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Santa was busy last weekend bringing Christmas sparkle to Santa parades and festive celebrations around Hauraki-Coromandel



Santa and one of his helpful elves wave to the crowd during the Thames Santa parade on Saturday. MORE PHOTOS: P11
Photo: TERESA MAXWELL

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Rates cap meets rising costs

By KELLEY TANTAU

The district's councils could be preparing for careful financial adjustments as rising costs collide with the government's proposed four per cent rates cap.

The government announced this month it wanted a rates cap "to help district councils keep rates increases under control and reduce pressure on household budgets".

The cap would apply to all sources of rates: general rates, targeted rates, and uniform annual charges, but would exclude water charges and other non-rates revenue, like fees and charges.

Hauraki District Mayor Toby Adams said the biggest unknown was how the cap would apply to essential infrastructure.

"Everything's always going to be feasible, it just means that we're going to have to maybe drop some level of service or drop some projects out. The good thing is that the infrastructure, certainly around water and wastewater, is not part of that cap, but we haven't yet had a definition on roading, bridges, that type of infrastructure, or management plans for flooding.

"But we need industry to sharpen their bloody pencils," he said. "Because what we're paying for in chemicals, insurance, power, that stuff's going up more than four per cent. When we had our first big rate rise, some of our IT software was going up 100 per cent. Insurances and bridge inspections were going up 35, 40 per cent. Roading's gone up 30 per cent. So it'd be interesting to know what the government's going to do to make those people adhere to the inflation rule. Otherwise, we're going to have to stop doing some stuff. It's as simple as that."

Hauraki District Council's 2024-2034 Long Term Plan had signalled a 13.3 per cent average property rates increase for the 2025/26 rating year, but Mayor Adams earlier said after scrutinising the budget and tightening its belt, council got the average property rates increase down to 8.4 per cent.

"We're not afraid of keeping the rates down. We love to keep the rates down. Every council loves to keep the rates down. It's only the public that thinks we want to raise them," he said. "But the public are the ones that are asking for the different parts of the community they want enhanced.

"So we've got to look after that."



Peter Revell and Toby Adams. File photos

In Thames-Coromandel, the district council implemented a 7.7 per cent average rates increase for 2025/26.

Like Mayor Adams, TCDC Mayor Peter Revell said his council was "absolutely behind the principle of controlling excessive rate increases".

"We are already working hard on this for our Annual Plan for 2026/2027 in line with the commitments made to our residents and ratepayers during the election campaign. Our current target is 3.8 per cent or better.

"This has not been in response to a central government mandate but rather in response to our local communities' making it very clear that they need rate increases to be affordable and sustainable."

Mayor Revell said there was much detail still to be determined, but "for the pressing need we have today to lower rate increases", council had established a Mayoral Efficiency Taskforce, the purpose of which was to "urgently identify savings and keep planned rate increases affordable for residents and ratepayers".

"The government is clearly seeking input to determine whether four per cent is the right number," Mayor Revell said.

"We will be responding to government with a submission in the new year, but ahead of that we will be ensuring that we understand and hear from our communities on their views of the entire proposal, and not just the range proposed."

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Thames Tides

Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue
Dec 10	Dec 11	Dec 12	Dec 13	Dec 14	Dec 15	Dec 16
 Morning: 5:42am 0.4 12:10pm 3.6 Afternoon: 6:23pm 0.6 Sunrise: 5:51am 8:30pm Best At: 5:42am 6:06pm Moon: Rise 12:27am Set 11:07am	 Morning: 12:37am 3.3 1:02pm 3.4 Afternoon: 6:33am 0.6 7:17pm 0.7 Sunrise: 5:51am 8:31pm Best At: 6:29am 6:51pm Moon: Rise 12:55am Set 12:12pm	 Morning: 1:29am 3.2 1:56pm 3.3 Afternoon: 7:27am 0.7 8:11pm 0.8 Sunrise: 5:52am 8:32pm Best At: 7:12am 7:33pm Moon: Last Quarter Rise 1:20am Set 1:15pm	 Morning: 2:22am 3.1 2:49pm 3.2 Afternoon: 8:24am 0.9 9:05pm 0.9 Sunrise: 5:52am 8:32pm Best At: 7:53am 8:13pm Moon: Rise 1:42am Set 2:14pm	 Morning: 3:19am 3.0 3:41pm 3.1 Afternoon: 9:25am 1.0 9:59pm 0.9 Sunrise: 5:52am 8:33pm Best At: 8:34am 8:54pm Moon: Rise 2:05am Set 3:13pm	 Morning: 4:19am 2.9 4:33pm 3.0 Afternoon: 10:25am 1.1 10:54pm 0.9 Sunrise: 5:52am 8:34pm Best At: 9:15am 9:36pm Moon: Rise 2:27am Set 4:12pm	 Morning: 5:19am 2.9 5:24pm 3.0 Afternoon: 11:20am 1.1 11:47pm 0.9 Sunrise: 5:53am 8:34pm Best At: 9:57am 10:19pm Moon: Rise 2:52am Set 5:12pm

MOON AND FISH KEYS

New Moon First Quarter Full Moon Last Quarter

Good Fishing Fair Fishing Not So Good

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	-0	05	-0	03
Whitianga	-0	01	-0	05
Tairua	+0	10	+0	20
Whangamata	-0	03	-0	06
Waihi Beach	-0	21	-0	16

Social services call for combined approach

Treating methamphetamine addiction is complicated - not only are medical services stretched, but there are also underlying social issues which need to be addressed, providers say. In this installment of The Valley Profile's investigation into methamphetamine use in Thames, reporter ALICE PARMINTER looks into what providers want to happen now.

Mental health providers in Thames are seeing increasing numbers of methamphetamine presentations, along with increased violence and aggression, a health leader says.

"The people that are coming to our mental health service who need to go into an inpatient mental health bed - methamphetamine is related to one in three of those admissions," Health NZ Te Manawa Taki mental health addictions lead Vicki Aitken said.

"[And] if you are somebody who has a history of trauma or lots of distress, and you are using methamphetamine and other drugs to cope with that, then you've got that other vicious cycle of drug use and mental health problems happening."

Additionally, methamphetamine users had a much greater chance of developing an unresolvable psychotic disorder, she said.

What was really needed was a whole-of-community, wrap-around solution.

It's a view that's being echoed by other providers in Thames, such as Te Whāriki Manawāhine o Hauraki Women's Refuge.

"There is an element of intervention and prevention, which is where I think the police are very much part of this picture," Te Whāriki director of research Paora Moyle said. "[But] until we deal with the causes, there will always be a segment in our society who will be addicted to some form of drug, whether it's an illegal drug or whether it's prescribed medication."



Clockwise from top left: Vicki Aitken, Paora Moyle, Gareth Carter and Eddie Churton.

"These are real people who live in our community... They deserve for their community to take some care and compassionate approach towards them."

Some of the more common causes were housing issues, the cost of living, and inter-generational family abuse and trauma.

She said Te Whāriki was working to address these issues alongside addictions, rather than separately.

Te Whāriki was already seeing some success. In May, 18 women with substance dependencies joined one of its intervention programmes. "Following the [course], every meth user became clean, supported through the impact of the programme, the ongoing

backing of Te Whāriki, and most importantly the sisterhood support system they set up and strictly maintained for themselves," she said. "When I met with them recently, all had stable homes. Every woman was either in work or involved in voluntary helping, and two were engaging positively with Oranga Tamariki [Ministry for Children] to have their children transitioned back into their care."

Staff at the Living Well Trust on Mary St also see a lot of methamphetamine users - they estimated around 80 per cent of the people through their doors are either using the drug or have an addict in the family.

Co-ordinator Amanda Goldfinch and team

lead Eddie Churton said often their biggest impediment to getting someone help was timeliness. "We've had people ask for help and we've run through all the services, and it just takes so long to get back... By that time they're over wanting the help, it's too late," Amanda said.

"When they've come down off a massive high and they're feeling really down in the dumps and at the lowest possible level, then they really want help. But then some nice person will lend them some money or give them some P and they're back up again," Eddie added.

Police were also taking a more nuanced approach to methamphetamine, Thames Community Officer acting Sergeant Gareth Carter said. "The Police a number of years ago looked into the reasons why things are occurring - they call it the 'eyes wide open' approach. So you're going into situations trying to establish the factors causing the harm," he said.

"That often involves liaising with our partners and non-profit groups such as the Baptist Church or the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). We have local drug and alcohol counselling services... in Thames we have the Manaaki Centre, Te Korowai [has] drug and alcohol counsellors as well as mental health services."

The one thing everyone agreed on was the need to work together.

"I think a social audit is really important - what resources have we got available in our communities?" Paora said.

