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Issue 048 December 1, 2021

Omahu sets sail



Pipiroa boat builder Aaron Beattie at the launch of the multi-million dollar *Omahu*. Photo: GORDON PREECE

By GORDON PREECE

A local boat building business has launched their tenth and most expensive boat to date.

The multi-million dollar catamaran, *Omahu*, set sail on November 24 from Kōpū to Coromandel where its new Auckland owners enjoyed an afternoon fishing and scallop diving before heading to its new berth in the City of Sails

the next day.

Omahu, a Roger Hill displacement catamaran, is the result of just over two years' work by Pipiroa boat building business Lifestyle Yachts, with the help of up to 15 local businesses.

Lifestyle Yachts director Aaron Beattie, who's built boats in Pipiroa for 16 of his 32 years in the trade, said *Omahu* came up "really nice" with everything the owners could possibly need

for long periods away.

It came with on board air conditioning, dive compresses, a washing machine, a full galley, barbeque, two showers and two toilets, he said.

It also holds 5000 litres of fuel and 700 litres of water, and its onboard water maker can make 200 litres of fresh water per hour from sea water.

The catamaran is also equipped with electronically controlled double 400 hp

Yamaha motors, allowing it to cruise at 17 knots and reach top speeds of 26 knots.

Kōpū's Stainless Specialist Installations director John Liddall said it was great to be apart of *Omahu's* challenging construction and was "pretty proud" of the end result.

Originally from Auckland, Mr Beattie said the advantages of his Pipiroa workshop was the open space and the freedom from the rat race.

"We don't have the high rents that a lot of these guys are having to charge in Auckland or Tauranga which keeps the price of the boats down a wee bit," he said.

"We're in talks with a couple of other people interested in us building them luxury vessels."

Lifestyle Yachts launched their last boat *Affinity* three years ago, which went to Tonga to repair one of their trimarans damaged in Cyclone Gita.

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The *Valley Profile* is a community newspaper that delivers 100% local news in the Thames Valley region. We deliver 12,600 copies each Wednesday to every letterbox, reaching approximately 30,000 readers in Hauraki Plains, Paeroa, Thames, Thames Coast and surrounding rural areas, plus bulk distribution around the Coromandel Peninsula.

NEWS/EDITORIAL

Editor Teresa Ramsey
Ph 0204 0944 853

editor@valleyprofile.co.nz

Senior Reporter Kelley Tantau

Ph 022 619 4889

kelley@valleyprofile.co.nz

Reporter Gordon Preece

Ph 022 174 3988

gordon@valleyprofile.co.nz

ADVERTISING

Ad manager Nikki Sanders

Ph 022 1303 885

Email: nikki@valleyprofile.co.nz

MISSED PAPERS/ADMIN

Ph 027 396 2459

Email: admin@valleyprofile.co.nz

OFFICE: 2 QUEEN STREET, PAEROA

www.valleyprofile.co.nz

Plains obtains info funding

By KELLEY TANTAU, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

Up to three businesses in the Hauraki Plains could receive \$5000 each from the district council in return for providing visitor information services.

Hauraki District Council resolved to finance the implementation at its November 24 meeting, marking the first time the council has funded information services in the Plains ward.

However, no decision was made about which businesses would receive the funds.

Currently, the Glory Company cafe in Ngatea provides an information service to the public in collaboration with Visitor Point, a national distributor of travel information, but it does not receive funding from council to do this.

Under the new set up, council would support working together with Visitor Point and Destination Coromandel to provide the information stands and artwork at three locations around the Hauraki Plains.

A letter of agreement would be established with each funded business, with the businesses having KPI's they would need to fulfill.

Another option was the possibility of creating a pop-up stand at popular tourist destinations, such as at Blueberry Country in Ngatea or along the Hauraki Rail Trail.



Glory Company Cafe currently provides an information service for the Plains.

Plains councillor Ray Broad said the pop-up had merit, but he was concerned about the timing of the project.

According to a council report, the pop-up would require "a significant amount of preparation" and might not be up and running until late summer 2022, if at all that season.

There might also be a limited number of people using the pop-up service in a Covid-19 environment.

Paeroa councillor Jo Tilsley preferred the pop-up option, calling it "dynamic".

"Because the Plains doesn't have an information centre per say, we can provide something a little bit special," she said.

"We can also be proactive about where we put the pop-up, except that it might not happen this summer, but that's probably okay."

"I think people have already got their summers planned."

Under council's Long Term Plan, \$20,000 in funding was allocated for information services in the Plains ward.

While the pop-up option had the potential to go \$2900 over budget in its first year, the option to provide funding to three businesses came in under budget.

Mayor Toby Adams said while he did like the pop-up idea, it was something that could be implemented across the district at a later stage.

The motion to fund the businesses was passed, but with two Plains councillors, Ross Harris and Phillip Buckthought voting against it.



Water supply in trouble

Three years of lower than average rainfall is threatening the Hauraki Plains water supply over the summer period.

Hauraki District Council group manager service delivery Adrian de Laborde said drought impacted the district's reservoirs.

"We have less water than we should at this time of year," he said. "We are on track for the lowest annual rainfall since 1993, even lower than the last two years."

During times of low water demand, the Kerepēhi plant has enough water to supply the Plains, but during times of increased use, both the Kerepēhi and Waitakaruru water treatment plants are needed.

The two consented water sources used for the Waitakaruru plant, the Mangatarata Stream and a former quarry pit filled by the Waitakaruru Stream, situated on Steen Road, Mangatarata, are both lower than average.

During increased summer demand, this could lead to the Quarry Reservoir running out of water, council said.

"We are now looking at ways we can save water district wide," Mr de Laborde said.

"We need farmers to check their water lines and troughs for leaks, we need our residential properties to let us know of issues like pooling of water on footpaths. We need to work together if we are going to make it through the summer with enough water."

