



Just another stunning shot from Life on the Road NZ - Little Waipa Reserve.

This reserve is a great hang out for summer. It has a boat ramp, toilets, showers, rubbish and recycling bins and access to the Waikato River Trails. The Little Waipa trail is great for walking and biking and is a fairly easy section for families and people of all abilities.

BREAKING GROUND AT MARAETAI ROAD INTERMODEL BUSINESS PARK



A karakia (blessing) and sod turning took place at the Maraetai Road Intermodal Business Park on Wednesday 18 October to formally mark the start of the development.

Council's Mahu Armstrong alongside Kyle Amopiu from Raukawa and Louis Armstrong from Oranga Tamariki blessed the site, before Mayor Gary Petley and Councillor Kerry Purdy turned the first sod. Council's Economic and Community Development Manager Paul Bowden said a few words, acknowledging all the players involved:

- Council staff and Elected Members, both past and present.
- Partners - Raukawa, SWIPICs and the Cook Island Society.
- Consultants and contractors involved including Harrison Grierson, Gray Matter, Camex (who is the main contractor).

This project is jointly funded by Council and Kānoa, the Government's Regional Economic Development and Investment Unit. Kānoa granted the project \$3 million in May this year.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

After six and a half years of construction, it took just six and a half minutes for the first trainload of passengers to speed through the 2.6 km tunnel linking the Canterbury plains to the port of Lyttelton on 9 December 1867 - the first passengers to traverse the Lyttelton rail tunnel.

Construction of the tunnel was challenging from the start. The first firm contracted to do the work withdrew. The hardness of the volcanic rock and the need to find ways to ventilate and drain the tunnel resulted in delays. Hundreds of people also walked its length between Lyttelton and Christchurch for a day.

IN HOUSE

Produced in-house for South Waikato residents by the SWDC Communications Team.

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PUTĀRURU POOLS UPGRADE

The Putāruru War Memorial Pools saw several upgrades over the past couple of months and it is now ready for everyone to enjoy over the summer!

The upgraded works kicked off in September 2023, and took just over one month to complete.

The facility has received a new and improved kiosk, new perimeter fencing, an upgraded footpath that takes you directly to Glenshea Park and most importantly, a brand-new car park with line marking!

Tīrau Earthmovers did a fantastic job of moving and shaping the land to create a new, safe car park for everyone to enjoy when heading to the Putāruru Pools. Despite the heavy rain experienced over October and November, they managed to complete everything just before the doors opened.

The Putāruru Pools will also receive new lining for the bottoms of both pools at the end of summer 2024.

The Putāruru War Memorial Pools opened on Saturday 18 November and will run throughout the entire summer season.



SUMMER POOL HOURS

This year our hours and opening times may look a little different. This is largely due to the shortage in lifeguards available for summer. Unfortunately, our country is facing a nationwide lifeguard shortage and we are doing our best to get our team ready so everyone can enjoy their summer swims.

We feel very fortunate to be able to operate throughout the majority of the summer and we thank all of our pool users for their understanding and look forward to seeing you around to make a splash.

Putāruru Pools will open Saturday 18 November and Tīrau Pool will open on Saturday 2 December.

See the operating hours below:

PUTĀRURU POOLS

Term Time:

- Monday to Friday: 2pm-3pm Adult Swim & 3pm-6pm General Swim
- Saturday & Sunday: 12pm-6pm General Swim
- Monday & Wednesday: 6pm-6.45pm Adult Swim
- Tuesday & Thursday: 6pm-7.30pm Swimming Club

School Holidays:

- Monday to Sunday: 12pm-6pm General Swim
- Monday & Wednesday: 6pm-6.45pm Adult Swim
- Tuesday & Thursday: 6pm-7.30pm Swimming Club

TĪRAU POOLS

- Monday to Sunday: 1pm-6pm General Swim

SOUTH WAIKATO ARTISTS TO SHOWCASE THEIR TALENTS

The streets of the South Waikato are about to get a whole lot brighter with the addition of four more Chorus cabinet art murals.

Mayor Gary Petley says the Chorus Cabinet Art Programme supports artists to showcase their talents to the local community.

“We always look forward to partnering with Chorus through their Cabinet Art programme and this year we’re happy to say that, once again, we received high-quality designs.”