"Having everybody at the table and working out what is going to be best for the Thames community - housing, MSD, mental health, Police, local government and health care, family harm providers - together they can have much more of a wraparound approach," Vicki said.

"We're not going to arrest our way out of this. We need a combined approach and combined solution."

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ADVERTISING FEATURE

Thames dux hopes to inspire change

By DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

Naomi Hinton's main focus in her school studies was "just doing the best I could". It's what makes her recent accolade a master stroke.

The 18-year-old Thames High School student was "extremely surprised" when she was awarded the school's highest honour of dux for 2025 on October 29 at the schools prizegiving, she told *The Profile*.

"There are so many incredibly skilled and intelligent people in my year, so I wasn't expecting my efforts to be recognised in such a huge way with so many others to acknowledge."

The award winner said she was also happy she achieved first in four out of five of her classes: art, drama, English and psychology.

Naomi also received the Furth cup for Performing Arts - Drama, the Mackwell Ovation Trophy for outstanding contribution to Performing Arts and the Business One Trophy for outstanding dedication and commitment in art.

"So getting trophies and dux made prizegiving such a night to remember," she said.

It felt like an achievement for her current self in the moment, she said - "and for the little kid I was, who always tried so hard to do well in school".

As part of her dux award, Naomi said she gratefully received the



Thames High dux for 2025 Naomi Hinton celebrates with mum, dad, friends and family.

Photos: SUPPLIED

Pak'nSave tertiary study award of \$800. "That money will go towards buying the necessary things I need to study at university."

"I hope that my achievement of dux will improve my chances in getting into the university I choose and getting scholarships to assist my future studies," she said.

The academic and arts student said she planned to have a gap year and then continue her psychology and art studies.

"During this gap year I'm going to put some of my paintings up for sale and open commissions, as well as getting work experience and doing some extra courses on-line."

Something significant that marked the prizegiving was when students and peers of Naomi performed a haka for her.

"Receiving a haka was the biggest honour I could've asked for. The energy within haka is

enough to make me tear up without fail every time I see one, and then having one performed for me? It's something I will remember and hold closely for a very long time," she said.

"Thank you to Whaea Rawinia and the Thames High School kapa haka group for organising that."

The high achiever didn't get to this place without any hurdles.

"I have two chronic illnesses that affect every part of my life, includ-



ing school. I've had a couple of years to work with this diagnosis, but I will always run into problems," she said.

Naomi lives with postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS) and fibromyalgia.

"The main symptoms from these illnesses that affect my school life are fatigue, pain, dizziness and brain fog, but there are a lot of other symptoms too," she said. "I have to be fair to myself and be proud of each achievement, big or small, that I've made this year despite the challenge."

The support and encouragement from friends and family was something the dux winner said she was grateful for.

Naomi's hope was that people would remember her as a creative person who always aimed to improve, she said.

"[I hope] that it'll inspire people to keep making a change and express themselves freely, in whatever way seems fit."

Meanwhile, Pallary Rous received the Proxime Accessit to dux award.

Te Kura Tuarua o Te Kauaeranga

Kia kōtahi ai te piki ake, kia ikeike rawa ki te taumata

Thames High School

We grow together to achieve ones true potential

SPORTING SUCCESS

CONGRATULATIONS
FFIN OWEN

Ffin Owen (Year 12) has been accepted into the Rugby League Excellence Programme at Redcliffe State High School in Queensland, Australia, for 2026. This is an outstanding opportunity for Ffin to further his passion and talent for Rugby League – a sport he has shown exceptional commitment to through consistent effort, determination, and hard work on and off the field.

CONGRATULATIONS
SENIOR MIXED TOUCH TEAM

Senior Mixed Touch team is ready to shine at the NZSS Touch Nationals in Rotorua. They are THS Team of the Year: Thames Valley Secondary Schools Winners / Waikato Secondary Schools Regional Winners / Gold Coast Titans Queensland All School Touch Tournament - 17th overall out of 84 teams!

CONGRATULATIONS
WALTER WIKI
TYLER SMITH
CORTEZ HOGAN

Congratulations to Walter Wiki (Year 12), Tyler Smith (Year 10) Cortez Hogan (Year 11) who have been selected for the U17 Representative Squad for Coastline & Hauraki District Rugby League

CONGRATULATIONS
JESS RENDALL

Jess Rendall has been selected for the Waikato Valley U19 Women's Cricket team. Well done Jess and we look forward to hearing the results.

Jess was also awarded a Full Colour Sports Laurel for her Outstanding Achievement in Woman's Cricket for 2025 at our recent Sports Awards.

CONGRATULATIONS
TESS WATTS

Thames High School is proud to announce that we are one of 40 winners in Westpac's 'Nominate a Teacher and Help Us Donate Sports Equipment' competition.

Thanks to Netball Coach Volunteer, Kelly Carter's, who submitted an inspiring nomination recognising our Sports Coordinator, Tess Watts, incredible dedication to our school's sports programme.

Visit Thames High School website www.thameshigh.school.nz ~ Thames High School Events and Celebrations ~ Ph +64 7 868 8688

\$159k fine for exploitation

Sport, art, thriving kids the goal

A Paeroa business has been sentenced to pay a \$159,250 fine after pleading guilty to exploiting migrant workers and providing false information to Immigration New Zealand (INZ).

Dev Trading Ltd (DTL), trading as Super Clearance, also faces court-ordered reparation of \$18,684 and emotional harm payments of \$5000 per victim.

Labour Inspector calculations revealed more than \$158,000 of unpaid wages and entitlements, with \$140,000 paid to the victims before sentencing. "This is a good outcome for INZ and, most importantly, for the victims," national manager investigations Jason Perry said. "They have received significant reparation and emotional harm payments, and this case reinforces that exploitation will not be tolerated in New Zealand."

The company's directors, Chetna Dave and her husband Hitesh Dave, recruited two Indian nationals under the Accredited Employer Work Visa scheme and subjected them to unlawful employment practices. This included five charges of exploitation of temporary workers and two charges of provision of false or misleading information to INZ during an investigation and in an application to renew employer accreditation.

The investigation revealed the workers were required to work extremely long hours, in some cases up to 14 hours a day, seven days a

week, even working on public holidays - all without being paid their lawful entitlements or complying with holiday and leave provisions. One worker was unlawfully subjected to deductions disguised as loan repayments totalling over \$6000. DTL went to considerable lengths to deceive authorities, submitting false records and documentation to INZ, including fabricated rosters and pay slips and even completing employment modules on behalf of the workers. By doing so, the victims were denied the opportunity to learn about New Zealand law and their employment rights.

After a lengthy and detailed investigation, Ministry of Business, Immigration and Employment (MBIE) Immigration Investigators were able to uncover the deception and hold the offenders accountable in court. "The callous exploitation of vulnerable migrants and the deliberate provision of false information to INZ is not just unethical, it's criminal. We will continue to work with our partner agencies to hold those responsible to account," Jason said.

Prior to sentencing, DTL was sold and is now under new management.

DETAILS: Anyone with information about immigration fraud or migrant exploitation is encouraged to report it. Contact MBIE on 0800 200 088 or report anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

By ALICE PARMINTER, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

When Miller Avenue School's sports-mad new principal arrived on November 3 he was ready to play ball, kicking off his tenure with a winning play - playtime.

Derek Martin has a big vision for the Paeroa primary school.

"I want the school to thrive," he told *The Profile*.

"I want us to become even better at literacy and numeracy teaching. We need to be a centre of excellence, with a strong localised curriculum built around the needs of the local community."

However, many of these achievements were strengthened by work outside the classroom, he said.

"I certainly want to bring my love for sports and art into the school.

"We're going to do a lot more sport, we're going to do a lot more arts and cultural events, so that each kid finds something they love [and] is excited to come to school."

In the handful of weeks since starting, Derek has already established a popular lunchtime sports programme, engaging the students in touch and cricket training sessions.

"It's a little start, but next year we'll expand that quite early on," he said, adding he also had plans to install a basketball hoop, volleyball nets and pickleball facilities early in the new year.

"Many of our students love their sports and we will give them more and more opportunities as the year progresses," he told parents in the school newsletter.

"We will also look to run music,



New Miller Ave School principal Derek Martin.

Photo: ALICE PARMINTER

dancing and drama groups."

For now though, Derek is happy to finish out the year by finding his feet in the role, and getting to know the school community.

"Principals shouldn't just lock themselves in their office. They should get out and get to know the community," Derek said.

"Before I was appointed, I let the board know that that's what I would be doing. I have already let parents know that if they're at the school, they're most welcome to come in and see me."

Next year, Derek will be drawing on his more than 25 years of senior education management experience to begin making the school "very strong and grow again."

"I know I can make a meaningful difference and that's what drives me. That's what makes me come to work every day in a positive mood," he said.