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Thames Tides

Wed Dec 1		Thu Dec 2		Fri Dec 3		Sat Dec 4		Sun Dec 5		Mon Dec 6		Tue Dec 7	
Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon
4:42am 3.1	5:00pm 3.4	5:44am 3.3	5:56pm 3.5	12:20am 0.5	12:47pm 0.6	1:15am 0.4	1:40pm 0.5	2:09am 0.2	2:33pm 0.4	3:00am 0.2	3:25pm 0.4	3:50am 0.2	4:18pm 0.4
10:54am 0.9	11:23pm 0.7	11:52am 0.7		6:44am 3.5	6:53pm 3.6	7:39am 3.6	7:49pm 3.7	8:32am 3.8	8:45pm 3.7	9:23am 3.9	9:40pm 3.7	10:15am 3.9	10:35pm 3.7
Sunrise	8:22pm	Sunrise	8:23pm	Sunrise	8:24pm	Sunrise	8:25pm	Sunrise	8:26pm	Sunrise	8:27pm	Sunrise	8:28pm
Best At	10:26pm	Best At	11:19pm	Best At	11:47am	Best At	12:47pm	Best At	1:51pm	Best At	2:58pm	Best At	3:30am
Rise	4:34pm	Rise	5:47pm	Rise	7:03pm	Rise	8:21pm	Rise	9:34pm	Rise	10:42pm	Rise	11:40pm

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MOON AND FISH KEYS

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TIME DIFFERENCES FOR OTHER PLACES

To determine tide times at the following places, add (+) or subtract (-) the given time difference from the Thames times listed in the calendar.

PLACE

	Hr	Mn	Hr	Mn
Coromandel	-	05	-	04
Whitianga	-	02	-	05
Tairua	+	10	+	21
Whangamata	-	07	-	07
Waihi Beach	-	12	-	12

Retired nurses answer Covid call to action

By KELLEY TANTAU, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

A retired nurse who put up her hand to help vaccinate the Thames-Coromandel population has been watching the district's vax rates rise.

For Pam Smith, seeing the figures increase has made her feel "very proud" as the district worked to curb the spread of Covid-19.

Pam is part of the Te Korowai Hauora o Hauraki team of vaccinators who have been travelling around the district providing hard-to-reach communities with an opportunity to get their Covid-19 Pfizer vaccination.

She retired from the industry seven years ago, but rolled up her sleeves when the Waikato District Health Board called for experienced hands to administer vaccines in the region.

"I just wanted to do something to support the vaccination drive," she told *The Profile*.

"It's nice to be able to reflect back on your work day and feel satisfied that you've helped in some way."

Pam is a Bowen Therapy practitioner in the Thames-Coromandel. Bowen is a form of bodywork that aims to reduce pain by stimulating the nervous system. She's been juggling her work with administering vaccinations and said it had been a "privilege to be part of this ongoing process".

"Being part of a team has been really special for me," she



Pam Smith, left, says watching the district's vax rates rise makes her feel proud of the community. RIGHT: Janet Leonard helps out administering the Covid-19 vaccine to patients at a pop-up vaccination site at McDonald's in Paeroa.



Photos: KELLEY TANTAU

said. "What has been reinforced is that teamwork and respect is paramount."

As at November 26, the Waikato DHB, which includes Thames Valley, had 90.28 per cent of its population receive their first dose vaccination. However, 28,622 doses were still needed to reach 90 per cent fully vaccinated.

The Thames-Coromandel district was 2726 doses away from reaching 90 per cent vaccinated; while the Hauraki district needed 2678 doses.

Janet Leonard was in Paeroa last week administering first

and second jabs at a pop-up vaccination site at McDonald's.

She too is a retired nurse who answered the call of duty when approached.

"I thought, well, I can do something useful. I could sit at home and read a book but that's not actually saving the world."

Both Janet and Pam said administering injections was "elementary" for them - with the process over and done within seconds.

Back in September, Unichem Thames owner and pharmacist Anas Wadood told *The Profile* that when the pharmacy

started its vaccination roll-out on August 2, it initially "took off", with many people coming in to get their first and second Covid-19 jabs. He only had one person get cold feet.

"I've personally only had one patient who got into the room, was ready to get vaccinated, but then saw the needle and decided not to."

"That was absolutely his choice, and I just said to him that if he changed his mind at any time, we'd be happy to book him again."

Mr Wadood understood people did have phobias of needles

- even minor fears which saw them tense up or look away from the oncoming injection.

He said the Pfizer vaccine needle was "a little bit" longer than, for example, the flu vaccine; however, the deed itself only lasted a few seconds and came with a myriad of benefits.

"Getting vaccinated is an important step to take, especially nowadays, and if you look at the bigger picture, there are more benefits to getting it."



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Lois Waugh and Jeanne McNair volunteered at last year's toy appeal, to be held again this year. File photo: KELLEY TANTAU

Toy appeal to provide much-needed cheer

By KELLEY TANTAU, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

A group of Santa's helpers will once again be doing what it takes to distribute Christmas presents to children in need - they even provide the batteries. The Paeroa Baptist Church is organising the Christmas Toy Appeal, with residents asked to drop unwrapped gifts under a tree in the Paeroa Information Hub.

Appeal co-ordinator Glenys Lewis told *The Profile* around 180-190 gifts could be expected to be donated this year, a generous target after what had been an "uncertain" 12 months.

"I believe that this year the need is even greater to be able to bring joy to families in our area

in this small way," she said.

"It has been a year of anxiety and uncertainty for many children and I would like to think that by continuing to support families through this appeal, that in some small way we are able to alleviate some of the heartache of the past year."

A dedicated team of Santa's helpers will be wrapping the presents on December 9, before the gifts get distributed to around 20 organisations, who supply the volunteers with names and ages of the young recipients.

Ordinarily, gifts are given to children aged between 0 to 12 years, however, Glenys said if organisers are told of a family in need, presents could also be dis-



tributed to older members of the whānau.

"I think that all children should be able to unpack something and have something for themselves on Christmas," Glenys said.

"I think they deserve to have something they can play with straight away.

"We supply the batteries and we've got people checking things over to see if they work, and if they don't, we don't put it in."

