessed to work with a leader that wants to hear from me, the Parliamentary team, and our community. Thank you Jacinda Ardern for your five years of leadership.

Chris Hipkins has stepped up to the role of Prime Minister and Carmel Sepuloni as Deputy. They've hit the ground running, getting out around the country, listening to the issues and possibilities that are important to New Zealanders. We're privileged to have such a great team leading us into 2023.

Back in 2020 when the Labour Party launched our election campaign, I got together with all the New Plymouth MPs, that is, those who grew up in this beautiful city. Yes, there are quite a few of us. Since 2020 many of them have moved into significant Government roles. There's Hon Carmel Sepuloni, now Deputy Prime Minister, Hon Andrew Little, who just became Minister of Defence (with a long list of other portfolios), Hon Deborah Russell, who is now Minister of Statistics, Dr Liz Craig, and not to mention Angela Roberts, who's just stepped up as Deputy Chair of the Primary Production Committee. New Plymouth and Taranaki have strong links into Parliament and I am working to continue leveraging these, ensuring a strong voice in Wellington.



**Chris came up to Celebrate WITT 50 Year Anniversary last October, and Deputy Carmel Sepuloni comes up to see us often.
PHOTO CREDIT. Sandra Henderson Photographer**

I was so excited to see Carmel Sepuloni elected as Deputy Prime Minister, making her New Zealand's first ever Pacific Deputy Prime Minister, alongside the largest Pāšifika Caucus in the history of parliament. Sepuloni's family is well-known in Taranaki. Her Dad worked at the old Waitara Freezing Works and she attended New Plymouth Girls High School, going on to play Netball for Tysons Waitara. Life's experiences and Sepuloni's career that followed, have influenced her passion around employment, education, youth issues and the power of mentoring. Some of Sepuloni's biggest successes in her time as a Minister have been the landmark changes around child support rules, putting birth injuries under ACC cover, and setting up The Ministry for Disability Issues.

Prime Minister Chris Hipkins also lived in New Plymouth in the early 2000s, calling the region "amazing, with so much to offer," not to mention his Mother growing up in Waitara. Chris's opening speech and our Government's number one priority is around the growing cost of living and ensuring hard-working New Zealanders – particularly families – can live and thrive. We are 100% committed to tackling the challenges of the cost of living that New Zealanders are facing. We know people are worried about paying their grocery bills and paying their mortgages. We know there's a lot of work ahead of us and so, as Parliament resumes,



our Government focus will shift to bread and butter issues facing Taranaki and the country. In 2023 we want to grow a strong economy to make sure Kiwis can get into good jobs, lift incomes and create opportunities for people to get ahead. We'll keep working hard to strengthen the core public services like health and education.

Here in Taranaki, while dairy is our highest grossing export, our region has so much more to offer. Our food and fibre sector is one of our most lucrative and rapidly developing industries nationally. Since 2017 we have seen export revenue grow by 39% - from \$38 billion to \$53 billion. This figure is forecast to increase to over \$56 billion by 2026. In the Taranaki region alone, this sector contributes over \$1.5 billion per annum to our GDP.

At the start of 2020, the Government partnered with Venture Taranaki to launch Branching Out, where local farmers, growers, food manufacturers, marketers, universities, Crown Research Institutes, and investors identified environmentally friendly expansion opportunities within the region. Now moving into Phase two, the Government is investing \$975,000, alongside industry support worth \$1.2 million, into six different commercially viable ventures including hemp fibre, medicinal ingredients, indigenous ingredients, hops, gin botanicals and high-value food crops. I'm very proud of the work our Government is doing to support our primary sector and I'm very proud to be part of a region championing such positive and innovative change.

The challenges facing our country, cost of living and climate change, won't go away overnight but the Labour team is ready to kick on. Long may we keep producing political talent from this region and celebrate the good that is already happening here. Taranaki, thank you for your trust and confidence. Bring on 2023.

NEW ADVERTISING ASSISTANT FOR THE TOP.

Kia Ora, my name is Jacinda McCallum. I am the new advertising assistant for the TOP. I have just finished my Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in Communication Studies and minoring in Science Communication at the University of Otago. This year I am continuing my studies in Dunedin working towards a Diploma for Graduates in Human Recourse Management. I have grown up in Taranaki and am a big fan of all it has to offer. In my spare time I'll be swimming at Ōākura beach or catching up with friends for coffee. I am excited for this role and being able to transfer my skills and experience from my studies into the TOP.





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STAPLES RODWAY

Ratatouille, a favourite summer meal for me and my gut bugs.