"We've got extra classrooms. We've got the capacity to take more kids, and that's what I really want. The proof will be if we can keep growing and [have] happy kids, who are learning and achieving well."

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Commendation Award for rescue

A long-time Whangamatā community member who helped locate a missing kayaker in trouble in strong winds during a multi-agency offshore rescue last year has been recognised by Waikato Police for his efforts.

On October 12 last year, a group of three kayakers and a paddleboarder had set off from Whangamatā Beach on a short trip to explore the inshore islands.

But the group soon struck trouble in strong winds that began to push them further out to sea.

The paddleboarder managed to make it to shore and the alarm was raised.

As Police, Coast Guard, Surf Life Saving and Ambulance staff responded, Bryan Black, a life member of the Whangamatā Surf Lifesaving Club, also became aware of the rescue situation and offered to assist.

A recreational helicopter pilot, Bryan mobilised his helicopter from nearby and assisted in the search.

Taking to the air, he was able to soon locate one of the missing kayakers about 6.2 nautical miles offshore.

He relayed the co-ordinates of the kayaker to rescue services, who were able to swiftly locate and assist the missing kayaker.

Knowing the co-ordinates also allowed rescue services to track the location of the other kayakers who had been picked up by a private vessel on the water by coincidence.

On Saturday, November 29, Bryan was recognised with a District Commander's Commendation Award for his efforts on the day in offering his services at no cost to ensure the swift location of the missing kayakers.

Without Bryan's quick actions on the day, the result may have been different, Whangamatā Police Sergeant Will Hamilton said. "The ocean can be both beautiful and unforgiving, and in that moment,



Bryan Black is presented with a District Commander's Commendation Award. Photo: SUPPLIED

every second mattered," Will said.

"He spotted what others could have so easily missed — the faint outline of the stranded kayaker.

"Because of his courage and expertise, that person was brought home safely to their family."

Bryan was presented with the award by Acting District Commander Acting Superintendent Will Loughrin in front of family and friends.

He was also commended on his contribution to the community and support to rebuild the local surf lifesaving club.

Pepe Bridge contract signed

Another milestone has been reached in Tairua's \$22 million Pepe Stream Bridge replacement project, with a contract signed for the design, consenting and construction of the new bridge on State Highway 25.

Fulton Hogan will build the new two-lane bridge, working with engineering consultancy WSP to support the design and preparation of resource consent applications.


NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi's Darryl Coalter said construction was expected to start in spring, 2026, with traffic on the new bridge by December, 2027.

"This community has been very patient while we work through the procurement process since funding was announced last year."

The new bridge will replace the single-lane structure, built in 1943, and also the current wooden pedestrian bridge. A 3-metre wide shared path will be on the seaward side of the new bridge, and a 1.5-metre footpath on the western side. A pedestrian crossing with a safety refuge is planned near the Pepe Rd intersection.

A community information session is planned for late February to provide more details on the Pepe Bridge design, traffic management and other construction details. SH25 through Tairua will remain open while the new bridge is built and the old one demolished, with occasional brief closures at night.

Meanwhile, NZTA says traffic management staff will again be in place over the summer holidays to assist traffic over the old bridge.



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New dredges arrive in Kerepēhi, Waihi



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.

1922

At Kerepēhi a new type of dredge had arrived to advance the area's progress.

It was an American steel dipper type, with 1 1/2 yard bucket. The steam driven dredge was to be mounted on a wooden punt 80ft by 20ft and 6ft deep. The punt was not supplied with the dredge, and would have to be made.

The dredge would be able to dig ditches from 21ft to 49ft wide. Two others of this design - only oil driven and with steel punts - had been sent to the Waihi swamp.

These dredges were the first of their kind in New Zealand.

Over at Thames, residents were transfixed by the sea, watching a school of whales in the gulf for over two hours.

At about 3pm a number of pedestrians had observed black bodies rushing through the water at an alarming speed, with giant fronds of spray rising high in the air. All along Pollen St groups of people were standing watching the whales gamboling. At one time there must have been sever-



One of the modern dredging machines at work at Kerepēhi, 1922.
Photo: SUPPLIED

al hundred people observing the remarkable phenomenon. Glasses and telescopes were quickly found, and it was confirmed - they were whales; the dark rounded bodies could be plainly seen. After watching them for some considerable time, and counting several hundred spouts, a *Thames Star* reporter made investigations.

He climbed a high parapet, and with the aid of a powerful glass, could make out that the objects were not whales at all, but waves. Each succession of waves, grouped into three or four cones, with the black mud of the shallow water forming a centre, gave the impression of a body.

The wind then raised the spout-like spray. It seemed highly improbable that even if a few whales

did stray in, they would go in an endless circle as these appeared to.

Men long acquainted with the gulf later said that the phenomenon was only seen when certain conditions prevailed. There must be a heavy easterly sea running, sending considerable movement up the gulf. Then the rivers must be high and the wind in the right quarter. One man said that years ago these black bodies - caused by the mud being swept up in a regular contour by the wave - were known as Captain Jones's whales, an astonishing hoax by the sea.

At Waihi, the Federal Band was trying very hard to secure a new euphonium instrument to replace their present one, which had been a disappointment since it was first

received by the band several years previously. The band intended playing some selections at the Waihi football match on the Recreation Ground, and with the kind permission of the Waihi Rugby Union took up a special collection in aid of purchasing the horn-like brass instrument.

Meanwhile, Paeroa's unsightly telephone wires were now no more with the installation of an aerial metallic cable telephone system.

The offensive numerous wires were done away with to a large extent, and in several places there was just one cable. The work had been in progress for more than 12 months and there were now 144 lines connected with the Paeroa telephone exchange.

Chris' Quiz

Weekly quiz compiled by Chris Parminter

1. What is the chemical symbol for water?
2. What nationality is Michael Flatley, the creator of Irish Dance shows such as *Lord of the Dance*? a) US American, or b) Irish?
3. In New Zealand, is the month of December Daylight Savings time or Standard time?
4. Historically a squire acted as an attendant to a person with which title? a) Lord, b) King/Queen, or c) Knight?
5. What is the state capital and largest city in the state of Massachusetts?
6. The World War II Battle of Guadalcanal was fought on and around the island of Guadalcanal, which is in which ocean? a) Atlantic, b) Indian, or c) Pacific?
7. When the 9/11 terrorist attacks occurred in New York on the 11th September 2001, what day of the week was it in New Zealand?
8. Which main character in the TV sitcom *Friends* was a paleontologist?
9. The British Empire Games, which were last held in Auckland in 1950, were replaced by which regular four-yearly multi-sport event, the next of which is to be held in Glasgow in 2026?
10. Who wrote the play *Romeo and Juliet*?



ANSWERS: 1. H₂O; 2. a) US American (though his parents were Irish); 3. Daylight Savings time; 4. c) Knight; 5. Boston; 6. c) Pacific; 7. Wednesday (12th September 2001); 8. Ross Gellar; 9. The Commonwealth Games; 10. William Shakespeare.

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Ella McCay (115 mins) M. All-new comedy about the complicated politics that arise when an idealistic young woman's career clashes with her chaotic family life. Starring Jamie Lee Curtis, Woody Harrelson, etc.

Twiggy (95 mins) M. Starring Paul McCartney, Brooke Shields, Twiggy, Stella McCartney, Joanna Lumley, Dustin Hoffman, Sienna Miller. An intimate, star-studded dive into the birth of an icon, and everything that followed. A look at the life of the greatest it-girl of all time. The first time the icon has told her story first-hand.

How the Grinch Stole Christmas (1/2-price tickets sponsored by Raine & Horne) (105 mins) PG. The Grinch (Jim Carrey) decides to ruin Christmas for the citizens of Whoville. Joined by his dog, Max, he comes down from his mountaintop home and sneaks into town to swipe everything holiday-related from the Whos.

Wicked: For Good (138 mins) PG. The final chapter of the witches of Oz. Elphaba, now demonised as The Wicked Witch of the West, lives in exile, hidden within the Ozian forest while continuing her fight for the freedom of Oz's silenced animals and desperately trying to expose the truth she knows about The Wizard.

Pike River (131 mins) M. Melanie Lynskey and Robyn Malcolm star as two ordinary women who stand up and take on the government, justice system and a company after the 2010 Pike River Mine explosion.

Christmas closure: The cinema will be closed from Monday 15 December to Friday 2 January. Thanks very much for your support during 2025. We look forward to bringing you a wonderful selection of films in 2026.

Kids' movies in January: We have the new The SpongeBob Movie and Zootopia 2 starting on 3 January and Pets on a Train starting on 15 January. We'll be open every day during the school holidays.

Adults' movies in January: See the 'Coming Soon' page of our website. We start with Song Sung Blue. Based on a true story, two down-on-their-luck musicians form a joyous Neil Diamond tribute band.