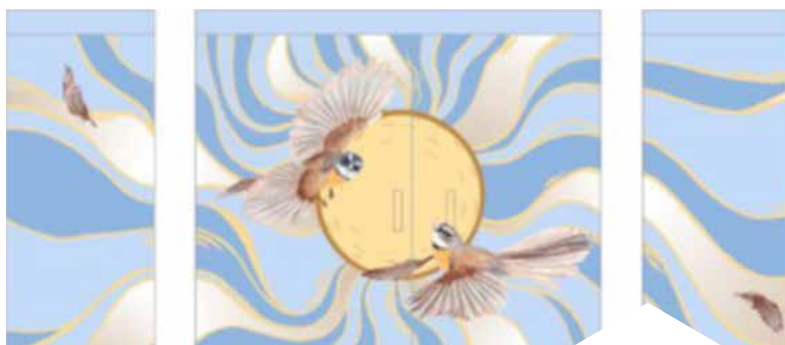
Designs chosen for this year’s murals include a Kowhaiwhai design that represents whānau, an artwork that acknowledges the work of healthcare professionals, two fantails playing under the sun, and Manu tukutuku – contemporary and traditional kites flying freely across the sky.

Chorus is pleased that the partnership with South Waikato District Council has been such a success.

Community Relations Manager Jo Seddon says the collaboration with the Council helps local artists bring artwork to the community.

“Our ongoing partnership helps us work with more local artists and bring their creativity to life,” she says.

Artists will be out painting their murals over the coming months, so keep an eye out for them.



MAYORAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED FOR 2024



South Waikato District Council is proud to announce the recipients of the 2024 Mayoral Scholarship Fund. Maia Putoko from Forest View High School and Shaun-Leigh Davey from Putāruru College were each awarded a \$10,000 scholarship towards their studies.

A proud Mayor Gary Petley attended the respective school's prize giving ceremonies where he made the announcement.

"The scholarship is Council's way of assisting our rangatahi to achieve their dreams and career aspirations. I was blown away by the calibre of applicants. Our youngsters have clearly put in some hard mahi this year and they can be very proud of what they have achieved."

A hearty congratulations to our two young wahine who rose to the top and competed against 16 other applicants. They can now reap the rewards of their mahi. Council received 18 applications this year, from Forest View High School, Tokoroa High School, Putāruru College and Matamata College. Applicants indicated interest in a range of degrees from science and technology to finance, education, sports and travel and tourism.

TESTIMONIAL

Here's what Ryan Hall, a former Mayoral Scholarship recipient had to say, "I would like to sincerely thank the South Waikato District Council for the last four years of financial support offered by the Mayoral Scholarship programme. Being the recipient of this scholarship has been an immense honour and has had an enormous impact on my academic path. My financial burden has been lessened, and my educational experience has been enhanced by the Council's dedication to helping local students. Being able to focus solely on my academics was made possible by not having to have a part-time job. I was able to devote all my time and energy to my courses, research, and extracurricular activities because of this undistracted focus, I feel as that my academic performance and grades have significantly improved which is a testament to the Council's continuous support.

"I am incredibly appreciative of the [Council's] vision and commitment to enabling students like myself to pursue higher education without being constrained by their financial situation. Their dedication to the community and building a better future for the region is evident in their investment in education. I am incredibly grateful that this scholarship has not only reduced my financial burden but also given me access to a world of academic opportunities, in which I am profoundly thankful."

Receiving the loveliest email from a one of our former Mayoral Scholarship recipients thanking Council for the scholarship support. See story alongside!

Having Sir Peter Leitch of Mad Butcher fame *like and comment* on one of our social media posts!

The South Waikato libraries have partnered with Code Club Aotearoa and launched Code Clubs in Tokoroa and Putāruru at the start of term four. It is fantastic to see our young people taking advantage of the opportunity to learn to code in a safe and fun environment. Computer code... not undercover covert spy stuff!

The Pool team has held several successful Water Wise sessions and are planning more over the summer period. Great news too is that these sessions are funded by Sport New Zealand's Tu Manawa – Waikato, hosted alongside SplashSave. The sessions are designed to teach our community how to be safe around water while addressing the concerning drowning statistics in our country.



Congratulations to the Tokoroa Fire Brigade that celebrated its 75th Jubilee recently. As part of the celebration, they opened the fire station up to the public, demonstrating just how easily a fire can start in a kitchen when water and hot oil mix and techniques to extract people from vehicles (pictured). Our tamariki had fun searching for quiz answers around the station. Huge appreciation to our fantastic business community for sponsoring over 200 spot prizes (!) - amazing support for local brigade. *A bit of history* - Tokoroa's original fire station in 1947 was situated on Logan Street, opposite the current Police Station. They moved to their current site in 1959. The old station became Tokoroa's first RSA.



