

# TOM oakura

## A Date with Fabio and Franklin D



*Kariba the brown alpaca checking out the camera.*

*Seriously curious and cute!*



A trip to the top of Hurford Rd recently to meet two special males had me zipping up the road in much anticipation, for Fabio and Franklin D are no ordinary, run of the mill guys — they are alpacas. Franklin D is about two months old and Fabio two weeks old, and they are cute and not at all difficult to fall in love with! Neil and Trish Watson are the owners of the alpacasRstyle ranch on Hurford Rd, and on Sunday, May 2 their stud farm is open to the public as part of National Alpaca Day. Neil and Trish have been

farming alpacas on their 25 acre lifestyle block since 2004 and today they have 62 animals of all ages. The couple do as much of the husbandry and fibre processing as they can, whether it is shearing, feeding or health care.

Alpacas are for sale at alpacasRstyle and these are ideally suited to lifestyle blocks, for pets or for farming. Alpacas are endearing animals that are inquisitive and friendly with the most engaging dark eyes that pretty much look you straight in the eye (unless you are really short!). Alpacas

enjoy interacting with humans and have an avid curiosity. Care of alpacas is simple and their needs are uncomplicated. They need to be shorn once a year and Neil is able to carry out this task with the help of one or two extras. Additional hay can be supplied in racks and supplements are given occasionally. They do not suffer from fly strike or foot rot and readily adapt to any type of terrain, which they do not damage like cattle because of their soft, padded feet. They do not challenge

*(Continued on page 2)*

# editorial FROM THE TOM ZONE

I saw the most endearing sight the other afternoon. It was a beautiful sunny autumn day late in the afternoon. It had rained heavily that morning and there was an enormous puddle on the road verge in McFarlane St. Several small children were playing in the puddle in their clothes as their mums looked on protectively. Further down the street two mums were sitting on the footpath having a glass of wine, no doubt gossiping and watching their little ones tear up and down the footpath on their trikes, bikes and go-carts. Teenagers were out jogging and young men were blasting around in their hotted up cars. Then Jennifer texted me to see if we could fit in a photo of Paige with some youngsters on the beach — warm fuzzies!!



Kim

## TOM dates for May issue

Copy and ads deadline –  
23 April

Distribution –  
12 May

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# TOM OAKURA

TOM OAKURA is a free, monthly publication, delivered on the second Wednesday of the month to all homes from the city limits to Okato.

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*Points of view expressed in contributed articles are not necessarily the views of TOM*

## cover story



FranklinD and Fabio with Camilla (Franklin D's mum).

fences and can easily be contained in a non-electrified, strained, 6-wire fence without battens.

Something that might appeal to smallholders is that alpaca meat is not marketed in New Zealand so they are not raised for slaughter. Rather they provide fibre and breeding stock. The fibre is a long, luxurious, fine and soft product that Trish and Neil make into yarn, carded fleeces, luxurious cot duvets and clothing.

Neil says it doesn't take long to get to know your animals as individuals and become devoted to them. Perhaps it is their eyes, perhaps it is their expressive mewing, perhaps it is the apparent gratitude shown by the alpaca when helped through adversity, or perhaps it is the sight of all the youngsters pranking about the paddock in the early evening. For me the experience was love at first sight — it's the eyes I think — they look at you so intensely, so confidently, so trustingly.

Put 2 May in your diary as a date not to be missed and head up Hurford Rd to meet Neil and Trish and their extended family of 62! Visitors are very welcome whether to see the animals, talk about farming alpacas, shop for alpaca products, or even just to touch a real live alpaca, but be warned you will want one!

Sunday 2 May, 680 Hurford Rd, 10am-4pm

By Kim Ferens

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### Hi folks!

The idea that we live amid the footsteps of history has never been clearer to me than it has this month.

In these last few weeks we have seen the opening of the long-awaited Taranaki War exhibition at Puke Ariki, where the past, present and future issues around the wars that started in 1860 are able to be discussed by everyone in the community.

We have seen questions around the war raised during the celebration of St Mary's Church becoming the Taranaki Cathedral of St Mary.

I am proud to be part of a community where we can talk about the events that have shaped our towns and region, with a willingness to hear what is said and consider what this means for our future.