Scott Simpson

MP for Coromandel

Contact me anytime

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Christmas gifts and good eats

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Festive season fun in the Hauraki-Coromandel

It's that festive time of year just before everyone and everything hits the pause button. People and families across the Hauraki-Coromandel will be getting in the swing of things with gatherings and luncheons, setting up decorations, and looking for gifts to pop beneath the Christmas tree. You don't have to leave the region to find a great meal or a special gift for their loved ones. That's because *The Valley Profile's* Christmas Gifts and Good Eats feature is the go-to guide for all the hot-spots in the Hauraki-Coromandel for gift options and a delicious bite to eat. Whether it's a piece of furniture or something for the home, the treat of a massage or some gifts and hardware - there's something for everyone. There's even a place to get decor and pieces for the garden, music tuition or a tasty meal. Take the time to browse through the Christmas Gifts and Good Eats feature for all the top places to go this festive season.





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Calling all rising rockstars

A lifelong love of music is what inspired Kristian Bennett to start his itinerant music school: Rapid Rockstar Music Academy.

The academy director and tutor, who is a multi-instrumentalist, producer, session musician and has toured the world with various bands, told *The Profile* "music has gifted me so many wicked experiences".

"It's taken me across the world, allowed me to perform for massive audiences, tiny schools and everything in between."

It's a passion he now poured into his work, hoping to open the same doors for others, he said.

The Academy operates as an independent music programme that partners with primary schools. The Paeroa musician said his work in high schools highlighted how many students loved music but didn't have the foundations to study at that level.

His goal is to focus on primary schools to help foster musical ability, and as they get older, this will develop opportunities and experiences for students throughout the Thames Valley and Waikato.



That's where Rapid Rockstar Music Academy comes in. "We're currently teaching at a number of schools across the region," he said. "While we teach on the school site, parents/caregivers handle enrolment fees directly with us. We currently offer one-on-one and group lessons for guitar, bass, drums, and ukulele."

"Our package includes a qualified tutor and a curriculum designed to develop musicianship, creativity and performance confidence. We've already had three showcases at schools in the last few weeks and the kids smashed it."

DETAILS: For schools or parents with students eager to learn an instrument and get into musical performance - contact Kristian Bennett at info@rrma.co.nz.



Directors of Rapid Rockstar Music Academy Kristian and Chevarna Bennett.
Photo: DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA



Rapid Rockstar Music Academy

Do you want to rock out on the guitar?
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We offer fun, engaging tuition in guitar, bass, drums, and ukulele, and we're currently teaching in primary schools throughout the Thames Valley — with plans to expand into more schools in 2026.

Contact Kristian at info@rrma.co.nz for more info, or scan the QR code to fill out our interest form.

If you have a child keen to learn, we'll be in touch!

Is it anxiety — or is it just anticipation?

OPINION



By MICHAEL WILKES

Have you ever noticed how similar anxiety and anticipation can feel?

Right now, as I'm writing this, I'm loading up the truck for a four-wheel-drive trip for my birthday.

And my body's firing off all these signals — my stomach's in knots, my heart's beating faster, and my brain's racing

through a million "what ifs." What if we get stuck? What if something breaks? What if this trip's a disaster?

But at the same time, I'm buzzing.

I'm pumped for the adventure ahead.

And that's the thing — the physical sensations of anxiety and anticipation can feel almost identical.

Our heart rate spikes. Our palms sweat.

Our thoughts start firing faster than normal.

The difference isn't what's

happening in our body — it's what's happening in our mind.

Sometimes, we mistake anticipation for anxiety and end up holding ourselves back.

We feel those butterflies, assume something's wrong, and bail out.

But often, the very thing we're "nervous" about is actually something we deeply care about — something that could grow us, stretch us, or even lead to something beautiful.

Think about it: Giving a speech.

Starting that side hustle

you've been dreaming about.

Asking someone out.

Changing jobs.

Saying "yes" to an adventure you've never tried before.

If we call it anxiety, we pull away.

If we call it anticipation, we lean in.

The story we tell ourselves about that feeling changes everything.

I reckon the next time you feel your stomach flip and your heart race, stop and ask yourself:

"Am I actually in danger... or

am I excited?"

Because here's the truth: so many of the things that scare us are also the things that grow us.

And sometimes, the only difference between fear and freedom is the name we give that feeling.

Michael Wilkes is a youth worker with Thrive Trust, supporting mentoring and resilience programmes across Thames and Paeroa. To support his local youth work or follow stories and insights, find him on social media @michaelwilkes.kiwi. Enjoy these articles? Grab his book *The Unschooled Life* at michael-wilkes.kiwi.

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Festive styling is all about creating warmth, atmosphere, and moments of delight at home (or your bach!) - and at Flowers on Pollen, we're embracing a look that's both elegant and naturally inspired.

For this table setting, we've taken our Christmas centrepiece and reimagined it paired with sculptured candles.

Textures of cypress and cones bring a seasonal woodland feel, grounding the look in nature while still feeling contemporary.

To add a little magic, we've styled the table with our light-up dandelion

trees, and starburst garlands, casting a gentle twinkle that elevates the space - perfect for dining rooms, living spaces, consoles, or anywhere that needs a festive touch.

Each place setting includes one of our Tippl cocktail infusion bonbons, ready for guests to enjoy or take home as a thoughtful favour.

It's a simple way to make the table feel fun and celebratory.

We're also showcasing one of our favourite new arrivals: sandwax candles, which allow you to create a candle in any vessel - even a water-filled vase.

Our festive pedestal version ties into the elements of the floral design and invites creativity in holiday styling.

To finish, we've added our felt mini wreaths and moss-filled baubles for a fresh, textural twist.

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Santa season

Sunshine and good vibes reined across the Hauraki-Coromandel as Santa made the first of his official holiday season appearances. First up was the Paeroa Santa Parade on December 6, followed by the Thames Santa Parade on December 7, and Christmas at the Lake in Waihi's Gilmour Lake Reserve on December 8. ALICE PARMINTER, DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA and TERESA MAXWELL joined the crowds of festive merry-makers.



Santa's first stop was Paeroa for the Kiwi Christmas-themed parade.



Micah, Elise and Macie catch a pony ride at Waihi's Gilmour Lake.

Photos: VALLEY PROFILE



The Kerepehi Brass Band marched their way through all three events.



Basking in the summer sun in Paeroa.



Central Kids Paeroa on their cheerful float.



Cohen and Maggie McDonald visit Santa in Waihi.



Santa's littlest helper at the Thames Parade.



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On the Land

Artificial Intelligence in farming – is AI a yay or a nay?



By Dr Greg Lindsay
BVSc, Franklin Vets,
Kōpū

With technology advancing at a pace not seen for some time, it’s easy to tune out and let it all happen around you. Absolutely... life will go on; the grass will grow, the cows will milk, and the sun will continue to rise and set (we hope!). But what opportunities are you missing out on?

Artificial intelligence is still largely a foreign concept to many of us. Beyond AI-generated videos of Will Smith eating spaghetti or rabbits jumping on trampolines, we don’t really understand what it is, how it works, and, most importantly, what it could do for us!

Modern New Zealand dairy farmers are tasked with a huge amount of compliance paperwork, performance reviews, and data-based decision-making.

It is here that I feel there is a huge opportunity to leverage the power of AI to complete these ‘office tasks’ more efficiently, allowing you to get back outdoors to what you enjoy doing!

While AI may seem a complex and daunting place to play, it is important to start doing just that.

Playing with AI tools (Copilot, Chat-GPT, etc) and familiarising yourself with how to make requests to complete and perform tasks.

Often it is as simple as feeding the tool some information (i.e., a copy of your dairy records or spreadsheet of your herd profile alongside sire options) and asking it to provide you answers to a specific question – i.e. “from the lists provided, allocate a sire and semen type to each cow based on these rules...”

AI may not provide all the answers in the

first instance, but you can repeat the process and refine your requests until you’re happy with the output.

The key thing is to be bold, experiment and play.

Take some time to consider the office tasks that keep you off the farm and ask yourself if there is an opportunity to automate the process or at least part of it.

Start small, creating rosters or writing farm policy documents, perhaps?

AI won’t replace farmers, but farmers who use AI may outperform those who don’t.

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On the Land

The 12 pests ruining Christmas for farmers

Pine trees and deer might stir up warm feelings of festive joy for many Kiwis, but for farmers they represent mostly cost, destruction and heartache.

That's why Federated Farmers has launched a new campaign, swapping *The Twelve Days of Christmas* for *The Twelve Pests of Christmas* to highlight the most troublesome farm pests.