WHAT'S HOT WHAT'S NOT

Did you know that many of the 'paper' disposable cups for coffee, tea, hot chocolate etc belong in the rubbish bin, not the recycling bin. These cups are not only made of paper and are not suitable for recycling. Did you also know that concrete slabs are not permitted in the red lid wheelie bin... we feel a little silly pointing this out...



BITTERSWEET CLOSURE OF TE PUNA BLUE SPRING TE WAIHOU WALKWAY

Te Puna (Blue Spring) / Te Waihou Walkway was officially closed on Monday 13 November 2023. The South Waikato District Council's Mahu Armstrong in collaboration with Joseph Kaponga from Ngāti Ahuru, Oranga Tamariki's Louis Armstrong guided by kaumatua koro Bo Makene performed karakia as the ceremony marked the official closure of the pathway for the next 12 months.

A rockfall in June made the Walkway impassable from the Leslie Road end. Since June, visitors have been using the Whites Road (SH28) carpark entrance to gain access to the Walkway, but this is causing an overflow of cars and significant traffic/pedestrian safety issues on a busy state highway.

Shane Anderson, South Waikato District Council's Acting Executive Manager - Delivery says that public safety is the reason for the Council's decision to close the Walkway.

"After the rockfall occurred we implemented immediate safety measures, and the Walkway was closed from the Leslie Road carpark entrance. We have subsequently decided to close the Walkway completely so Council and our partners can carry out a thorough assessment of the respective roles of stakeholders involved," he said. "It is important to establish ownership, land tenure and if they are still appropriate for the sustainable management of the area."

The good news is that the Walkway will re-open, but a lot of work needs to be done before that can happen. Council continues to work with landowners, Raukawa, the Department of Conservation and Waikato Regional Council on long term solutions.

We are confident that through this period of rest and revitalization, Te Puna (Blue Spring) will emerge more vibrant than ever before.

We have included a selection of frequently asked questions. If you would like to view the entire list, please visit Council's website or scan the QR code on the next page.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS...

1. Why has Council closed the Blue Spring Te Waihou Walkway?

A landslip at the Leslie Road end forced closure of that end. Closing Leslie Road end drove increased traffic volumes to the Whites Road end. Overflow parking onto the immediate section of a state highway is causing extremely dangerous situations for members of the public and other vehicle occupants. *There is no public access to Blue Spring - access over private property may be considered trespassing by the landowner.*

2. When will the Blue Spring re-open?

We anticipate opening the Walkway and Blue Spring by November next year. This may be sooner but we didn't want to over promise and then have to extend the closure.

3. Can we still swim at the Whites Road end?

Yes. Swimming at the Whites Road end is still permitted. No one is allowed access to the Walkway. The Whites Road carpark will remain open. This is owned by Waka Kotahi, not Council.

4. How much does this cost ratepayers?

The cost to close the entire walkway is minimal and consists mostly of fencing, signage and some public messaging. Other security options such as traffic management may be considered if visitors continue to ignore the no entry restrictions. This kind of security costs approximately \$13,000 per week, depending on the level employed.

5. Will Te Waihou Walkway remain permanently closed?

No, Council along with stakeholders has every intention of re-opening this track once the complexities are resolved and an updated and effective management plan in place.

6. Why hasn't Council started the slip remediation work ?

Three reasons. 1, Council has no budget for this work. 2, process and expertise – stabilising a cliff is a complex and intricate process, Council would need to secure experts as we don't have this expertise in house. 3, Council does not own this stretch of land.

Council is investigating options to relocate this section of walkway from landslip area.

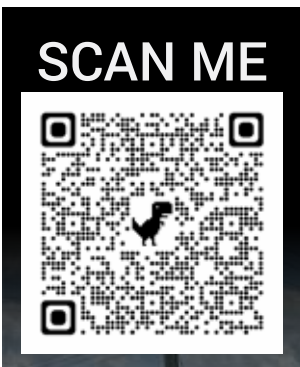
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS, CONTINUED...

7. What solutions has Council found to the problem?
Council is investigating several possible solutions and has closed the Walkway to work through options with various stakeholders. If a fix is found early in the piece and it is possible to re-open the walkway, Council will do this.

8. Why does Council not rent a piece of land for extra parking?
Renting additional land for parking at the Whites Road end may be an option. Parking solutions at the Whites Road may require earthworks. We are consulting with landowners on a number of matters, including possible parking solutions at both ends of the Walkway.