There is a comprehensive programme of speakers, workshops and other events around the Taranaki War exhibition that the public can take part in. Find out how you can be involved by checking out [www.pukeariki.com](http://www.pukeariki.com).

### Draft Budget 2010/11

Have you had your say yet on the Draft Budget 2010/11?

We want to get your comments on this document, and the proposed amendment to Community Plan 2009–2019 Treasury Management Policy, as it will confirm our activities for the coming 12 months.

This budget follows a thorough review of the Council's costs and levels of service, which started in the middle of last year. The review has resulted in a reduction of \$2.9 million in the Council's total rates requirement for the 2010/11 year, compared to that projected for 2010/11 in the Long-term Council

Community Plan (also known as the Community Plan, covering 2009–2019). The review has also achieved rates savings of \$58 million for the remaining years of the Community Plan.

These are serious savings — but we're still determined to provide excellent services and facilities for our residents, businesses and visitors. Keep an eye out for our Seven Days newsletter in the North Taranaki Midweek for more information.

You can view a copy of the Draft Budget at Oakura Library and online at [www.newplymouthnz.com](http://www.newplymouthnz.com). Submission forms are available at the library, or you can mail your comments to the Council, fax them to 06-759 6072, email them to [budget@npdc.govt.nz](mailto:budget@npdc.govt.nz), or fill in the online submission form on the Council's website.

Be sure to have your say before the deadline of 30 April!

Don't forget that I'd love to hear from you if you have an idea on how we can improve our services, or if you have a project that you'd like to get off the ground. Just give me a call on 06-759 6100.

*Peter Tennent, Mayor*



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Trish and Neil Watson, 680 Hurford Road, Omata [www.alpacasRstyle.co.nz](http://www.alpacasRstyle.co.nz)

# kaitake community board

The late summer weather is trying to hang on and at time of writing we have our fingers crossed for a fine Easter. As everyone is out and about, the Council organised another Waimoku Stream straightening. The stream has been showing high levels of E. coli and as the stream had meandered into the beach bathing area it was considered prudent to straighten it. Regular Regional Council tests show the E. coli is from animals and birds rather than from human sources and while most strains of the bacterium are harmless, several are known to produce toxins that can cause diarrhoea.



**AhuAhu Stream.**

The stream at the western end of Ahu Ahu Beach has also been straightened, albeit for a different reason. The stream was also meandering eastwards and as a consequence was beginning to erode the dune area along the beachfront. These dunes provide natural protection from coastal storms and play an extremely important role in retaining the recreational values of Ahu Ahu Beach. During summer periods with low to moderate wave action, sand tends to move onshore and a wide high-tide dry beach develops. Dry sand blown landwards is trapped by dune vegetation, building up the dune over time. The vegetation has been enhanced along our beachfront by successive plantings of our native spinefix and pingao. During major storms, waves erode the beach and the dunes help to protect the beach by dissipating excess wave energy. Dune erosion does take place but after storm events the native sand-binding grasses on the seaward face of the dune gradually begin to extend down the eroded dune face — renewing the process of sand entrapment and gradually repairing the eroded dune face.

Another recent incident needs bringing to the community's attention. Teenagers, many of them local, held a party on the beach at the far end of the beach camp. While that in itself, and the accompanying rowdy behaviour, wasn't of real concern the lighting of a beach bonfire and the litter left behind was. Most of us find it incomprehensible that young members of the community, most of whom have helped pick up litter on the beachfront on many occasions during their time at the local school, will not only leave glass bottles all over the beach but also a fire burning with smashed bottles in it. This truly baffling behaviour is compounded further by those parents who will drive their children down to such a party on the beachfront and are quite happy to leave them there unsupervised. And, as always in such incidents, it was left to a few other village residents to clean up their mess.

The Kaitake Community Board (KCB) have been very active since last reporting.

I attended a very pleasant NPOB Surf Club information and meet the sponsors evening, there have been Highway 45/Koru



**Post beach party mess. Shame on you.**

Road refuse collection point issues to discuss, we have attended a large number of Council workshops and meetings, freedom camping issues have surfaced again this summer, the Oakura School picnic at Corbett Park was another well organised and enjoyable event, the Oakura Hall Committee and Community Board presented submissions on the District Halls Review, and sewerage connection issues still need addressing from time to time.