Spokesperson on pest issues Richard Dawkins said the campaign was about raising awareness of New Zealand's growing pest problem and hopefully spurring some action. "Sure, we're taking a cheeky and playful tone with our messaging, but this is a serious issue that needs some urgent attention from the Beehive.

"These pests and weeds aren't just a minor nuisance; they're an economic and environmental crisis causing serious problems for farmers and conservationists.

"They're spreading disease, destroying native forests, killing native birds, chewing through farmer's pasture, and in some cases eating newborn lambs - it's absolutely devastating."

To highlight the problem, Federated Farmers has booked a large digital billboard outside the Beehive and will feature a new pest each day in the lead-up to Christmas. "Unfortunately, these pests are out of sight and out of mind for most New Zealanders, running rampant through farms and forests, not cities and suburbs," Dawkins said. "That's why we



NAUGHTY LIST: Wild pigs are the first to feature on the '12 Pests of Christmas' billboard near the Beehive. Federated Farmers' 12 pests aren't just giving farmers a very un-merry Christmas - they're killing the mood all-year long. Photo: SUPPLIED

wanted to put them up in bright lights in central Wellington - to make politicians and the public really sit up and take notice."

New Zealand's pest problem was getting worse by the day and a co-ordinated national pest management plan was needed to protect our farms, forests and biodiversity, he said. "Pests are costing farmers hundreds of millions of dollars every year in lost pasture, damaged fences and stock losses - but there is a large cost to indigenous biodiversity too.

"And the problem is only getting worse. New Zealand's pest control systems are severely underfunded and too fragmented to do the job

properly.

"Responsibility is scattered across DOC, regional councils, MPI, OSPRI and others, but there is no single lead agency with overall responsibility - so we keep going backwards. We're calling for a national pest strategy that unites all the main players under one co-ordinated plan covering all species and land tenures."

Dawkins said most urban New Zealanders would be horrified if they saw the true scale of the pest problem facing farmers and conservationists. "For example, I'm well aware of many farmers - like those in the Lawrence area of Otago - who are losing large num-

bers of newborn lambs to feral pigs coming out of forestry blocks. It's terrible stuff."

Other pests on Federated Farmers' naughty list include wilding pines, possums, feral deer, feral goats, wild cats, wallabies, rabbits, and Canada Geese.

Dawkins hoped the *The Twelve Pests of Christmas* campaign would spark some serious conversations about the issue. "If we can get everyday New Zealanders talking about our national pest problem as they stand around a barbeque drinking a beer this summer, then we've done our job.

"And if we can get ministers talking about the issue around the

Cabinet table, that's even better, because they're who we need to step up and sort this out.

"Farmers are doing their bit - trapping, shooting, poisoning, fencing, clearing, monitoring, you name it - but this can't be solved farm by farm. A national problem of this scale requires a national solution - but that will require much more coordination, funding and leadership."

Federated Farmers' *The Twelve Pests of Christmas*:

On the first day of Christmas, my neighbour sent to me: bush pigs rooting in the field; On the second day of Christmas, my neighbour sent to me: 2 wall-abies; On the third day of Christmas, my neighbour sent to me: 3 wild deer; On the fourth day of Christmas, my neighbour sent to me: 4 kill-er cats; On the fifth day of Christmas, my neighbour sent to me: five wilding pines; On the sixth day of Christmas, my neighbour sent to me: 6 chewing goats; On the seventh day of Christmas, my neighbour sent to me: 7 T-B possums; On the eighth day of Christmas, my neighbour sent to me: 8 rab-bits breed-ing; On the ninth day of Christmas, my neighbour sent to me: 9 Can-a-da geese; On the tenth day of Christmas, my neighbour sent to me: 10 ducks de-destroy-ing; On the eleventh day of Christmas, my neighbour sent to me: 11 koi carp swim-ling; On the twelfth day of Christmas, my neighbour sent to me: 12 rats a-gnaw-ing.



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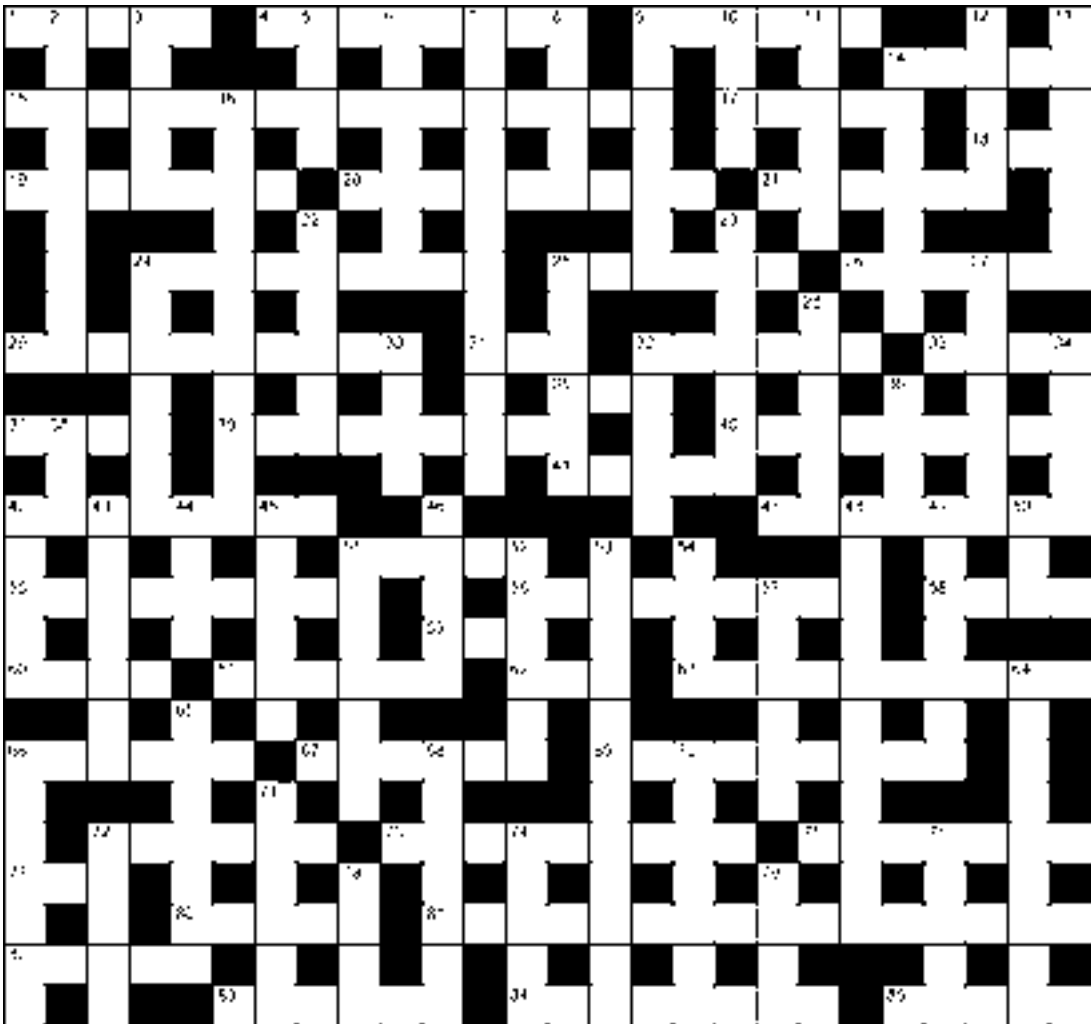
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7	4	3	8	9	5	1	6	2

250

23 Body organ (7)
24 Flier (7)
25 Disquiet (6)
27 Ill-defined (7)
28 Get even (6)
30 Zilch (4)
32 Pass on (5)
34 Gave medicine to (5)
36 Corrosion (4)
38 Meadow (3)
42 Spin (5)
43 Iterates (7)
44 Church recess (4)
45 Clans (6)
46 Vegetable (5)
48 Group of islands (11)
49 Futile (7)
50 Sheep (3)
51 Give up all hope (7)
52 Printing method (6)
53 Sycophantic (12)
54 Carpenter's cutters
 (4)
57 Court game (6)
64 Doorsill, entrance (9)
65 Muted (7)
66 Rapture (7)
68 Area on golf course
 (7)
70 One with
 revolutionary ideas or
 opinions (7)
71 Yearbook (6)
72 Bus station (5)
74 Dog tether (5)
76 Let down (5)
78 Mountains (4)
79 Astound (4)



DOWN: 2 Molars, 3 Lying, 5 Owns, 6 Tribute, 7 Deters, 8 Ocean, 9 Hothead, 10 Stab, 11 Ocelot, 12 Fable, 13 Find out, 14 Stirrer, 18 Classified, 23 Pivot, 24 Seaside, 26 Hectare, 27 Buffalo, 29 Meander, 30 Finish, 31 Beret, 32 Persia, 34 Seer, 36 Ready, 38 Pedal, 40 Weak, 45 So far, 46 Reeking, 47 Debt, 48 Estate, 49 Loyal, 50 Glaring, 52 Cornflakes, 53 Explode, 54 Eyelet, 55 Astound, 56 Drake, 57 Afro, 62 Tepid, 67 Nosegay, 68 Rigging, 70 Liaison, 72 Chianti, 73 Enigma, 74 Carted, 75 Evicts, 76 Elver, 78 Aroma, 80 Opium, 82 Heal, 83 Knee.