BY ROSEMARY LAW - NZ registered dietician

Summer fresh fruit and veggies are something I always look forward to and I know summer is really here when I can start making ratatouille with yummy aubergines from Mellissa's Coastal Market Garden down the road. Nothing is more delicious than a big plate of ratatouille for a summer veg fix and feeding good gut bacteria. Research has been looking at how important our gut bacteria are for our immunity and overall health for decades now. Over the years healthy eating and lifestyle advice has been a bit hijacked by messages of what we shouldn't be eating - Sugar free, low salt, not too much fat etc. I like to point out what all foods are useful for when hearing someone say they shouldn't be eating something. Looking at food from a nourishment perspective is a much more useful strategy. The probiotics and pre biotics health message has been a bit hijacked too (though I admit trying to make money out of a good thing isn't bad) and often the messages get a bit skewed. Probiotic foods and supplements are part of many peoples' regime and though we know there is good evidence for the benefits of fermented foods with live bacteria, taking the bacteria as a probiotic supplement, though not harmful, hasn't so far shown up to be as useful in research as everyone in the game was expecting it to be.

Including plenty of pre biotics or the food we eat that bacteria like to eat or ferment too, is a great way to nourish our bodies. Pre biotics include the fibre from fruit, veggies and wholegrains, particularly the soluble fibre and also resistant starches. These food components are not

digested by our gut enzymes so then travel through our bowel and are available to be used as an energy substrate for bacteria in our bowel, most particularly feeding the beneficial bacteria. The by-products from the bacterial fermentation are useful for our whole body and the fibre is especially useful for our bowels.

TO MAKE A SIMPLE EASY RATATOUILLE:

2 eggplants, 3 zucchini, 2-3 peppers, a can of tomatoes, 2 tablespoons of tomato paste, a tin of chilli beans and or bacon.

Chop the eggplants into small chunks and fry in a generous amount of olive oil until the eggplant chunks become translucent. If you don't use enough oil they dry fry and don't develop the right texture and flavour. Add the chopped zucchini, peppers of various colours and cook through. Add fresh or tinned tomato; I use tinned and also add in a dollop of tomato paste. Traditional recipes say fry everything separately then combine, which might add extra flavour but I like the all in one option. I don't tend to add onion, though it's one of my usual veggies in the fry pan, I like ratatouille without onion but will add garlic if I have some. I also add a can of chilli beans for extra fibre and protein. Sometimes I add fried bacon for a salty hit of flavour.

Delicious ratatouille goes with any carbohydrate base, rice, pasta, mashed potato/kumara but our favourite is ratatouille on wholegrain toast, which makes it an extra specially good dose of pre biotics.

Eat and feel very virtuous as your gut bugs and your taste buds will be very happy.

Community Police Officer – Constable Matt Stone

Kia Ora Koutou,

There has been some activity in Ōākura since my last article.

Damaged letterboxes, door knockers, broken windows, all incidents have stemmed from the behaviour of some local teenagers and their out of town friends. Can I ask that this behaviour is reported to Police as soon as possible. It can be reported through the Police 105 number or contacting me directly. Although as an individual matter it may seem minor, often there is other activity that has occurred elsewhere and it may all tie in. As a Police Officer I don't like to blow things out of proportion, but sometimes a quiet chat with a teenager is all that's needed to curb future behaviour.

I note that there have been reports on the local Facebook page of suspicious people roaming the Ōākura village at early hours of the



morning. I can tell you that Police really enjoy attending jobs of this nature. Please ring 111 straight away if you witness this activity.

I know that this may appear to contradict my comment from my previous post around some minor matters taking time to deal with, however if these incidents are reported then I can make a plan with respect to attendance.

On a positive note, what an awesome weekend in Ōākura over the long Waitangi weekend. I was present in both a personal and work capacity. There was such a good atmosphere around, many people on the beach, at the cafes, walking the dog, it really is a special place to 'hang out'.

Once again I appreciate your time and look forward to connecting with you in the near future.

Matt

matthew.stone@police.govt.nz

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What's
on?