9. I've always walked Te Waihou, why can't I walk it now?
The closure is designed to protect everyone, not just visitors. We hope to re-open the walkway as soon as it is safe to do so.

10. Who owns the land along Te Waihou?
The land over which the Walkway goes is owned by various individuals and organisations such as local landowners, Department of Conservation and South Waikato District Council has an unformed road corridor in the area which is traversed by the Walkway at various points.



11. Will the Whites Road parking lot close?
Whites Road is a State Highway and the carpark is a designated rest area, managed by road controlling authority Waka Kotahi.
The rest area will remain open, allowing people to continue to stop and use the rest area as intended.

12. What is Waka Kotahi doing to make SH28 safer?
State Highway 28 has been noted and put forward for consideration as part of the 2024 - 2027 state highway speed management plan.

13. What did the geotechnical report tell you?
The assessment by the geotechnical engineers found that the site at Leslie Road end is highly unstable and prone to further rockfalls and boulder movements.

READERS: Please note that these FAQs were correct at the time of writing. Discussions and updates may have moved things forward. Our Te Waihou web page will be updated regularly.

14. Why not just build a new access road over the wetland at Leslie Road end?
We have discussed this option with Waikato Regional Council and the current suggestion will not get resource consent. This is not a permanent solution. WRC has indicated we could put a temporary track in over the wetland, but it would never get consent and would need removing, at Council (ratepayer) cost.

15. Why won't WRC give this solution a resource consent?
Because it will interfere with the wetland and water overland flows and would be in breach of the current legislation.
Council has engaged consultants to determine the pathway for a possible alternative walkway and provide assistance through the resource consent process.



Mana whenua, Ngāti Ahuru, Ngāti Mahana, Raukawa, Waka Kotahi, Ngā Pirihimana o Aotearoa, and the South Waikato District Council gathered at Te Waihou (Whites Road) to acknowledge the significant occasion as the pathway for Te Waihou was bid a rest for 12 months.



South Waikato District Council

Offices and facilities opening days and times are not as normal during the Christmas period.

	Fri 22 Dec	Sat 23 Dec	Sun 24 Dec	Mon 25 Dec	Tues 26 Dec	Wed 27 Dec	Thurs 28 Dec	Fri 29 Dec	Sat 30 Dec
COUNCIL OFFICES									
Tokoroa Council office	Open – closes midday	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Putāruru Council office/library (* open for library services ONLY)	Open – closes midday	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	Closed
The Dog, Tīrau	Open – closes 3pm	9am – 3pm	9am - 3pm	Closed	Closed	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm
RUBBISH & RECYCLING									
Tokoroa Transfer Station	Normal hours	9am - 4pm	9am - 6pm	Closed	9am - 4pm	9am - 4pm	9am - 4pm	9am - 4pm	9am - 4pm
Putāruru Transfer Station	Normal hours	9am - 4pm	9am - 4pm	Closed	9am - 4pm	Closed	9am - 4pm	Closed	9am - 4pm
Tīrau recycling drop-off zone	Normal hours	1pm - 5pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	1pm - 5pm	Closed	Closed	1pm - 5pm
LEISURE FACILITIES									
Tokoroa Library	Open – closes midday	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	Closed
SW Sport and Events Centre	Open – closes midday	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Tokoroa Indoor Pools	Open – closes 6pm	7.30am – 6pm	10am – 4pm	Closed	Closed	10am - 6pm	10am – 6pm	10am – 6pm	10am – 6pm
Putāruru Pool	Open – closes 6pm	12pm – 6pm	12pm - 4pm	Closed	Closed	12pm – 6pm	12pm – 6pm	12pm – 6pm	12pm – 6pm
Tīrau Pool	Open – closes 6pm	1pm – 6pm	12pm – 4pm	Closed	Closed	1pm – 6pm	1pm – 6pm	1pm – 6pm	1pm – 6pm



Festive Season Closure Hours

During the festive break. Check out the opening times below.