ENTERTAINMENT

Music club launches Waihi Christmas fundraising debut

A Friends Place, a Waihi community music club, is preparing to take its talent from the rehearsal room to the public stage in support of local essential services. The club - made up of musicians and singers of all ages - has formed a smaller performance group with the goal of raising funds to ease financial pressures across the district. The group's first trial event will take place at the Waihi Library on Rosemont Rd, Tuesday, December 16, from 1pm to 3pm. Held in collaboration with Waihi Library which is providing the venue, Hato Hone St John will be receiving any donated money for much-needed lifesaving equipment for ambulance restocking and depot supplies. Visitors are invited to enjoy the Christ-

mas-themed performance, with organisers asking patrons to avoid standing directly in front of the musicians to ensure a safe, congestion-free environment. Loose-change donations will be collected during the event, and St John information brochures will be available for those wishing to learn more about the organisation's work. "We would like all donators to feel they are also collaborators in this new initiative, and thank them for their much needed donations and community spirit," the event organisers said. "We look forward to seeing you on the day." **DETAILS: A Friend's Place, performing at the Waihi Library in Rosemont Rd on Tuesday, December 16, 2025 from 1pm to 3pm.**



Some members of A Friends Place Music Club.

Photo: SUPPLIED

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BOOKSHOP 1906

Book Reviews

Read
Play
Give

The Mushroom Tapes by Helen Garner, Chloe Hooper and Sarah Krasnostein
The Mushroom Tapes brings together three renowned writers of true crime: Helen Garner, Chloe Hooper and Sarah Krasnostein. This is an extraordinary true crime book like no other, a record of the writers' private conversations about their impressions from inside the courtroom. They explore the gap between the certainties of the law and the messiness of reality, their own ambivalence about the true crime genre, and all that remains unknowable about Erin Patterson. The authors track the story of Erin Patterson's preliminary hearings and trial, join the media scrum at the Latrobe Valley Law Courts, sleep over in Morwell and spend countless hours in fervent discussion of the case and the themes it raises: love, hate, jealousy, revenge, marriage, money, mycology and murder. A fascinating read, sometimes the truth is stranger than fiction!

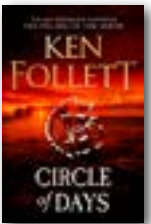


of Days invites you to join master storyteller Ken Follett in exploring one of the greatest mysteries of our age: Stonehenge.

Nourish by Chelsea Winter
Nourish is a welcomed return to hearty, well-loved classics from Chelsea. A return to meat, eggs, dairy and fish. A joyful return to what made Chelsea's food a household favourite - now reimagined with balance and a deeper intention to truly nourish. Inside you'll find soul-warming meals with every recipe infused with Chelsea's signature magic: mouthwatering flavour, reliable results, simple steps, clever tips and flexible swaps. With a huge range of gluten-free and dairy-free options clearly marked throughout, *Nourish* makes it easy to cater for a variety of dietary needs - without compromising on taste. From delicious, practical dinners to sensational sweets - and even a new chapter on easy, food-based home remedies - *Nourish* is here to guide and uplift. These honest, sustaining recipes are nutritious, family-friendly, and made to be shared. This isn't just a cookbook. It's a trusted kitchen companion that will leave you feeling inspired, empowered - and, as always, like a legend in your own kitchen.



Circle of Days by Ken Follett
From the master of epic fiction comes the deeply human story of one of the world's greatest mysteries: the building of Stonehenge. Seft, a talented flint miner, walks the Great Plain in the high summer heat, to witness the rituals that signal the start of a new year. He is there to trade his stone at the Midsummer Fair, and to find Neen, the girl he loves. Her family live in prosperity and offer Seft an escape from his brutish father and brothers, within their herder community. Joia, Neen's sister, is a priestess with a vision and an unmatched ability to lead. As a child, she watches the Midsummer ceremony, enthralled, and dreams of a miraculous new monument, raised from the biggest stones in the world. But trouble is brewing among the hills and woodlands of the Great Plain. But as drought ravages the earth, mistrust grows between the herders, farmers and woodlanders - and an act of savage violence leads to open warfare . . . Truly ambitious in scope, *Circle*



Taniwha by Gavin Bishop
The amazing Gavin Bishop brings us a monster-sized book about the mythical monsters of Aotearoa! Award-winning weaver of stories Gavin Bishop retells a variety of tales about the taniwha of Aotearoa, from the guardians who accompanied waka voyages to present-day inhabitants of the whenua and moana. Taniwha are all around us. They are good at hiding or changing their shape. They can be very tricky. If you want to meet one, you have to know what to look for and where to look. Describing how the landscape was shaped, and exploring relations between Māori and the sometimes friendly, but more often terrifying, supernatural creatures, these traditional stories are taken to a new level of spooky visual splendour.



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Whānau Day fun

The rain didn't stop people and whānau from heading to Whānau Day Out at the Paeroa War Memorial Hall on November 19. The event, hosted by Te Korowai Hauora O Hauraki in collaboration with Hauraki District Council, provided a day of fun and interaction with local community groups and health and social services together in one space. There were lots of stalls to visit, spot prizes and activities for tamariki and adults to enjoy and plenty of opportunities to connect with people from the community. Reporter **DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA** captured some of the moments.



Robert Butler-August snaps up the prizes.



Lesley Madgwick of Thames, left, and Nyvonne Krause from Caring Families.

Photos: DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA



Pam and Alison from Hauraki CAB.



Rebecca Short and Toia Wihongi.



Nicola Te Moananui, left, and Christina Castle.



Jess Lourie, Julie Stephenson, Gr8 Job Hauraki.

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THAMES CROQUET

Thames Croquet Club held it's 119th Birthday celebration with a tournament on their lawns Beach Road Thames on Saturday 15 November. After a good day of competition 36 players and hosts from the Thames Croquet Club enjoyed afternoon tea followed by prize giving.



First division winners were Pat and John Flinn from Whangamatā. 2nd division winners were Jeanette Dyer from Claudlands 3rd division winners were Wendy Wilson and Graham Parsons from Thames. Photos below: Pat and John Flinn, Jeanette Dyer and Jenny Campbell, Graham Parsons and Wendy Wilson.



PAEROA CROQUET

Community spirit was alive and well at a recent Paeroa croquet tournament. On November 5, the Paeroa Croquet Club hosted a tournament between its club team and a Paeroa Probus club team, with the former taking out the win. The weather was "perfect" for the spectators, who also enjoyed a barbeque lunch and prizegiving, followed by the drawing of the raffles. Tournament organiser Noel Coventry had sought sponsorship from various Paeroa businesses for prizes and raffles, and wanted to thank the following



for providing funds: HG Leach & Co, Mike Walmsley, Coombe & Associates Ltd, The Paeroa Motel, Casa Mexicana Motel, N & M Coventry, Arkwrights Antiques, The Courtyard Café, Providence Pantry, Valley Funeral Services, Jokers Café, Earth Angel Magic, Sunnies Variety store, Country Dog Garden Centre, Amber Jacks, Agrisea, Just Plane Interesting, McHardies 100% Store and Unichem Paeroa Pharmacy. Funds raised went towards the Probus Club and The Croquet Club. The Probus Club team also wished to thank the Croquet Club for hosting the tournament for the second year.