March

ALL OF MARCH

Neighbours Aotearoa month. See page 5

THURSDAY 2

Get help with Census forms. At the NPOB surf club 10-11am

Pre-school story time. 10am at the library

TUESDAY 7

Census Day

THURSDAY 9

Missed census day? It's not too late. Get help with forms. At the NPOB surf club 10-11am

SATURDAY 18

Ōākura Classic Bowls tournament.
Details page 7

April

MONDAY 3

Kaitake Community Board meeting.
5pm Hempton hall, Ōkato

THURSDAY 6

Meet Constable Matt Stone at Morning Talk coffee group. 10-11am NPOB Surf Club

Ōākura TENNIS CLUB



Competition has been under way and the break has seen a few injuries. If anyone is keen to fill in let us know as there are a few vacancies! Junior tennis restarted with the school term so hopefully the kids enjoy a swim to cool off after their lesson. Check out Blitz tennis website for lessons, coaching etc. Thanks to Anne and Leanne for their team updates:

Ōākura Fours Team 2 has had a fun season and will finish in the middle of the pack by the end of round 1. The main players of the team have been Jack Husband, Ryan Waite, Noah Lash and Charlie Bridges with some wildcard guest appearances from Jordan Whittleston and Ōākura old timers Robbie White, Michael

Spurdle and Isaac Barbour. Whilst the results overall have been mixed, a key feature has been the winning streak of Noah's – once his previous string of losses was broken, there has been no looking back. The team withdrew from this competition in mid February as they all headed away to Uni, but with 3 of the team in Canterbury and Ryan just down the road at Otago, there is hope that they might be able to continue to play a few social matches. It's been fun watching these guys play their tennis this year – always played with great sportsmanship and respect for the opposition, but loving a win if they can get it. **Anne Bridges**

Ōākura 3 (The Ferguson Family) has lost two team members this year with Fletcher and Brodie prioritising golf over tennis and working up north at Te Arai Links. This has left the rest of the team with no permanent subs. Brodie did play a few games before he left though and

won every game except one doubles match. The team has had a bad run of injuries this year as well, with Cooper having a long lasting hip injury and Ferg senior trouble with both Achilles. However, with two weekends rained off they have only lost two matches out of the remaining eight. Miller and Cooper have played alternately in the number one spot and won most of their matches. Ferg has hobbled around the court and only lost one of his singles matches. Leanne slots in at number 4 and has had an equal win/loss ratio with one of her singles games going well over two hours, only to lose 15-17 in a heartbreaking super tie break. She is nearly ready for retirement. Ōākura 3 is currently sitting in 2nd place on the table and hopes to make the finals again this year. Good luck team. Thanks to the people that have filled in for the team during the season. **Leanne Ferguson**

Kaitake Golf Club

Hi everyone,

We have had a very busy few weeks and some excellent golfing weather conditions. Our green fees have been well up this year, a lot to do with the weather. Great seeing so many visitors to our course.

We had a very successful Kaitake Community Sports Hub Ambrose Golf Tournament. There were 13 teams of 4 and they managed to raise over \$6,500 for the Kaitake Club rooms, which is a great amount. Thanks to John Dazley and everyone that contributed to the day.

Unfortunately one of the participants on the day did the sensible thing and left his works truck in our car park and some vandals came and broke into his van and stole his work tools but left his golf clubs. Just a warning, if you are playing at Kaitake and have a few drinks on the course please leave your vehicle in the back car park. We lock the white gate at night so it will be safe there.

We were supposed to also host the Mellowpuff Tournament this year but it was postponed due to the weather. The rain started at 9.00am and

did not let up till late morning. Terry Long had to make the call so this is now postponed till the 3rd MARCH 2023. We look forward to this event. With 168 entries it will be a big day for our club.

\$5.00 WEDNESDAYS - This is open for non-members for a \$10.00 entry, which includes Twos, so bring a friend and come and enjoy this beautiful course and weather.

LADIES CLUB NEWS

A few of our Ladies played in the Taranaki Women' Strokeplay which was played over 36 holes at Te Ngutu on Sunday with two of our girls Nicola Avery winning the Best Bronze Nett and Janine Lockley coming in 3rd Nett. Well done to our girls and everyone else that entered.

We are starting the Kaitake Quick 6 again for another 6 weeks and Andrea and her helpers will be here every Wednesday at 5pm 15th February – 16th March at 5pm. Cost is \$30 for six weeks and thereafter a special for Quick Six members to join Kaitake Golf Club for the rest

of the year at \$360.00. For more information contact Andrea andrea.jarrold@xtra.co.nz

If anyone is interested in joining our Golf Club contact the office or Ladies Club Captain Janice 027 698 4806.

Janice Farrant
Ladies Club Captain

GREEN FEES: Non-member \$25.00 per round. Nine hole \$15.00. Cart cost 18 holes \$30.00 and Nine holes \$20.00 - bookings essential.

TARANAKI VETS GOLF

All golfers over the age of 50.

CHIPPERS:

5 - 12 yr olds: Every 2nd Sunday at 9.30am - phone the office to be added to the group chat for the next chippers meeting.



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Ōākura School

Fresh Faces of Ōākura School

We welcome five new kaiako (teachers) this term. They bring enthusiasm and dedication to their teaching and are very happy to be at our school. We interviewed each of them to uncover more information about their interests and how they feel about beginning teaching at Ōākura School.