30 Dec	Sun 31 Dec	Mon 1 Jan	Tues 2 Jan	Wed 3 Jan	Thurs 4 Jan	Fri 5 Jan	Sat 6 Jan	Sun 7 Jan	Mon 8 Jan
ALL OFFICES									
Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Normal hours
Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	9.30am – 12.30pm	Closed	Normal hours
9am – 4pm	9am – 3pm	Closed	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	Normal hours
LIBRARIES & RECYCLING									
9am – 4pm	9am – 6pm	Closed	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	9am – 6pm	Closed
9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	Closed	9am – 4pm	Closed	9am – 4pm	Closed	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	Closed
9am – 5pm	Closed	1pm – 5pm	Closed	1pm – 5pm	Closed	Closed	9am – 4pm	Closed	1pm – 5pm
COMMUNITY FACILITIES									
Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	9am – 4pm	9.30am – 2pm	Closed	Normal hours
Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Normal hours
9am – 6pm	10am – 4pm	Closed	Closed	10am – 6pm	10am – 6pm	10am – 6pm	10am – 6pm	10am – 6pm	Normal hours
9am – 6pm	12pm – 4pm	Closed	Closed	12pm – 6pm	12pm – 6pm	12pm – 6pm	12pm – 6pm	12pm – 6pm	Normal hours
9am – 6pm	12pm – 4pm	Closed	Closed	1pm – 6pm	1pm – 6pm	1pm – 6pm	1pm – 6pm	1pm – 6pm	Normal hours



*HAPPY
Holidays*

Tokoroa's new dairy factory is up and running

After two years in the making, ofi's new, state-of-the-art dairy processing plant in Tokoroa, South Waikato, is up and running.

It celebrated its official opening in mid-November, a short while after the first product had already been shipped to international customers.

Waikato milk made at ofi's plant will be used in its customers' dessert, bakery, beverage and confectionary products sold around the world.

"I'm thrilled to see ofi's new dairy processing plant in Tokoroa, come to life after two years of hard work. ofi's presence in the Waikato has been a game changer for our local community,

ushering in new options for farmers, fresh career opportunities and substantial investment," said Mayor Gary Petley.

This is the start of a multi-phase development, kicking off with the spray dryer that can process one million litres of milk per day, producing more than 45,000 tonnes of milk powder per year.

Paul Rennie, ofi's Operations Director, said: "We're humbled by the positive response from local farmers wanting to partner with us. We're incredibly grateful to farmers and the local community for the support they have shown us – we couldn't have got here without them."

The next step involves expanding the plant's capability to make higher value produce protein concentrates, as well as whole milk powder.

Paul Johnson, Milk Supply Manager, said: "Right from the start, our approach has always been to listen to what farmers want in a milk supply partner. They told us they want a business partner who brings them confidence, certainty, cash flow and hands-on solutions to the everyday challenges they face, and we're pleased to have shaped an offer that meets their needs."

The factory has about created about 60 new jobs in the local area, including many highly skilled positions, with more opportunities on the horizon as its plans progress.

The first packet of whole milk powder came off the factory line in late August and the first 20 containers of whole milk powder were shipped to ofi's global customers in September.



MANULIFE FOREST MANAGEMENT PUTS IN THE MAHI TO KEEP NZ BEAUTIFUL



Manulife Forest Management, in collaboration with local contractors and Council, organised their annual clean-up of illegally dumped rubbish in the forests and surrounding areas.

The teams removed heaps of items which included furniture, appliances, various car parts as well as construction waste. All weighing in at an astounding 12.4 tons – the equivalent of six small tractors in weight! That's a lot of rubbish.

Bad news for offenders

As a result of the clean-up, Council's Solid Waste team has received crucial information which could lead to the positive identification of the offenders. People found guilty of offending may receive a Council infringement notice of up to \$400 or, for especially serious incidents, the Litter Act 1979 has provision for fines of up to \$7,500 for an individual or \$30,000 for a body corporate.

Report it

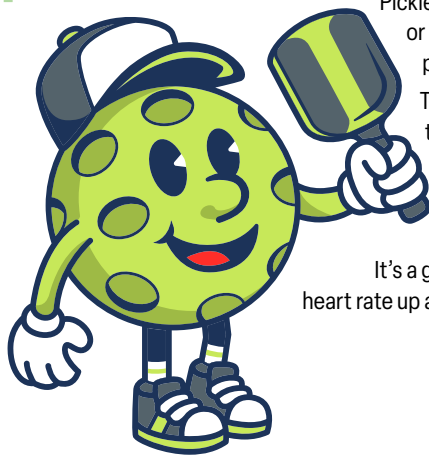
Illegal dumping costs ratepayers thousands of dollars every year in contractor fees to clean up. If you witness any illegal dumping please call Council on (07) 885 0340 or report it online through our Do It Online portal. Scan the code.



PICK UP A PICKLEBALL PADDLE

...say that three times fast...

Pickleball is taking over New Zealand as the latest sport. It was the fastest growing sport in America and now it has hit New Zealand. It's easy and social, that's what we like in Tokoroa.