The next Kaitake Community Board meeting is on at the NPOB Surf Club on Tuesday 27 April at 4pm.

Ka kite ano

*Doug Hislop (06-752 7324) on behalf of Keith Plummer (06-752 7050), Mike Pillette (06-752 7059), Al Rawlinson (06-752 7178) and Deputy Mayor Alex Matheson (06-756 8080) who is the Council representative on the KCB.*

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# Fire Brigade

## Greetings from all at the Big Red Truck,

Please be aware that if you light a fire on your property and a concerned member of the public calls in a fire/smoke nuisance (which they can do) to the Fire Service, once this call is logged via our communications base in Wellington, we are obliged to attend the call out. Should the Fire Brigade determine that the fire/smoke nuisance is a potential hazard to people or property, we are obliged to extinguish the fire.

### Quick Facts

346 fire districts (urban)

440 fire stations

960 fire appliances (approx)

1707 career firefighter positions

7000 urban volunteer firefighters

524 management and support positions, full and part-time

76 communication centre staff positions

The busiest fire station in New Zealand in 2007 was Auckland City with 3,177 call outs. Christchurch City Station had 2,600 and Wellington City Station 2,502.

### During 2007 (calendar year):

The Fire Service attended 73,333 incidents. This includes such things as fires, motor accidents and chemical emergencies.

The Fire Service attended 24,279 fires, including 4,083 house fires.

There were 5,476 vegetation fires.

There were 33 fire deaths.

### For the Kids

Check out [www.fire.org.nz](http://www.fire.org.nz)

Under the media tab, they have a site called Fun Stuff. It includes games to play, downloadable ringtones, escape plans and fire safety tips.

All the best and stay safe,

Mel Breeze (Secretary)



## Hello everyone,

Wow, the first term flew by! Sea Week and the New Zealand rocky shore have been topics of study for many school children. In keeping with the sea theme, for our school holiday programme we will be making driftwood mobiles on Wednesday, 14 April from 10–11am here at the library. Registration is essential — sign up at the library.

Some beautifully illustrated and inspiring new arrivals ideal for primary and secondary school age: *Save Our Seas* (continuing the mission of Sir Peter Blake), *Eco-Rangers Save The Planet*, and Dave Gunson's *All About New Zealand's Seashore*.

It's New Zealand Post Children's Book Awards time again and the finalists have been released. We have the books on display. Children, come in and cast your vote for your favourite New Zealand book! Some of the young adult fiction appeals to adults as well. I thoroughly enjoyed *Banquo's Son* by T.X. Roxborough. It's "an epic tale of love, loss and revenge set amidst the turmoil of Scotland after Macbeth". And the good news is that this is the first of a trilogy. Her book is already attracting international attention. It's exciting to see how many talented children's authors New Zealand has.

Karen and Vincenza

## Oakura Ladies Book Club

Oakura Ladies Book Club hosted a farewell party for two members in March, with dinner at The Garlic Press and a movie at Arthouse Cinema. The food was brilliant, the company fantastic, and the movie was absolutely... well, we won't give it away! *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* was a great movie, and the book club plans to read the book this year. We will miss Suki Bishop and Noelle Milam as they head off to new book clubs far, far away.

Currently, the group is reading *Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders* by Gyles Brandreth. Join us at Oakura Village Cafe or on Facebook or call the Oakura Library for more information.

By Jennifer Gros



New Zealand Post

**4**

Oakura

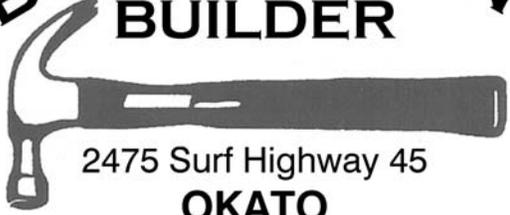
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# Sewerage scheme is up and running

How is the sewerage scheme functioning now that it is operational and locals are hooking up?

## According to the council -

Household connections to Oakura's reticulated sewerage system are on schedule to be completed by the end of the year. So far about 120 homes have made their connections live.