Photo - Reece McGregor enjoys the pool

A warm welcome to 2023 at Ōmata School

As you travelled past Ōmata School over summer, you may have noticed that our pool was extra busy. We are now lucky enough to have our school pool heated, which will hopefully increase the swimming season, and keep us in for longer during lessons.

Families have been making the most of the warmer water throughout the holidays and classes are now swimming daily for instruction in technique, water safety and survival skills. Classes are also receiving some specialist instruction from our coach Liz Aiken.

We spoke to some children from Ruma Pūkeko after their swim recently and they told us that they loved doing handstands in the pool, sitting on the bottom of the pool, doing dolphin diving and playing with the pool noodles.

Peyton Valentine and Kupa Butler (Year 8)

Welcome to Mrs Tania Scott

We would like to welcome Mrs Scott to Ōmata School in 2023. We asked her if she could tell us a little about herself. Mrs Scott grew up in Rāhotu. She went to Rāhotu Primary School, Ōpunake High School then Waikato University. Before her job interview she took herself on a tour of the school and thought, "What a wonderful school to work at." She has four wonderful sons, which keep her busy. In her free time Mrs Scott loves to go wakeboarding at Tarawera. She also loves to play and hangout with her dog Rusty. She is excited to meet new people and is looking forward to embracing the Ōmata School culture and learning space.



Hayes Lee and Monte Fisher (Year 8)

GABRIELLA MALU

This is Miss Malu's first year teaching as she has just completed her teaching degree. Miss Malu is currently teaching in the Tī Tawhiti room with Year 5 and 6 students. She says that she feels very lucky to be teaching in Ōākura School and that all the staff have given her a warm welcome. She says that all the tamariki (children) at Ōākura School are very friendly. Miss Malu likes reading and recently helped run a student reading programme at the Ōākura Library. Miss Malu also enjoys keeping active and spending time with her family. She says Ōākura School seems like a fun school and she is looking forward to learning more about our ākonga (students).



SOPHIE ALLAN

Mrs Allan has been teaching Year 7 and 8 students for eight years and is looking forward to the change of teaching Years 5 and 6 tamariki in the Kahikatea Room this year. Mrs Allan says all the teachers and staff have been welcoming and kind. She loves to spend time with her whānau and says one of the many reasons she enjoys being in Taranaki are all the awesome beaches we have, as she and her daughter love spending time at the beach.



SOMMAI LIGHTBOURNE

Ms Lightbourne has been teaching for 20 years and has previously taught students from year 0 - 6. She is currently teaching the Year 4s at Ōākura School. Ms Lightbourne was born in Thailand but she grew up in Palmerston North. She says she was nervous on her first day at Ōākura School but everyone was polite and kind, and when she got to learn more about her students, she said all the students were friendly and welcoming. She looks forward to learning more about Ōākura School and being part of the Ōākura community.



MATISSE BEGG

Ms Begg has previously taught New Entrant tamariki in Auckland and is currently teaching the Years 1 and 2 students in the Nikau Room. She is very excited about doing fun lessons down in the school's Enviro Centre. Ms Begg is loving being in Taranaki and is delighted to have become a member of the Ōākura community. Her partner, Callum, is also a teacher and is currently working at Spotswood Primary School. Ms Begg says that on her first day at Ōākura School all the children were enthusiastic, friendly and gave her a cheerful welcome.



JANICE LONG

Ms Long has taught students for over an amazing 20 years and is currently teaching in the Pūriri Room with the Years 7 and 8 students. Ms Long arrived in Taranaki at the start of December after living in London for the past 24 years. She was originally born in South Africa and moved to London when she was 21 years old. Ms Long loves to travel and is very excited to learn more about Aotearoa's history. She says she had visited New Zealand twice before coming to teach here and says that on one of her visits she saw Ōākura School and thought to herself that it was exactly the type of school that she would love to teach at and now ... here she is! She is excited to be teaching at Ōākura School and is loving learning about all of the wonderful tamariki at our school.