DETAILS: Donated gifts are to be new, near new, or in excellent condition, and donations of wrapping paper and tape are also gratefully accepted. Drop-off is at the Paeroa Info Hub, in the old post office building in the centre of town. Place unwrapped gifts under the Christmas tree by December 7.

Cake fundraiser success

By GORDON PREECE

Cakes were flying off the tables at the Women's League of Ngatea's St Paschal Church cake stall and Christmas raffle last week.

The annual event held on the last Friday in November outside Ngatea Prime Meats has been going for as long as the women can remember and was always a "big hit with the locals".

Hauraki Plains Catholic Women's League president Kay Brydon said the event raised funds to support ten different women's health related charities and organisations, with Ngatea's main supporter being a mission in Niue.

"Sister Siena is the head lady in charge and we try and contribute to her up to four times a year and she's always abso-

lutely grateful," she said.

"We've also recently sent off some goodies to her from the community who did clean outs during the lockdown."

St Paschal Church Women's League (CWL), which has 13 members, also strongly supports Giana's Choice, a house in Pukekohe for young pregnant women with nowhere to stay.

Friday's event raised around \$1500, an increase from last year's \$900 effort.

"It was a huge surprise and success," Mrs Brydon said.

"I want to thank all the community for their support each year. It's just fantastic and I look forward to our next one."

Colleen Jordan of Ngatea, who's been a member of CWL for 61 years, won the Christmas cake raffle and Dot Chipman, of Mangatangi, won the Christmas dinner raffle.



Volunteers at Ngatea's St Paschal Church Women's League's busy stall last week. Photo: GORDON PREECE

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Pedestrians 'at risk' in busy Paeroa streets

By GORDON PREECE

Paeroa's main streets have been deemed a risk to the public amid fears pedestrians may be crushed by unreinforced masonry in an earthquake.

In an extraordinary meeting held on November 23, Hauraki District Council named four streets in Paeroa's central business district as "busy thoroughfares" under the national earthquake-prone building system introduced in 2017 by the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment.

This means those streets experience high foot traffic and are considered an "at risk location" in an earthquake. Council's decision means owners of potentially earthquake-prone buildings on Belmont and Normanby Roads and Mackay and Wharf Streets will be informed by council by July next year of their obligations under the Building Act.

Building owners will then have one year to provide engineering assessments of their building to council, who will then determine whether their building is earthquake-prone.

Because the Hauraki district

has been categorised as a medium seismic area, earthquake-prone building owners will then have 12.5 years to earthquake-proof their building or vacate or demolish it.

The Profile earlier reported the Paeroa RSA needed to raise an estimated \$1 million to earthquake-proof their 95-year-old Wharf St building.

An earthquake-prone building notice was issued by Hauraki District Council to Paeroa RSA in September last year requiring them to earthquake strengthen the building by 2032 or they would need to vacate.

President John Hallett, who's held the position for three years, said the building was an iconic part of Paeroa and couldn't be demolished because of its heritage status.

In a statement, Mayor Toby Adams said making it a priority to earthquake proof buildings in busy areas sooner rather than later could be lifesaving.

"After the earthquakes in Canterbury in 2010-2011, and most recently in Melbourne, we've witnessed the risk vulnerable unreinforced masonry buildings pose to public safety

"After the earthquakes in Canterbury... we've witnessed the risk vulnerable unreinforced masonry buildings pose to public safety."

- Toby Adams



Unreinforced masonry buildings on Paeroa's central business district have been deemed an earthquake risk.

File photo: TERESA RAMSEY

and property during a moderate earthquake," he said.

Before council classified the four Paeroa streets as "busy thoroughfares" they asked for public feedback which took place during the month of October.

Eight of 13 respondents opposed Council's proposal, saying it would cost too much for building owners to earthquake-proof their buildings and cause "mental stress on top of the Covid stress they are all suffer-

ing from", the council report said.

In a written submission, Warwick Buchanan, of Paeroa Farm Services, said the council not publicly listing the already identified earthquake-prone buildings in Paeroa caused concern and brought into question council's assessment. He also said it was disappointing that building owners didn't have enough time to be consulted.

The council report said under the earthquake-prone building

system, all territorial authorities must assess all relevant buildings in their district to determine if they're potentially earthquake-prone.

They then state the consultation process for busy thoroughfares only relates to unreinforced masonry buildings.

Council also ruled Waihi's Seddon and Rosemont Streets to be busy thoroughfares at the November 23 meeting, but there were no unreinforced masonry buildings in Ngatea.

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SPORTS



HPC Elite team member Tiare Ballantine has fun evading the opposition.

Photos: MARK BROWN/ONE OF A KIND PHOTOGRAPHY

Ngatea touch takes off

The Ngatea Touch Module has been held every Tuesday night since October at Hugh Hayward Domain. Around 34 adult teams and 26 primary teams have taken part, with the primary finals held next week. **MARK BROWN** from *One of a Kind Photography* took these stellar shots!



Braxton Green gets in a good run for the Mangatangi Magic.



Eli Dovey evades a touch from Tommi Bjerring.



Te Rangi Morehu-Rapana runs away with the ball.



Devon Shirley, right, sidesteps an Underdogs player.



Samantha Hana, left, plants the ball for Last Minute.

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SPORTS

The future looks bright for Thames Valley Rugby

By KATE DURIE
Wintec Journalism Student

Richard Foster admits being more of a soccer player than rugby player – and for one game he counted himself lucky the ball never made its way out to him on the wing.

But now, it's rugby all the way for Richard, who has just been appointed the new acting general manager of the Thames Valley Rugby Union.

This season caps a successful first term at the helm for Richard, who took over at the start of the Valley's Heartland campaign.

Richard was born in Te Awamutu in 1958 – New Zealand born and Yorkshire bred according to his father. In his 20s he was in Auckland graduating with a Bachelor of Arts.

He loved his sport too - but it wasn't until he was fitted with contact lenses in 1981 that he was able to get a clear view of the field.

"I am more of a soccer player than I am a rugby player. But I do enjoy playing rugby," he said.