"We're averaging about 12 connections a week. At this rate, we'll have everyone who registered with us connected to the system by the deadline of January 2011," says Manager Projects Mark Hall.

After Easter the Council will spray the locations of the proposed planting in Shearer Reserve to kill off the grass, after which these areas will be mulched in preparation for planting in late May/June. This planting is part of the landscaping plan agreed to with residents.

Mark has a couple of tips for those homeowners who are still to connect their properties to the sewer reticulation:

### Location of the laterals

Make sure your plumber or drainlayer has physically located the end point of the lateral before they start laying the connecting pipe to your house.

"They shouldn't start work before they have eyeballed the lateral's position on the property boundary, to ensure they know its placement to the millimetre," says Mark.

### Septic tank decommissioning

When your sewerage connection is live, decommission your septic tank by:

- Having it pumped out.
- Knocking a hole in the bottom so it will no longer hold water.
- Filling it with earth or metal (so there is no void in the ground).
- Having your registered drainlayer write to NPDC to confirm this has been done, or arranging for a Council Building Inspector to see it.

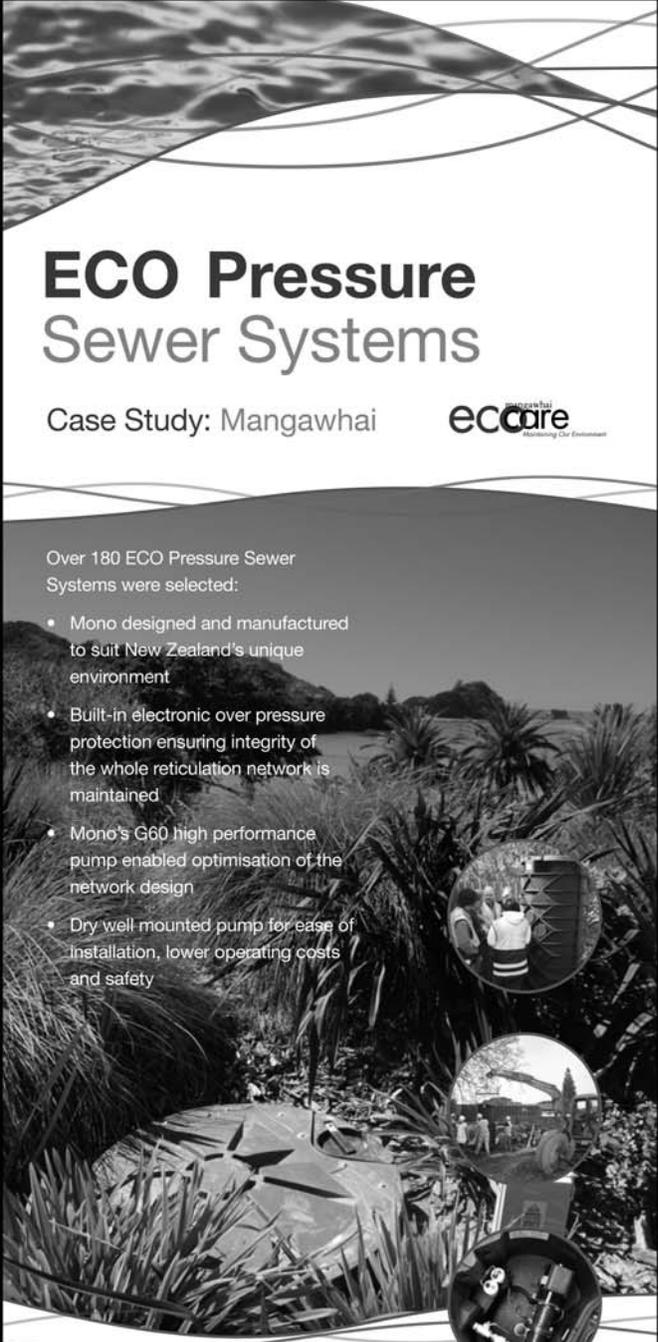
## According to the locals -

"We had the sewerage connected at our rental property on McKellar Street. Everything has gone very well! It was a big job finding the septic tank under an old fish pond, garden and trees. We have been very happy with the work done so far, it has all been within budget and done efficiently. I have re-landscaped my garden because of it!" — Davina Johnson