CLASSIFIEDS - Deadline 12 noon Monday

Death Notices	Church Notices	For Rent	Auto Detailing	Situation Vacant	Handyman Services
<p>MARTIN, Wayne Bruce: Born July 11th 1951. Passed away December 4th 2025 peacefully after a long courageous battle with cancer. Loving husband of Lorraine. Cherished father of daughter Sheree and son-in-law Mike, son Haden and daughter-in-law De and son Brenden. Adored grandpa of Ava, Sebastian, Taj and Lily. Treasured great-grandpa of Elijah. You have left us all with loving memories that will be in all of our hearts forever. May you rest in peace.</p> 	<p>Waihi Assembly of God Church "Worship & Healing" 10am Sundays Scout Hall, Baker St, Waihi</p>	<p>\$475 pw located in Thames. 2 bedroom unit. Suits 2 people. Must be working. Brand new kitchen, brand new bathroom, off street parking. Beautiful sea views. If interested please contact Bret on 027 777 8332 or Pai 027 802 3371</p>	<div><p>TRON DETAILING</p><p>Your Car, Like New Again. We Come to You! Is your car looking a bit less than showroom fresh? Salt, sand, summer adventures... The Coromandel is beautiful, but it can take a toll on your vehicle. At Tron Detailing, we bring the shine directly to you, at your home, work, or holiday spot. We're a mobile service dedicated to protecting your investment and making your car a joy to drive again.</p><p>Why Choose Tron?</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mobile Convenience: We save you time. You relax.• Premium Products: We use professional grade, eco friendly products.• Precision & Care: Attention to detail you can see and smell.<p>Book your detail in the next 7 days and receive 15% OFF your first service!</p><p>Mention this ad when you book. Call or Text: 02041844788 Visit & Book Online: www.trondetailingnz.com</p></div>	<p>We are looking for 2 mechanics to join our team. A qualified car mechanic must have a WoF ticket & a motorbike mechanic. Some experience would be an advantage but training will be given to the right applicant. If you are reliable and a team player send your CV to miles@hpmotors.co.nz or ph 027 227 1121 for a chat.</p>	<div><p>THAMES HANDYMAN & BUILDING SERVICES Building, home maintenance & general gardening services Phone: Fleur or Crighton • 0273 913 283</p></div>
<p>REDDISH, Doris Mavis (nee Humphrey, formerly Hoyland): Passed away at home (following a short illness), surrounded by family, on 6th December, 2025. Loved wife of Brian. Loved mother of Ezra, mother-in-law of Trista, and Grandma of Elodie and Ebony. Loved sister of Pat, Michael, Colin, and the late Eric, Dennis and Cathy, and their families. A service to celebrate Doris will be held at the Salvation Army Citadel, 713 Pollen Street, Thames on Tuesday 16th December at 1pm, followed by private cremation.</p> <div></div>	<p>For Lease</p> <p>Yards for lease, Thames and Kopu. Suitable for trucks, vehicles or trade business base. Ph 027 440 7101</p>	<p>Trades</p> <div><p>FENCING CONTRACTOR Residential & Rural Retaining walls & more High quality workmanship Competitive prices Call Matt 021 1727 148</p></div>	<p>Painters</p> <div><p>HAURAKI REGIONAL PAINTERS Over 12 years experience, interior/ exterior. Refs available. Free quotes. Phone Graeme for all your painting needs. 020 485 1312</p></div>	<p>Piano Tuner</p> <div><p>Sharyn Clark Piano Tuner & Technician 'Fully Qualified' and Covering all areas of Hauraki and Coromandel M: 0274 485 089 sharynclark22@gmail.com</p></div>	<p>Situations Vacant</p> <div><p>Te Kura Tuarua o Te Kauaeranga Thames High School</p><p>Library & Resource Hub Coordinator Permanent Part-time (25 hours/week) Term Time Only</p><p>We are seeking a friendly, organised person to lead our library learning centre and resource hub. The role includes supporting reading, learning, study and research, helping maintain a calm and welcoming space for students, coordinating school devices and resources, and assisting with media and archive management (photos, displays, historical records). We are on a journey to ensure our valued library remain innovative and relevant, with scope for the role to evolve.</p><p>We are looking for someone who enjoys working with young people, is confident with digital tools, and can keep the hub running smoothly. Library, school, or administration experience is an advantage but not essential.</p><p>Hours: 8.15 am – 2.15 pm Full details: www.thameshigh.school/vacancies Applications close: Tuesday 22 December 2025 (4.00 pm)</p><p>We may begin interviewing suitable applicants as applications are received and may appoint before the closing date.</p></div>
<p>Church Notices</p> <div><p>Waihi Bible Chapel Ph. Num 021 522 668 Come read the Word. Learn Scripture (King James). You want the truth, it's all here. Come help us read and learn. Bible Study Wednesday nights 6pm</p></div>	<p>Gardening</p> <div><p>STUMP GRINDING. All sizes, all areas. Thames based. Ph 021 060 7659</p></div>	<p>Builders</p> <div><p>Reno's, decking, fencing. For free quote ph Phil 021 088 63559</p><p>Friendly licensed builder. 40 years exp. All aspects. No job too small. Ian 021 540 376</p></div>	<p>Storage</p> <div><div><p>STORAGE KOPU, PAEROA "New Units" Ph 027 440 7101 07 868 3033 Safe n Sound Storage www.safestorage.co.nz</p></div><div><p>Storage Unlimited 25 Ngati Maru Highway Kopu, Thames Clean, secure, dry Units available 7 x 3.6m and 7 x 5.5m Phone 07 868 9944</p></div></div>	<p>Te Ara Whakamana - Programme Coordinator (Fixed Term 2026) Teacher Aide Role Term-Time Only</p> <p>We are seeking a positive, organised Programme Coordinator for Te Ara Whakamana – Pathway to Empowerment in 2026. This homeroom-style programme supports taiohi through authentic, relevant learning, project-based activities, selected class participation, and workplace experiences.</p> <p>We seek someone experienced in working with young people who can build strong relationships, support foundation literacy and numeracy, coordinate engaging learning opportunities, and help craft personalised IEPs with students, whānau, and staff.</p> <p>Hours: 8.30 am - 3.30 pm Full details: www.thameshigh.school/vacancies Applications close: Tuesday 22 December 2025 (4.00 pm)</p> <p>We may begin interviewing suitable applicants as applications are received and may appoint before the closing date.</p>	
	<p>Handyman</p> <p>Handyman Services. Waihi and surrounding areas. Building maintenance and repairs. Mobile - Grant 027 333 8331. E-waihi105@gmail.com</p>	<p>Painters</p> <p>Professional roof painter. Mario Kerkhof 027 961 4055</p>	<p>PAPER DELIVERIES</p> <p>Although we endeavour to deliver our paper to everyone, sometimes we just cannot achieve this. If you are one of the few who did not receive your weekly paper, please note they are available here:</p> <p>NGATEA - Ngatea 4 Square, HDC Council Offices, Ngatea Post Shop, Z Petrol Station, Ngatea Purple Dairy PAEROA - Moores Caltex, Countdown, HDC Council offices, Takenote, Paeroa 4 Square, Paeroa Information Hub WAIHI - Maybelle Superette, New World, Toyworld/Takenote, Info Centre, Daffodil Dairy, Waihi Supervalve THAMES - Totara Veggie Shop, Mobil Kopu, Gull Service Station, Martina 4 Square, Bin Inn, Tararu Dairy, Queen St Mobil, Goldfields Mall, Pak'N'Save, Paper Power, Thames 4 Square, Carson's Bookshop, Thames Council Offices, Kauaeranga Store TURUA: Turua Dairy KEREPEHI: Kerepehi Dairy</p>		

SPORTS

Email your sports news, reports and photos to editor@valleyprofile.co.nz



Tridents receive the L&P Bowl, left, while Dylan Kirk (Pride) rips the flag off Wilson van der Veen (Tridents).

Flag football showdown

It was an unforgettable flag football showdown that took over the Paeroa Domain on November 16 - the L&P Bowl. The inaugural event of flag football, a non-contact, fast-paced version of American Football, saw the Tauranga City Tridents claim victory against the North Harbour Pride from Auckland, in four out of five divisions. The L&P Bowl, named tongue-in-cheek after the famous local soft drink, marked the first full-club bilateral between the two sides, with games played across men's, women's and legends (35+), U14, U12, and U10 divisions. The Tridents took out the overall honours, winning four series to one, with the Pride's U10s producing a strong showing to claim their division. More than 120 athletes took part in the day, including players from local club the Peninsula Pirates, who are helping establish and grow the sport across the Coromandel Peninsula. The event also included a milestone moment for the Pride, with long-time player Dylan Kirk celebrating his 100th game for the club, recognised by both teams at the after-match presentation. Peninsula Pirates President James Maurice said the event was another positive sign of flag football's expansion across the country.

"We're seeing flag football really take off around New Zealand, with schools and community clubs picking it up in more regions every year," he said. Tauranga City Trident president Alex Hatwell said the L&P Bowl was an exciting step forward for flag football in the region. "It was a fantastic day all round - great weather, great competition, and a brilliant turnout," he said. "This was our first interclub event of the season, and it was special to see every level of the club represented, from our Peewees right through to our Legends. "Flag football is growing quickly across New Zealand, and we're keen to keep building connections like this that strengthen the game for everyone." North Harbour Pride president Jeremiah Nonu said he praised both clubs for their commitment to collaboration and development. "It was an awesome event to be part of, and a real celebration of the game," he said. "Having Dylan's 100th game fall on this day made it even more meaningful. He's one of those players our juniors look up to. He is always leading by example and we hope that the pathways being built now will mean some of our younger players reach that same milestone one day."