He would play rugby on Saturdays then football on Sundays – but before the contact lenses he tried one game on the wing and "could not see a thing".

He and his young family moved from Auckland to Thames in 2005 and was asked

to help out with the Thames Valley Rugby team as an enthusiastic supporter of the team.

Thames Rugby & Sports Club president Steve Gooder suggested he should go on the Thames Valley Rugby Board, and in 2014, he ran and was elected to the board and has since been on the board directors for the Thames Valley Rugby Football Union.

When the union was looking for a new general manager before the Valley season began this year, Richard agreed to step in for the season.

"The [Heartland] coaching staff: Joe Murray, David Harrison, Matt Bartlett and Matt Rolston, have brought a degree of professionalism and the team has responded to this good leadership."

Richard said he believed this leadership had improved the calibre of the Heartland team standings and created a "boost for rugby in the Thames Valley Region".

"The guys who used to always be beaten up are now winning. It's so good."

Richard has noticed the team atmosphere changed as they "believed in not only themselves, but their comrades".

The Swampfoxes recently made the Heartland championship final against South Canter-

"The guys who used to always be beaten up are now winning. It's so good."

- Richard Foster



Richard Foster is standing in as TVRFU general manager for the season.

Photo: KELLEY TANTAU

bury for the Meads Cup, a prestigious trophy named after Sir Colin Meads.

The Swampfoxes had an extra incentive to win back the cup - in 2018, the teams clashed in the final, also held in Timaru, beating South Canterbury 17-12.

This season, Thames Valley unfortunately lost 35-16 to South Canterbury, who had their first-ever win of the cup.

"The future's looking good for the Heartland team, with the emergence of upcoming players and with the kids running around playing ripper rugby," Richard said.

Thames Valley Rugby is also

opening its doors to all women in the region wanting to play, he said, with the women's team recently playing three sevens matches against Whanganui at Waihi Athletic on November 20.

Thames Valley women's rugby coach Scott Day said the talented young women, aged between 17-33 years, were finally able to get on the pitch after missing out on most of their season, due to losing players to lockdowns.

"We are wanting to continue to build on what's been done so far, so talk to your friends, work colleagues, sister and family to join."

Thames Valley Rugby is want-

ing to start up a fresh, new culture of women's rugby within the valley, he said.

Richard and the rugby union have also been involved in liaising with the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic for Cert4Rugby, which is an NZQA course for school leavers and players who are interested in pursuing a career in rugby, but also interested in learning a trade.

This course is available to them to gain any trade they choose while playing.

For more information, go to: www.thamesvalleyswampfoxes.co.nz, or women's rugby, contact Scott, Ph: 027 281 5270.

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Plum cake disappearance puzzles



Vintage Valley News

As part of a Valley Profile series, **MEGHAN HAWKES** searches through old newspapers to bring you the stories Thames Valley locals once read about themselves.

1881

The good people of Paeroa were in a state of excitement over the disappearance of a plum cake intended for a school feast. Several residents had busied themselves in supplying edibles for the young people's enjoyment, and the cake, which had cost more time and attention than the rest, was set aside for the adults who had prepared the festivities. When it was found to have disappeared altogether cries of "Who stole the cake?" reverberated around Paeroa.

At Puriri, the Ehrenfried brothers were about to build a large and commodious hotel. The greater portion of the timber was on the ground and a gang of men were busy digging a roomy cellar. The hotel, when completed, would contain fourteen rooms. Also at Puriri Edward Gallagher had laid on a line of omnibuses from Thames to Hikutaia. Mr Gallagher had, despite the bad state of the roads, kept up weekly communication by his drays with Puriri,



Sketches of Paeroa.

Photo: SUPPLIED

and when the fine weather set in he would lay on lighter carriages.

A traveller riding around the Thames Coast had much to say on the condition of the road. After leaving Tararu it swept boldly round the bluff known as Rocky Point. This portion was only one dray wide. The grade, however, was good, enabling riders to spin along at a round trot, occasionally dismounting and walking over the round beach stones which, being inclined to roll had to be trod on gently. The dray road degenerated into a horse track rounding the steep bluffs, where narrow sidling tracks were cut. The Puru and Waiomo creeks had old single log bridges which were a great advantage for foot passengers but good substantial bridges were needed as a large amount of land had been settled in the Puru valley. After one and a half hours ride Tapu was reached, the worst part of the road this far being the cuttings round the bluff, between the Whalebone Creek and Tapu, where the track

was very narrow and a danger to horsemen, the hard rock being bare and slippery. The inside wall was perpendicular and the outside nearly sheer down to the beach, which was wild and rocky - a tumble would result in the certain destruction of man and horse. Tapu had two hotels, kept respectively by Hosts Hawkes and Jacobs, and a peculiar population made up mostly of children.

At Thames, the police caught a 'tartar' but encountered some difficulty in detaining him. The young man was observed amusing himself by battering fireplugs in Pollen St. He was arrested but succeeded in eluding the officer in charge, and an exciting chase ensued. The culprit had the best of it for some time, the officer not being in form for running. The officer called upon an onlooker to "Stop him, stop him!" but received the reply "Stop him yourself; I'm not paid for it." Things looked critical until the arrival of a constable able to out-pace the two, and the vandal was caught.

ENTERTAINMENT



Alisha Wathen and Michael McPhee.

Photo: SUPPLIED

Ballerina returns for show

Thames Hauraki Ballet Theatre is delighted to have former student Alisha Wathen to dance as the principal ballerina in its upcoming concert.

She will perform the leading roles in the contemporary piece *Sarabande*, plus the now Queen and the Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker*.

Alisha, 17, has just returned from 18-months full-time training at the Alberta Ballet school in Canada.

There she had world-class teachers and mostly enjoyed classes with a Russian training influence. She also completed her academic studies to year 13 level. As a THBT student, she completed her Royal Academy exams to advanced 2 level and was part of a national elite training programme as a junior associate with the NZ School of

Dance. She is also a former student of Hauraki Plains College and plans to study law on scholarship, at Victoria University in 2022. "Alisha is outstanding and dances like a true professional," former teacher Pauline Germon said. Presented by the THBT senior school, a varied programme includes jazz, tap, and contemporary items, plus the gorgeous *Kingdom of Snow* and *Kingdom of Sweets* from the timeless Christmas classic *The Nutcracker*, with music by Tchaikovsky.