Pickleball takes place on a badminton doubles court, with two or four players using large wooden paddles to hit a hollow plastic ball back and forth across a low net.

The game is a cross between tennis, badminton and table tennis; and is suitable for all ages.

It's being played at the South Waikato Sport and Events Centre on a Thursday evening. You don't need a partner – staff are on hand to give you a game.

It's a great way to look after your wellbeing while taking that heart rate up a little, a win-win!



LIONS AND WARATAH GIVE BACK AT COMMUNITY DAY

Big ups to Waratah Ltd and the Tokoroa City Lions for organising a community day. The teams planted native trees at Lake Moananui and a hedge at the back of the Tokoroa cemetery with the assistance of Council's Parks and Reserves team.



CLOTH NAPPIES MAKING A COMEBACK



MARK THE DATE

SCAN TO BOOK

[Kate hosts Food Lovers Master Classes too...]



Do you have children in nappies? Are you pregnant? Did you know that a child will use more than 5,000 nappies from birth to two years and if you use disposable nappies, these go straight to the landfill and create pollution.

Well-known sustainability expert Kate Meads challenges the use of disposable nappies. She will be in Tokoroa and Putāruru early next year hosting her Cloth Nappies, Parenting, and more workshops. Tickets are \$17.

Tokoroa - 27 February 2024, South Waikato Sport and Events Centre, 10am to 12noon

Putāruru - 12 March 2024, The Plaza, 10am to 12noon

"One of my challenges to parents who attend my workshops is to get them to commit to using just one cloth nappy per day because if they do that, 365 nappies per child per year will not go to landfill.

"There are around 145,000 babies in nappies at any one time in New Zealand and if every child in nappies had one cloth nappy change per day, that would result in around a million nappies per week not being sent to the landfills."



SPRING INTO WINTER! START PREPPING YOUR FIREWOOD NOW!

After a long, wet and frosty winter the last thing you want to think of is getting your firewood sorted. But now is the time to do it. Yes, now, while it's hot - we know it's odd. Preparing your firewood now will set you up with seasoned, dry wood for next winter. Here are some tips to ensuring your wood is in tip-top condition for Winter '24!

- 1 Stack your wood somewhere with plenty of airflow. Wood that's too wet will cause a lot of smoke and won't heat as well.
- 2 Cut and split your wood into the right size for your wood burner to give your wood more surface area to dry faster.
- 3 Firewood should have less than 25% moisture. You can test this by throwing a small piece onto hot glowing coals. If it catches fire on the top and sides within one minute, it's dry enough to burn.
- 4 Get your firewood early to allow maximum drying time. Try to give your wood at least six to nine months of drying time.

SWDC's Top Tips to a *Festive Season*



Getting the title of being the ultimate party host among your whānau and friends is a title many strive for. However, being the party host isn't just about having a playlist full of bangers, having the best spread of food or knowing how to carve up the dance floor. Hosting a party or gathering is also ensuring your guests are safe when they arrive, during the party and when they leave. Here are our top tips for becoming the ultimate party host.

- **Chill** - Most harmful bacteria cannot grow at low temperatures so set your fridge temperature between 2°C and 4°C. Keep cold dishes in the fridge until you're ready to eat them and store raw meats and seafood in the fridge until right before you cook them.

A GUIDE TO BECOMING THE ULTIMATE HOST

- **Clean** - Keep hands and surfaces clean by washing hands between handling food; and make sure benchtops, cooking tools and barbecues are cleaned before and after use.
- **Cook** - Cook chicken, mince and sausages right through, and cook pork and poultry until the juices run clear. Use a thermometer to check the thickest part of the meat has reached at least 75°C.
- Cover cooked meat and place it on the bottom shelf of the fridge so their juices can't drip onto other food. Keep meat products away from ready-to-eat food such as fruit and vegetables. If you're eating outdoors, use an icepack or chilly bin to keep food cold.
- Gathered/recreationally caught food - always wash food that you or others have gathered (eg, pūha or watercress). If you gather kai moana or seafood, check that the place you are collecting from is clean and free of pollution.
- Have plenty of good substantial food - a cooked ham in the fridge can last forever and is easy to put other things with - bread, salads, steaks etc.
- Be respectful of your neighbours with music and merriment noise levels. Loud music and noisy boisterous behaviour fuelled by an abundant supply of alcohol can be annoying to those in your neighbourhood who are trying to sleep.
- Always have plenty of non-alcohol beverages - soda, juices, tea, coffee, a home-made non-alcoholic summer punch, perhaps - the list is endless.
- Try and make sure if someone arrives by car that they have a sober driver - or take the keys off people as they arrive and only return them if they are fit to drive - they will thank you the next day... even if they do need an aspirin!
- Have beds available if someone wants to sleep it off.
- Under any circumstances, don't allow a sleeping drunk either in a car or a bed without keeping an eye on them.
- Let your neighbours know if you are having a party or event that is likely to run late into the night. Most people are okay with the odd party however if this is a regular occurrence, you may find your neighbours start to lose patience.
- When a party or event is winding down, it can sometimes spill out on to the street as we say our goodbyes. While beeping your horn as you rev your car loudly away from your friends may seem fun for those at the party, spare a thought for your neighbours who may not feel the same. It's a nice gesture for your neighbours to keep your goodbyes on the footpath short and quiet.

