

NEWS FROM YOUR WAIKATO DISTRICT COUNCILLOR



As I write this article it is another lovely autumn day. However, speaking as a farmer, we need rain; on the flip side the drier weather has slowed down the growth of my lawn which is a good thing!!

You should have received the **Long Term Plan (LTP) 2018-28 consultation document** (which includes a submission form) in your mailbox during the last week. It was mailed to each householder, not part of the 'junk mail'. We are holding information sessions about the LTP - **the Eureka Ward session will be held at Matangi Hall on Wednesday 4th April, 6:30 – 8pm. Hope to see you there.**

Waikato District has given formal feedback on our preferred funding option for the Waikato Regional Theatre (replacing the Founders Theatre). The Regional Council's preferred option states *that of their proposed \$5m contribution towards capital costs, \$4.5m would come from the three primary beneficiaries outside Hamilton – Waikato, Waipa and Matamata Piako Districts with the remaining \$0.5m coming from the wider region.* Waikato Regional Council (WRC) have outlined a summary of the options in their Long-Term Plan which is now open for consultation. If you would like to make a submission about the theatre funding, details can be found on the WRC website. The public consultation period will be open from 16 March and close on 16 April.

The Eureka Express Committee has joined other groups in the Waikato district to create poppies to commemorate ANZAC Day. Knitting and crochet needles in homes in Eureka (including mine) are busy as poppies are created for a display planned for Eureka.

The idea to knit poppies began as a small project in Australia and has grown from there. The Waikato District initiative began last year when our *Placemaking* Team joined with local community houses to knit or crochet poppies to cover the trunk of at least one tree in town centres for the month of April. This year the project has grown with Council buying enough wool for the first 3,000 poppies and volunteers donating the rest. All the trees will be decorated by Tuesday 18th April and the **Eureka group hope to put up their poppies at the Eureka Hall, near the Cenotaph, on or about 9th April.** There is also a project to create a 1,200 poppy trail down the Te Awa Cycle Way.

Matangi Village joined the project last year with a tree installation in the Jack Foster Reserve and will be erecting their display again this year with the addition of more poppies being provided by their community. The Matangi Community Committee has also applied to the Heritage Fund for funds to go towards installing a World War 1 Roll of Honour to join the WW2 Roll of Honour in the Hall.

In Tauwhare, the Tauwhare Community Committee and residents are working with Council to combine an iconic sculpture with the development of a picnic/resting area. This week I met with the Community Committee, Council staff and local Iwi to discuss the final design for the sculpture. It was agreed to obtain the resource consent, so the project can proceed.

Every country is grappling with the problem of plastic waste. There is an excellent article in the February issue of the Waikato District Council Publication *Link* (see at www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz) which outlines what this could mean for NZ. All our plastics go offshore for processing - China has changed its regulations about receiving waste from other countries and this could have a huge impact on our recycling systems. So, we have to be smarter with our use of plastics. The article featured these helpful hints.

1. **Avoid plastic when you can** – a tough ask, but not impossible. There are plenty of amazing Kiwis that are doing this with no major upheaval to their everyday lives, except the conscious decisions they choose to make. If you want examples of this check out therubbishtrip.co.nz, 1yearnoplastic.blogspot.co.nz or singer Jack Johnson's website www.allatonce.org
2. **If you can't avoid it, try to reduce** the amount of plastic you have in your life – Numbers 1 and 2 are the easiest to be recycled. Try reducing the use of the other numbers that are more challenging.
3. **Choose clear over coloured plastic** – clear plastics have more value in the overseas market because they are the most versatile.
4. **Contamination is an issue** - ensure the plastic you put out for recycling is washed and only the numbers specified are put out.
5. **By reducing your use of plastic and making sure recycling is clean, you are supporting local businesses.** Two of our refuse and recycling contractors are local, providing local jobs in our communities

It is good to see that NZ supermarkets are moving away from the use of plastic shopping bags and packing meat in recyclable trays. However, we must reduce our dependency on plastic sooner rather than later.

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