DETAILS: Thames Memorial Civic Centre, December 1 and December 3 at 6.30pm. Tickets: TryBooking.com or Ph 027 242 8896. Covid restrictions of one-metre spacing, mask wearing and contact tracing will be adhered to. If any ticket buyer is unwell and unable to attend, a refund will be given.

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When

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Adviser to Achievers

Rural Life

Farmers urged to prepare for Covid

By GORDON PREECE

Federated Farmers want all rural sectors to be prepared to cope with Covid-19.

The organisation has launched a checklist to assist farmers with creating a plan in the event they're diagnosed with Covid-19 and need to leave their farm to isolate in MIQ or hospital.

Hauraki-Coromandel Federated Farmers president Robert Craw said the rural sector had realised Covid-19 wasn't just an urban problem and was "very scary".

"The potential consequences of a rural outbreak can be quite detrimental," he said.

"Farmers are very passionate about looking after their animals and if they got Covid they wouldn't be able to do this."

The checklist will include farmers providing information about their farms to allow family, friends or neighbours to come in and tend to the needs of livestock.

The checklist also provides information to assist the Ministry of Health with deciding the best course of action for farmers and those around them

to isolate. It will also include farmers providing their plans for the 14-21 day self isolation period, and plans for managing their personal wellbeing.

A positive Covid-19 case was recorded on a Waikato farm on November 12, and Mr Craw warned this was only the first of many.

"There's only one thing we (the rural sector) can do and that's look at the stats and numbers and get vaccinated if you want to protect your business, your animals, your family and your staff and focus on the future," he said.

Federated Farmers national board member and employment spokesperson Chris Lewis said distance for farmers from health and other facilities, workforce shortages and the need to continue to look after animals and crops raised all sorts of complications.

"As District Health Board Medical Officers of Health will be making the decision on whether it's practicable for a farmer or key farm staff member to self-isolate on the farm, evidence of pre-planning and preparedness will be an important factor," he said.

Predator-free group gains 'momentum'

By KELLEY TANTAU, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

A newly-formed group dedicated to seeing a predator-free Kauaeranga Valley is gaining momentum, Landcare Trust's Ric Balfour said.

Back in May, a meeting in Thames about backyard trapping attracted Kauaeranga Valley residents who requested a similar discussion be held for their area.

A group has since been established with goals to protect "precious" native birds and mitigate pest species.

"It's potentially going to be a predator-free Kauaeranga Valley," Mr Balfour explained.

"On public land, there's a real issue with goats and possums. There are also mustelids and rats - your typical mix."

There were also rabbits, and they brought in ferrets and stoats, he said, so the group talked about rabbit controls as an "indirect way of reducing the likelihood of a ferret problem".

"We also talked about what was precious in the valley that they wanted to protect, and it was the suite of native birds that are still there: like the New Zealand falcon/kārearea, and small groups of kaka."

Of the goals of the group, Mr Balfour said one was creating a "trap library" up at the Kauaeranga Hall, where people can collect traps, bait, and instructions to set up and moni-



Tracking tunnels are specifically designed for tracking small mammals such as mice, rats and stoats. INSET: The Kauaeranga Valley trapping catchment area. Photos: SUPPLIED

tor.

Another was utilising tracking tunnels, specifically designed for tracking small mammals such as mice, rats and stoats.

The predators are encouraged into the tunnels by a lure and walk across sticky ink, leaving behind high definition footprints.

Mr Balfour told *The Profile* it was great to see people "catching the bug" when it came to Predator-Free 2050 - an ambitious goal to rid New Zealand of the most damaging introduced



predators that threatened the nation's natural taonga.

The group's next meeting on December 8 will be focused on developing a predator control vision, strategy, and action plan, he said.

"There is some great momentum building for a community trapping group to get started, with the Department of Conservation and NZ Landcare Trust facilitating the process with advice and resources."

DETAILS: The next community trapping meeting is at Kauaeranga Hall, December 8, 5:30pm.

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NEW

NEW

NEW

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Market opens

Rotary Club of Thames held its inaugural Farmers' Market on Sunday at Goldfields Mall with 20 vendors drawing a steady crowd. Reporter **GORDON PREECE** went along to find a bargain. The next farmers' market will be held on December 19.



Rotary Thames president Warren Sly, left, said he was pleased with the market.



Beverly Groves and Tony Winter's colourful stall with an array of flowers.

Photos: GORDON PREECE



Louise Dean of Thames food waste group ReSource.



Bleach Tie Dye Shirts lit up the market.



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Artist shares stories in Thames murals

By DEBORAH MACDONALD-BROWN

Big changes are afoot for Ngāti Maru artist Rick Fisher. “I wasn’t ready. Then the universe opened wide and I’m ready now,” he said.

“I believe my readiness has come about because I realised that I was getting older and I had to do something about getting better and better at my art practice.”

The universe replied. It was the universe that spoke when the Matatoki hall came up for sale and where Rick has now set up a studio where he can paint his murals.

It was the universe that spoke when artist daughter, Lyssie, encouraged her father to go digital on an iPad during the first lockdown.

And it was the universe that spoke when he found his airbrush compressor on Trade Me at half price when he needed it.

And the universe spoke again when the commissions began to roll in - three books to illustrate and seven murals to paint for local primary schools, all in the past 18 months or so.

“It’s just happened and my work has exploded,” Rick explained.

But life has not always been this way. Childhood was difficult for Rick. “It can really knock you down. I fought back by being as good as I could be at what I know.”

What he realised early on



Puriri artist Rick Fisher and his murals outside St John at Kuranui, above, and Mary St, Thames, right.

Photos: SUPPLIED



was that when he made art, he could sink into his own world where he was happy.

Even now Rick juggles his art practice with his work and family.