MAKE SURE YOU'RE SAFE AT YOUR XMAS PARTY

If you are attending a party here are some tips to ensure that you're safe:

- Try and drink a couple of glasses of water or eat some food before you leave home.
- If you are driving there, make sure that you have a sober driver or that you intend to stay the night at wherever the party is.
- Don't let your drink leave your hands. If you have to put it down and come back to - get another glass and/or bottle.
- Don't mix drugs and alcohol.
- Eat if you can. Christmas is a great excuse to put on a few kgs... take advantage of this!
- Pace yourself.
- Go with a mate. Have a secret word for when you want to go home.

Above all, as the advert says - Be a bloody legend - don't let you mates drive drunk.



**Festive
Here is
s**

With so many destinations beautiful... Landing, Remember (see page

If you can't hot, your Walking on paw pads

It is an absolute in the hot in the shade in ten minutes stroke, im handle sit

Make sure summer, risk for fire but the time

You may have whānau the 400mm of safety barriers prevent you from the boundary compliance side (neig angled ramp use to climb

If it's getting have plenty spots! So being Jon Whakama Little Wait Pool, Tira the South argh] Inde

a Safe Season

HOT, HOT, HOT SUMMER TIPS!

Active Season also means summer has officially arrived! Here are our top tips and guide to having a safe and fun summer for you, your whānau and your pets.

As much to see and do, the South Waikato is the perfect destination for freedom camping this summer. We have several beautiful reserves that are ideal for camping. Check out Jones' Landing, Lake Whakamaru, Little Waipa or Dunham Point. Remember Te Waihou Walkway is closed (page 4).

You can't walk bare feet on the concrete because it's too hot and your pets should not be walking in their bare paws either! Walking on hot concrete or tar can seriously burn your pets' pads. This also applies to hot sand at the beach!

It's an absolute NO to leave your pets in the car whilst parked in the hot summer. Even with the windows down and the vehicle in the shade, a car can rapidly heat up - as much as ten degrees in minutes (!), putting the pet left inside at risk of heat stroke, irreparable brain damage or even death. If you can't stand sitting in a parked car in the heat, neither can they!

Be sure to mow your lawns regularly. The drier it gets over summer, the more dangerous your long grass can get as the risk of fire increases significantly! We know it's hot and steamy, but the time to work up a sweat is now!

You may be thinking of getting a new temporary pool for the summer. If you buy a pool that can hold more than 2000 litres of water, it must have compliant safety barriers. Pool safety barriers must fully enclose the pool area and should prevent young children from going directly into the pool area from the house, other buildings or other parts of the property. A boundary fence may suffice as a pool fence, providing it meets compliance requirements and there is nothing on the other side (neighbours' side) of the fence, such as close horizontal or vertical rails, a stack of firewood or trellis that a small child could climb over the fence.

As the weather gets hot and you're looking for a place to swim we have plenty of swimming spots!

Some of our favourites are Jones' Landing, Lake Whakamaru, Lake Maraetai, Little Waipa, Putāruru Outdoor Pool, Tirau Outdoor Pool and South Waikato [Heated...]. There are also many Indoor Pools in Tokoroa!



NEWS FROM THE PLAZA



Diane Willcox school of dance production

2023: Sunday 10 Dec, 10:30am. Come and see Diane Willcox's students showcase their skills through dance in her 2023 production. Entry is \$15 door sales only.

Sunday Movie, Love Again (2023): Sun 17

December at 2pm. About: To cope with the tragic loss of her fiancé, Mira, a young woman, sends romantic texts to his old number. Soon, the number plays Cupid for its new owner and Mira. Starring: Priyanka Chopra, Sam Heughan, Nick Jonas, Celine Dion. Last movie of the year – free entry!