More than 120 athletes are all smiles after a great day of football. Photos: SUPPLIED

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Boundary lines are indicative only



Kaiaua 1177c East Coast Road

Private and elevated with sea views

Rising across the foothills south of Kaiaua, this 56-hectare (more or less) landholding takes in sweeping views over the Firth of Thames and towards the Coromandel Ranges. With no main dwelling, you can shape the setting to suit your plans, with several elevated positions suited to a new build and supported by solid access. The block is balanced for grazing, with practical farm improvements and a dependable spring-fed supply. Weekends can shift between the Hauraki Rail Trail, the Waharau and Hunua Ranges, or time on the water just across the road. A place with scale, outlook, and room to create something enduring.

bayleys.co.nz/2630176

56.9692_{ha}

Tender (unless sold prior)
Closing 3pm, Wed 17 Dec 2025
96 Ulster Street, Hamilton
View 11-11.45am Wed 10 Dec
Karl Davis 0508 83 83 83
karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz
Connor Davis 027 496 4622
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Boundary lines are indicative only



Waitakaruru 108 Canal West Road

Versatile dairy holding with room to grow

Secure a flat 94-hectare (more or less) dairy unit supplying Open Country Dairy 95,000kgMS for 2025. A well-organised 20-a-side herringbone shed with 16-tonne silo leads a line-up of sheds, haybarns, a stand-off pad and a workshop. Council water, loam-over-clay soils, about 40 paddocks, strong fencing and a central race support steady daily flow. The 1960s three-bedroom home offers solid comfort for an owner-operator or staff. Close to Waitakaruru and Ngatea, with schooling, coast and major centres nearby, it blends productive farming with balanced living.

bayleys.co.nz/2630174

94.9_{ha}

Auction (unless sold prior) 11am, Thu 18 Dec 2025
96 Ulster Street, Hamilton
View by appointment
Karl Davis 0508 83 83 83 karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz
Sam Aislabie 027 429 5410
sam.aislabie@bayleys.co.nz
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Boundary lines are indicative only



Netherton 119 Wharepoa Road

A Hauraki Plains legacy - productive and proven

Opportunity before Christmas! A significant 241ha (more or less) dairy holding in the heart of the Hauraki Plains offering scale, infrastructure, and lifestyle appeal. Flat, fertile land with 146 paddocks supports around 600 cows producing over 207,000kgMS. Infrastructure includes a 43-aside herringbone cowshed, wintering barns, calf facilities, sheds, and staff accommodation. Around 90% of troughs and water systems are new. With council water, efficient effluent, and multiple dwellings, this high-performing farm offers proven production and long-term potential close to Ngatea, Hamilton, Auckland, and the Coromandel.

bayleys.co.nz/2630156

241.8506 ha

Tender (unless sold prior)
Closing 3pm, Fri 19 Dec 2025
96 Ulster Street, Hamilton
View by appointment
Karl Davis 027 496 4633
karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz
Sam Aislabie 027 429 5410

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Waitakaruru 376 State Highway 25

A well-placed dairy unit with scale and potential

Set across three titles with practical upgrades, this established dairy unit sits in a handy spot close to townships and favoured holiday areas. With the owner ready for their next step, it's well placed for someone to continue a proven operation. The farm spans 97 hectares (more or less) of flat land for efficient, straightforward management. A 20-side herringbone shed anchors the milking system, supported by extra shedding. Water is via metered council supply for reassurance in drier spells. A four-bedroom home keeps you close to the farm's daily rhythm. Just 9.3 kilometres from Ngatea, you're near strong schooling and key agricultural services. The farm will be sold on auction day.

bayleys.co.nz/2630173

97.3 ha



Auction (unless sold prior) 11am, Thu 18 Dec 2025
96 Ulster Street, Hamilton
Phone for viewing times
Karl Davis 0508 83 83 83
karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz
Sam Aislabie 027 429 5410
sam.aislabie@bayleys.co.nz

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Netherton 6520 Wilson Road (SH2)

Motivated vendors, acreage with income, so much to enjoy

This setting blends the ease of country living with space for a family to grow. Daily life fits naturally around school runs, stock work, and family routines. A grazing arrangement returning around \$648 per week provides a dependable income stream to help support the mortgage. There is plenty here: open living areas, spacious bedrooms, a rumpus room, broad windows for natural light, an expansive kitchen with a wetback log fire, manicured lawns, mature trees, a summer house, a private pool, and a floodlit tennis court, along with well-proportioned farm buildings. A standout location for excellent schooling and outdoor enjoyment.

bayleys.co.nz/2316278

9.4 ha



3



2



9



Asking Price \$1,399,000
View 11.30am-12pm Sun 14 Dec
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NEW LISTING



Kopu 74 Kanuka rise

Premium lifestyle opportunity with stunning views

Approximately 2.3 hectares (more or less) of beautifully positioned land, offering an exceptional blend of lifestyle, outlook, and character.

The property features a charming rustic shed, a welcoming entranceway, and an elevated, flat building site that captures sweeping views over the Firth and beyond. Scattered Kanuka and Manuka trees add natural charm and a sense of privacy, while still leaving plenty of open space.

A rare offering in a premium setting, ready and waiting for your dream home. Quite simply, one of the finest lifestyle sites in town.

bayleys.co.nz/2180894

2.3456^{ha}

Asking Price \$895,000
View by appointment
Robyn Cruickshank 027 308 7110
robyn.cruickshank@bayleys.co.nz
Karl Davis 027 496 4633
karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz
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NEW LISTING



Boundary lines are indicative only



Thames Courtyard Cafe, 710-712 Pollen Street

Dual-income investment in heart of Thames

Secure your foothold in Thames busy historic Grahamstown retail precinct with this versatile fully tenanted commercial property. Positioned on a commercially zoned 438sqm (more or less) site, this smart investment offers three income streams, anchored by two street front retail tenancies including a popular local café and Thames only music store, plus a spacious two-bedroom residential flat upstairs.

Currently returning \$52,535 net per annum Plus GST and Outgoings, this is a rare chance to secure an affordable multi tenanted small scale commercial holding right in the Thames town centre.

bayleys.co.nz/2180872

438^{sqm} 240^{sqm}

Asking Price \$775,000 + GST (if any)
View by appointment
Geoff Graham 021 733 430
geoff.graham@bayleys.co.nz
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Open Adult Champion Campbell Phillips with Shining N Stylish, left, and Rookie Champion Ingrid Jensen and Spirit of Aroha with the Maxine Roberts memorial trophy. Photos: GEORGINA LLOYD

Challenge returns in honour of founding rider

EQUESTRIAN

The Hauraki Western Riding Club's Western Up Triple Challenge returned this year on November 22-23 with special significance. The event, first held in 2024, was created by three friends who shared a passion for Western riding - Maxine Roberts, Annelies Resink, and Laurie Webb. The idea was born during a trip to Melbourne, where the trio attended the Australia's Greatest Horsewoman competition in the small town of Tatura. Inspired by the five-day showcase of skill and versatility, the friends decided

to bring a similar concept home. After a few planning sessions - and matching horseshoe tattoos - the Triple Challenge was launched. Maxine, who was battling cancer at the time, attended the first prize giving at the inaugural event in 2024 and thankfully got to see the idea come to fruition. Staying true to its origins, the event proudly celebrates its motto: three friends, three disciplines. Riders compete across a range of events, including the Obstacle Challenge, Ranch Riding Pattern, and Cattle Boxing, highlighting the versatility of

the Western horse and the human and horse partnership. Points were collated across all three disciplines to determine the overall winner. This year's Triple Challenge carries extra meaning, as sadly Maxine lost her battle with cancer in July. The event was held in memory of Maxine, whose love for Western riding, horses, and the riding club community left a lasting mark. This year, the Maxine Roberts Memorial Trophy was presented for the first time to the overall Rookie Champion, marking a heartfelt tribute to her legacy.

RESULTS
Lead Rein: 1st, Zadkeil Palmer and Jimmy; 2nd, Bryleigh Rendell and Ted; 3rd, Chloe Fraser and Rum; 4th, Irie Nicholson and Sonny. First Ridden: 1st, Skyla Inkster and Ellie; 2nd, Braytin Smith and Chester. Open Youth: Champion, Mara Gumbly and Rang; Res Champion, Lola Nicholson and Cinnamon. Beginner Adult: Champion, Alida Keukelaar and Delta; Res Champion, Kayla McCarthy and Stryker. Rookie: Champion, Ingrid Jensen and Spirit of Aroha; Res Champion, Tarita Smith and Chester. Open Adult: Champion, Campbell Phillips and Shining N Stylish; Res Champion, Kerri-Leigh Paterson and James.

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