“Life is a juggling act; prioritising is the main thing, 95 per cent of my life has been drawing, drawing, drawing.”

“I wanted to share what I had and I didn’t know how to

share it.”

So Rick kept on making art.

He sees a need in Thames. “I want to make it beautiful to look at, worthwhile to stay in. I feel privileged to be here and to be able to share what I do with my community. We are here. We were forgotten. We are still here.”

“Before mining, before tree felling, there was us. This

should not be forgotten. History goes further than this. We never got to hear the stories.”

Rick Fisher is a story teller in pictures. His murals and his illustrations allow him to tell his stories and show the beauty he sees every day.

With his big works, he asks people who approach him to tell him what they want, then he takes the ideas and throws

them into a pool.

Within two or three days, the ideas spark.

Then the process is about finding the unifying element, the one thing that brings it all together.

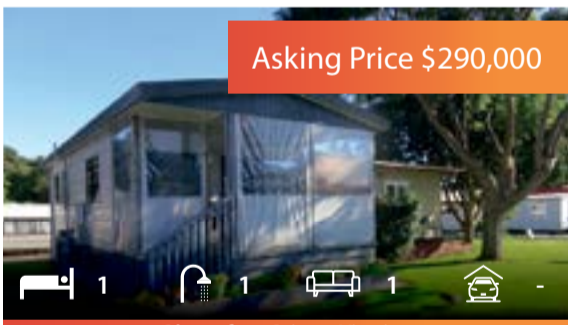
Rick’s work can be viewed in the heart of Thames on Mary St, St John at Kuranui, north of Thames, and at Tapu Primary School.



Maree Simpson



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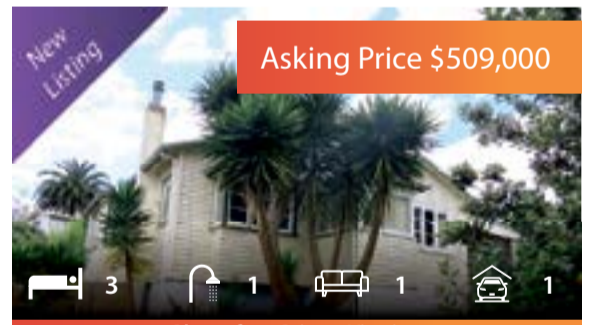
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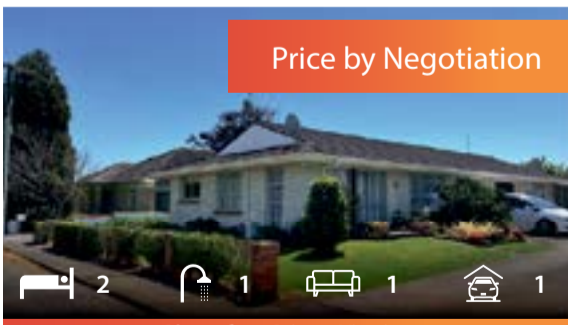
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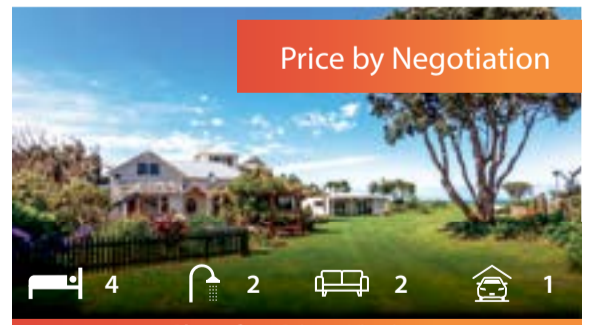
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HARD

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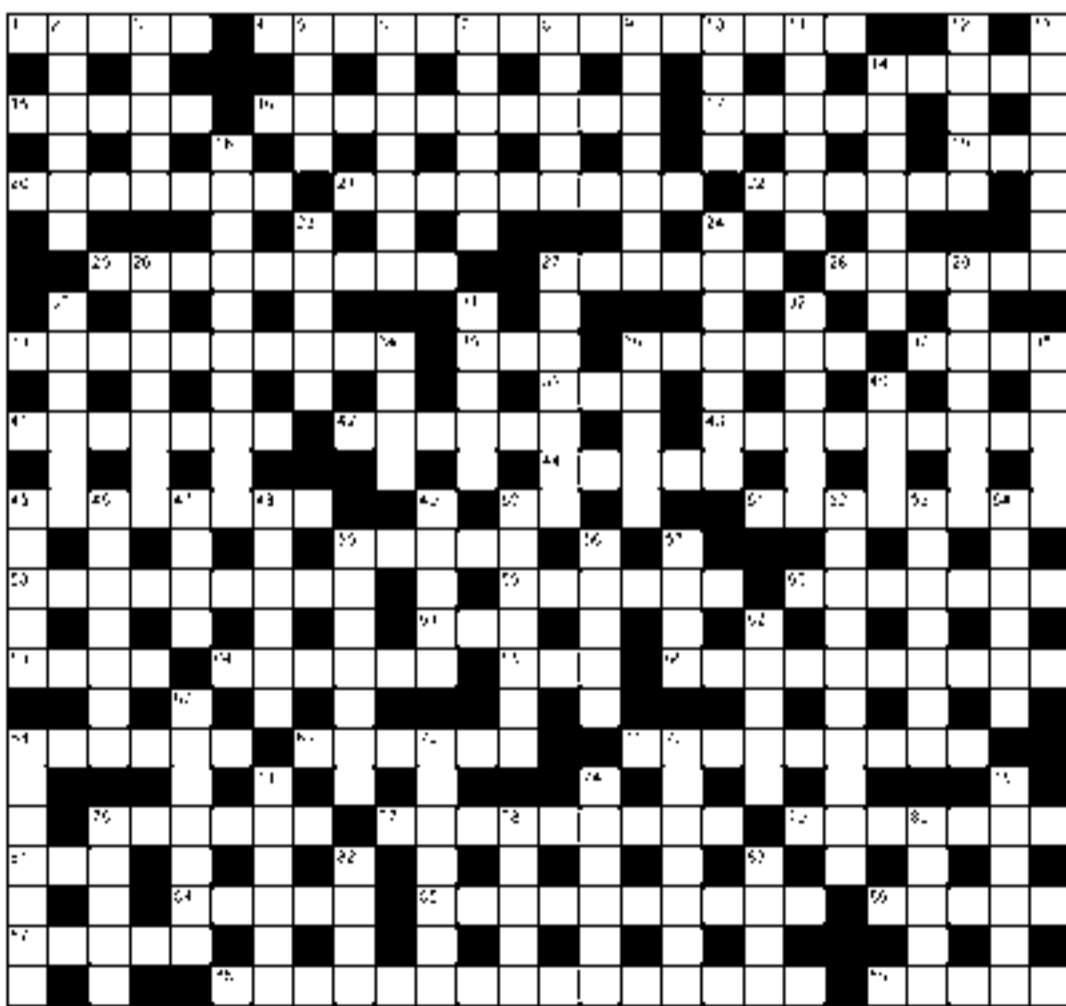
EASY