The Plaza Theatre will be closed for the holiday period from Monday 18 December to Monday 15 January.

We hope you have an amazing Christmas and New Year.

We have many exciting events already lined up in 2024 - see you there!

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DRIVING SAFELY IN THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS

With summer here and the promise of finer weather, many holidaymakers will be taking to the road.

Here are some tips to keep you and your whānau safe on the roads.

You can make a number of choices to increase your safety on your holiday journey, such as:

- Take a little time to make sure that you and your vehicle are safe before starting your journey.
- Plan to avoid the worst peak traffic periods when many highways become congested.
- Allow plenty of time – make the journey part of the holiday.
- Schedule regular rest stops.
- Long trips are tiring so plan to get enough rest beforehand.
- When packing your vehicle, make sure everything is securely stowed.

Often during holiday periods, passing lanes are closed to help reduce congestion and prevent further delays where the traffic merges at the end of lanes. Sometimes alternative routes are suggested. A good place for information and real time updates is: <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/traffic-and-travel-information/>

Drive to the conditions

This doesn't just mean the weather. It also includes:

- The road you're on.
- The traffic conditions.
- The speed (the speed limit and a 'safe speed' may differ).
- The driver, for example are you tired or on medication that affects your driving
- Your vehicle and load.

Relax and keep your cool

Being courteous, remembering to share the road with others and scheduling frequent breaks can help you keep your cool when driving during what is expected to be a hot as Kiwi summer!

Hopefully these tips will get you and your family ready to safely enjoy the fine weather and your holiday to come.

LEGEND JOSEPH MANU PAYS A VISIT

Local legend Joseph Manu came to the Council for a morning tea and spoke about his experiences as a professional athlete, some highs and lows of his careers and how he got to where he is today.

Council was super keen to host Joseph to pay him respect, mana and appreciation for what he has achieved. It is great to see our home-grown legends come back to town, even if just for a short while; and a wonderful opportunity to let them know just how proud we are of them; and of course Joseph specifically this day.

After morning tea at Council, Joseph then went on to a range of different schools across Tokoroa (his home town) to teach rugby league skills to those interested. He also shared his story to the youth to inspire them and show them where rugby league can take you.



TĪRAU DOMAIN A WORTHY 2023 FINALIST IN THE WAIKATO SPORT & ACTIVE RECREATION AWARDS



South Waikato's Tīrau Domain was announced as one of three finalists in the Outstanding Active Space Initiative category of the 2023 Waikato Sport & Active Recreation Awards.

Nominations were judged by local judges from the sector. The judges said it was a difficult job as there were so many worthy of top placings for all of the categories.

The Domain provides a family friendly environment. In the past twelve months the Domain has received several improvements, including a pump track which has allowed for specific participation for cycling and scootering and skateboarding enthusiasts.

The walkway is free to access. Dogs are allowed leashed on the Upper Domain area with a dog exercise area provided in the Lower Domain area. Winners will be announced by Sport Waikato on Thursday 15 February 2024.

READ IN TOUCH? PROVE IT...

... and be in to win a lucky dip \$50 supermarket voucher.

We will be running this competition every issue. The answers to the five questions below are in this issue – December 2023. You have to get them all correct to be in the draw.

Text your answers and your name to 0274 472 664 or private message our Facebook page by 30 December 2023.

1. **What are the names of the two students who received the Mayoral Scholarships this year?**
2. **Can users still swim at the Whites Road end of Te Waihou Walkway?**
3. **What does it cost to watch the last Sunday Movie of the year at the Plaza?**
4. **What anniversary has Tokoroa Fire Brigade just celebrated?**
5. **Which [awesome] local company cleaned up for Keep New Zealand Beautiful week?**

Congratulations to Shayla of Putāruru who was drawn as the lucky winner for the October In Touch competition. Thank you to all those who entered and shout out to our regulars. Try again this issue!

The correct answers were:

1. Thursday 30 November, 2. 49 and 5,032, 3. 19,264 and 374,
4. any three of the following - reduce, reuse, rebuild, refurbish, resold, recycle, rethink, regift, repair and rot, 5. Long Term Plan 2024-34.

Antenno is a mobile phone app that is FREE for users to download from Google Play or the App Store.

Install the app. Input your specific address(es) - home, work, play, and we send you messages relevant to your address. Users can also use the app to report issues or ideas to us.



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