Paige Manning (age 12) & Lily Hawkes (age 11)

MORNING TALK COFFEE GROUP

**Come along to the NPOB Surf Club
Every Thursday from 10am - 11am**

**6 APRIL, GUEST SPEAKER,
Constable, Matt Stone**

Any enquiries call Tracey 752 7875

TOP Activities

Ōākura

Ōākura Hall Bookings
Vicky Jury 027 215 2465

Bowling and Social Club

Bowling tournaments September through to April. Both mid-week and weekend games. Steve Muller 757 4399

Dancing in the Dark

Glenys Farrant 027 753 0120

Golf

Practice net. Non members welcome. Clubs and balls can be supplied. \$5.00 WEDNESDAYS. Casual competition for non-members. 8am to 1pm open to everyone. Denise 752 7665

Inferno 45- 4 X Bootcamp fitness

Mon and Wed 6am, Fri 9am.
Boxfit Friday 6am. All 1 hour sessions.
Ōākura Hall. Graeme 021 536 990

Indoor Bowls

Enquiries to Marvin Clough 752 7531

JKA Karate

Jim Hoskin 752 7337

Justice of the Peace - Lynn Murray

Ōākura Library Thursdays 10am-12.30pm.

Kaitake Ranges Conservation Trust

Pete Morgan 027 372 5182
morgpt@xtra.co.nz

Morning Talk - coffee group

Thursdays 10-11am at NPOB Surf Club.
Free tea/coffee. Tracey Lusk 752 7875

'Move it or Lose it'

Strength and Balance Fitness Classes

Ōākura Hall, Wednesdays and Fridays
9.30am. Contact Gloria Zimmerman
027 284 9111

Meditation Group

Kate Evans 027 203 7215

Mini Groovers - Music Group

All parents welcome with babies/under 5's.
Every Tues during term time 10-11am at the
Church Hall. Visit their Facebook page: Mini
Groovers - Ōākura. Fe Scott: 027 228 9113

Ōākura Yoga

Kate Evans 027 203 7215

Pickleball Ōākura

Ōākura Hall - Wed 7.30pm, Thurs 9.15am.
All skill levels welcome and equipment is
provided. Elayne 027 937 7173 or Vincenza
027 739 6574

Playcentre

14 Donnelly St. Sessions run Mondays,
Wednesdays and Fridays 9am - noon during
school terms. oakura@playcentre.org.nz

Pony Club

Tracey Mackenzie 027 319 0238
traceymackkyle@gmail.com

Pool Club

Meets every Wednesday night 7pm
over winter commencing April at
Butlers Reef. All welcome. For more info
call Margaret 027 232 1899

Probus Club

Meets once a month at Ōākura Bowling
club rooms on the 3rd Friday of every
month 10-11.30am. Contact Brenda Ryan
757 3537 or 027 748 9698

Te Reo Māori Lessons

Toni 021 661 912 thowison@hotmail.com

Ōākura - St James Church

Sunday Service every 2nd and 4th Sunday
of each month, 10.00am

Sunday School - St James Church

Every 2nd and 4th Sunday 10am.
stjamesoakura@gmail.com

Surf Lessons

Deken Waves Surf Coaching. Group &
Private sessions available. Contact Simon:
021 122 9525 dekenwaves@gmail.com

Running for Kids

TempoFit Kids - get fitter and faster and
have a blast along the way! Wednesdays
at Corbett Park. 3:25pm 8-11yrs, 4:10pm
11-14yrs. Hayden Shearman 027 483 5942
tempofit.org/tempofit-kids

Tennis Club

Coaching for all ages and levels,
go to www.blitztennis.nz
All other enquiries contact
Jackie 027 673 2900

Tai Chi Classes

Every Monday 9-10am at Ōākura Hall.
Judi 027 268 2601. Just come along or
contact: taranakitaichichuan@gmail.com

Val Deakin Dance School

Ōākura Hall Friday afternoon -
Pre-school dance classes at 2:45,
ballet for 5+ 3:30 to 4:15.
val@valdeakindance.org.nz
752 7743 or text 027 694 0933

Tataraimaka Hall

5 Elements Fitness Bootcamps and Kickboxing Fitness classes

Monday to Thursday 5-6 pm,
Barney 027 752 7076 barney@5efitness.
com or visit www.5efitness.com

Gymnastics Group for children - 5-7 yrs

Tuesdays after school at the Tataraimaka
Hall for basic level gymnastics sessions.
Rose at rosem@realfoodnutrition.co.nz

Okato

Okato Community Church meeting

At Hempton Hall on Sunday mornings
10.30am - all welcome.
Contact Nicky 027 497 3764

Okato and District Historical Society

Meg Cardiff 752 4566

Okato Lions Club

John Hislop 757 9696

Okato Squash Club

Monday nights from 6.30pm. All welcome.
Ladies morning Friday 9.30 -11am.
Rachel 020 4092 5243

Okato - St. Paul's

Sunday Service every 1st and 3rd Sunday
of each month, 10.00am
Mid-week Service - Pew for You, every 3rd
Thursday of each month, 4.30pm-6.00pm
okatocp@gmail.com

TOP Information

The Ōākura Post

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