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48

- ACROSS**
- 1 Harpoon (5)
 - 4 Adopt the manners and customs of the people you are living with (2,2,3,6,2)
 - 14 Glazier's filler (5)
 - 15 Motionless (5)
 - 16 Intruder (10)
 - 17 With cunning (5)
 - 19 Meadow (3)
 - 20 Masticating (7)
 - 21 Rejoice (9)
 - 22 Disquiet (6)
 - 25 Turn to vapour (9)
 - 27 Purplish antiseptic solution (6)
 - 28 Flashy but shoddy (6)
 - 33 Unappeasable (10)
 - 35 Cancelled (3)
 - 36 Led (6)
 - 37 Charitable donations (4)
 - 39 Look at (3)
 - 41 Liable to sudden unpredictable change (7)
 - 42 Stringed instrument (6)
 - 43 Rally driver's assistant (9)
 - 44 Frosty (5)
 - 45 Was part of (8)
 - 50 In order that (2)
 - 51 Book supplement (8)
 - 55 Select, privileged group (5)
 - 58 Wronged (9)
 - 59 Saw eye to eye (6)
 - 60 Mounted troops (7)
 - 61 Regulation (3)
 - 63 Slight quarrel (4)
 - 64 Church room (6)
 - 65 Age (3)
 - 66 Food poisoning (10)
 - 68 Going out with (6)
 - 69 Thwarted (6)
 - 71 A nice tune (anag)(9)
 - 76 Mute (6)
 - 77 Upset the equilibrium of (9)
 - 79 Battle plans (7)
 - 81 Compete (3)
 - 84 City in Florida (5)
 - 85 Contrite (10)
 - 86 Assassinate (5)
 - 87 Fashion (5)
 - 88 Complexion of velvety skin with downy pink cheeks (7,3,5)
 - 89 Rhyme (5)
 - DOWN**
 - 2 Irregular in quality (6)
 - 3 Let (5)
 - 5 Rower's tools (4)
 - 6 Doubt the genuineness of (7)
 - 7 Cured (6)
 - 8 Upright part of step (5)
 - 9 Deserved (7)
 - 10 Springtime construction (4)
 - 11 Dehydrating (6)
 - 12 Manner (5)
 - 13 Line of succession (7)
 - 14 Nightwear (7)
 - 18 Looking into (10)
 - 23 Seizes (5)
 - 24 Eerie (7)
 - 26 Active mountain (7)
 - 27 No finer (anag)(7)
 - 29 Crossed out (7)
 - 30 Come forth (6)
 - 31 Night-flying insects (5)
 - 32 Did duty (6)
 - 34 Give off (4)
 - 36 Lends a hand (5)
 - 38 Inoculation fluid (5)
 - 40 Leer (4)
 - 45 Copper alloy (5)
 - 46 Traveller's belongings (7)
 - 47 Steel pin (4)
 - 48 Begrudged (6)
 - 49 Daft (5)
 - 50 Underwater plants (7)
 - 52 Fiendish (10)
 - 53 Eastern (anag)(7)
 - 54 Boisterous (6)
 - 55 Book printing (7)
 - 56 Expansive (5)
 - 57 Hardens (4)
 - 62 Mixture (5)
 - 67 Excite intensely (7)
 - 68 Remain alive (7)
 - 70 Ancestry (7)
 - 72 Atomic (7)
 - 73 Breathe in (6)
 - 74 Boy's name (6)
 - 75 Fish covering (6)
 - 76 Durable twilled fabric (5)
 - 78 Hawaiian greeting (5)
 - 80 Clan (5)
 - 82 Record (4)
 - 83 Passport stamp (4)



PREVIOUS SOLUTION

ACROSS: 1 Spasm, 4 Other fish to fry, 11 Ideas, 14 Giant, 15 Stethoscope, 16 Saboteur, 19 Forceps, 20 Meter, 21 Tricolour, 24 Proceeded, 26 Tissue, 27 Valley, 31 Olive, 32 Zucchini, 34 Daydreamer, 38 Trivial, 39 Planet, 40 Odious, 41 Sign, 42 Cardiac, 45 Comparison, 50 Thirsty, 54 Rash, 55 Snares, 56 Python, 57 Soldier, 60 Delivering, 61 Abnormal, 62 Aches, 65 Munich, 66 Accent, 67 Presently, 72 Saddlebag, 73 Taint, 74 Heading, 79 Cyclists, 80 Microscopic, 81 Might, 82 Often, 83 Dog in the manger, 84 Stork.

DOWN: 2 Poison, 3 Sonic, 5 Tutu, 6 Extreme, 7 Fooled, 8 Sock, 9 Top brass, 10 Yearly, 11 Inoculated, 12 Eden, 13 Surgery, 17 Spicy, 18 Occupation, 22 Debut, 23 Olympics, 25 Revived, 26 Twister, 28 Gloria, 29 Kidnap, 30 Adjust, 33 Cello, 35 Runny, 36 Lava, 37 Lots, 42 Cared, 43 Rustling, 44 Canary, 45 Chronicles, 46 Mist, 47 Asphalt, 48 Intent, 49 Odour, 51 Hook, 52 Radical, 53 Teeter, 58 Evacuation, 59 False, 63 Relation, 64 Under, 65 Morocco, 68 Run-down, 69 Edited, 70 Balsam, 71 Anchor, 75 Drift, 76 Scot, 77 Arch, 78 Lime.

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Last month's winner of Thames Autos car valet worth \$150 was Ruth Henderson, who found Pete in the November 24 edition in the Aeroview Garden Centre advert. Go to page 2 for details on how to enter.



SPORTS

Tournament raises \$8500

GOLF

The sun shone on the Pārāwai School annual ambrose golf tournament, as neither Covid-19 Alert Level 2 restrictions nor predicted rain showers were able to thwart the fun.

Fifty six people playing 18 holes of golf in teams of four took part in the day's fun, which was held at the Thames Golf Course on November 14. The ambrose format is less about golfing prowess and more about a social get-together for a good cause, and plenty of banter along with a spirit of friendly competition was the order of the day.

Refreshments and a barbecue were on offer by the Pārāwai School PTA during the event, with a prize giving and auction held in the Thames Golf Clubrooms after the day's golf was completed.

The event raised \$8500 for the school, which will go towards improving the school's technology supplies and education outside the classroom for all students.

Pārāwai School thanks all our wonderful sponsors and the team at the Thames Golf Club, whose kindness and generosity ensured a very successful outcome for the day.



"The Wannabes" took out first place for the day, from left: Conrad Davis, Rachel Holmes and Teresa Allen, absent: Stephen Gooder.



Principal Jordan Palfrey and Arlo Sawyer draw the raffle during the prizegiving in the Thames Golf Clubrooms. Photos: SUPPLIED

'Frustrating' start to cricket season due to Covid-19

CRICKET

It has been a frustrating beginning to the cricket season with Covid-19 restrictions and weather challenges having caused frustration for players, coaches and supporters.

All are now hoping for a clear road ahead for play at all levels before Christmas festivities interrupt to the flow of scheduled competitions.

First class field and weather conditions at Hauraki Plains College greeted the visitors from Te Aroha and Matamata recently.

The games were the last of a mini-competition set up before matches involving Hamilton teams became possible.

In the match between the Hauraki and Te Aroha senior sides, Cullen Crowe (batting) Logan Dodunski, Xavier Anderson and Cooper Green (bowling) provided the highlights in a game which batsmen in both teams surrendered their wickets far too easily.

The match up between the

Matamata and Hauraki Years 9 and 10 teams saw Matamata cruise to victory, although several Hauraki batsmen did show a willingness to play with better technique than in previous matches this season.

Results submitted: Hauraki Plains College First XI 92 for the loss of 7 wickets (Cullen Crowe 30, Nihindu Wickramathunga 25 n.o.) defeated Te Aroha College, 91. Bowling - Logan Dodunski 3/10, Xavier Anderson 3/12, Cooper Green 2/7. Matamata Years 9 and 10: 149 (Fergus Ball 4/20) defeated Hauraki Plains 107). Other results: Senior B Grade - Kaihere 230 Mark Harris 49, Cullen Aislabie 46, Keegan Walsh 45, defeated Morrinsville B, 170. (Malcolm Barrow 49.) Sunday League: At Whangamata - Tairua Stringrays 218 for 6 wickets off 30 overs Leon Smith 49, Hunter Crowe 46, defeated Whangamata 203 for the loss of 7 wickets. Morrinsville B defeated Mercury Bay in their match played in Whitianga.

- Mike Cotter

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Friends use lockdown to break ‘artist’s block’

By KELLEY TANTAU, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

Three artists used the isolation and loneliness of the country’s two Covid-19 lockdowns to push boundaries and reconnect as creatives.

Christine Gibb, from the Maratoto Valley, Frankie Bullen from Thames, and Marilyn Nicholson of Whitianga, set themselves an art challenge with the goal of discovering new styles and techniques and “to create as we had never created before”.

The result is now displayed in an exhibition in Thames dubbed *Triple Vision*.

“I had only ever painted horses, realistically in acrylics and oils, but as a photographer I decided that I may as well just take a good photo,” Christine said.

“But I am an arty person and so felt the need to stretch myself creatively.

“One of the biggest learning curves was to allow myself to have failures. One learns a lot from a failure, much more than a success.”

The *Profile* visited the three artists last week as they set up their exhibition at Nectar on Pollen St. They said the challenge involved seven different themes: faces, Maratoto rock, movement, mono plus one, patterns in nature, still life, and beach scene.

It was inspiring to see each artists’ interpretation of the theme, they said.

“None of us had any idea



Frankie Bullen, left, Marilyn Nicholson, and Christine Gibb stand alongside their interpretations of ‘Maratoto rock’.

Photo: KELLEY TANTAU

what each of us were doing,” Frankie said. “Part of the challenge was having a specific plan of what we should paint and then seeing what each of our minds came up with.”

“A big part of it that I really liked was that there were no rules,” Marilyn added.

“You could push yourself in any direction without asking yourself whether it was go-

ing to be right.” The variation of themes and interpretations made for an inspiring exhibition, and the artists hoped visitors would be encouraged to think outside the box as well.

They had all suffered from self-doubt and insecurity, they said, but doing the challenge had helped them grow. So much so, that they were planning on running another chal-

lenge and called for other artists to join them.

“I painted subjects that I hadn’t dared to before: mountains, rivers, rocks and even the despised still life,” Christine said.

“Water was always in the ‘too hard bin’ but I did a painting of water movement in four days and loved every minute of it.”

And out of the seven chal-

lenge subjects, she only painted one horse.

DETAILS: *Triple Vision* art exhibition, at Nectar, 644 Pollen St, Thames. Running until December 4, 10am-2pm. All artworks for sale. For information, Christine at maratoto@gmail.com.



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