"So far everything has gone well. The hole still hasn't been completely filled, and the final bills haven't been paid yet. But everything is connected and all working well. We're just waiting

for the ground to be reinstated and the grass seeds to be sown." — Paul Lobb

"We are pleased with the connection and haven't had any problems. We were connected as soon as the system was up and running three or four weeks ago. Everything has been taken care of... it is brilliant!" — James and Maureen Priest



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**"I like the idea of the grinder pump not sitting in the crap!"**

*Des Horton,  
Oakura resident*

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Mono Pumps NZ Ltd., are the world leaders in the manufacturing of

progressive cavity type wastewater pumps. The company started back in the mid 1800's and have been in New Zealand since 1975.

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Local Mono approved installers are also available to provide around the clock call-out assistance if need be. They can be contacted for a fully installed quote.

Gas & Plumbing Ltd, contact Clyde Dorflinger, Ph: 06 757 9030.

Dairy & Water Specialists, contact Steve Bevan, Ph: 06 757 5064.

*For all other information, please contact:*

Shazad Ibnul at Mono Pumps New Zealand Limited on 09 829 0333 or e-mail [shazad.ibnul@nov.com](mailto:shazad.ibnul@nov.com)

**"It was installed before I knew it ... you don't even know when it's running!"**

*Kevin Davis,  
Oakura resident*



*Installation on Messenger Terrace (Installation by Dairy & Water Specialists).*

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Has your computer got you baffled? Is it running too slowly or being attacked by viruses? Don't suffer PC rage a moment longer — give Dave's PC Services a call!

For the past eight years Dave Skurr has been running his family-orientated computer solutions business from the slopes of the Kaitake Ranges above Oakura.

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"Computer servicing is a competitive business and I like to think of myself as being different from my competitors. I provide a mobile, personalised service where most jobs can be done in the customer's own home."

While Dave's bread and butter is repairing hardware and software faults, he also helps novices set up new computers, including getting email up and running and installing antivirus protection.

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By Robin Martin

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# Rural broadband — another forward step in National's step-change

For those of you who have sat in front of a computer screen and found that it was tedious and slow to do simple things like send emails, read online news or do a Google search, the proposals for the rollout of high-speed broadband in rural areas will be welcome. As technology changes we need to be able to take advantage of all it has to offer.

Our rural communities earn two-thirds of New Zealand's export dollars and provide one in nine Kiwi jobs. Yet many people living outside our main cities and towns are stuck in the dial-up age. They have poor Internet connections and painfully slow download speeds. Families living in our provincial areas find it hard to do the things online that people in our cities take for granted.

We can't afford to let our rural communities fall behind. That's why we're accelerating the rollout of fast broadband services to rural and remote areas and that is also why the Government signed off on National's rural broadband initiative. This \$300 million scheme will build on National's \$1.5 billion ultra-fast broadband plan focused on cities. Together with services to the rural and remote areas it will give over 90% of New Zealand households access to broadband services of at least 5Mbps. The remainder will reach 1Mbps. For many remote and not-so-remote rural areas this will be light years ahead of where they are today.

Our broadband plan will also connect fibre to rural schools. Our urban and rural initiatives will ensure schools and students will have access to broadband speeds of at least 100Mbps. The remaining — most remote — schools will achieve speeds of at least 10Mbps. This will help prepare every student for life and work in the 21st Century.

This initiative is expected to cost \$300 million over six years. It is being funded by a \$48 million Government grant, plus \$252 million from a new levy, which replaces the telecommunications service obligation levy. However the obligation to provide for local free-calling will remain. There will be no extra costs to consumers.

The Government expects to begin allocating funding for this initiative before the end of the year. By connecting our rural businesses and communities with the world, fast broadband will encourage investment and help create jobs, boost wages, and deliver the high-quality public services that Kiwi families need. The days of sitting in front of a computer screen willing it to hasten downloads will be a thing of the past.

*Jonathan Young MP*

**Jonathan Young**  
MP for New Plymouth



**National**

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## Emma Wilson selected for New Zealand triathlon team

### Corporate Sponsors Needed for Budapest Trip

We are very excited to announce that Emma Wilson has been chosen for the New Zealand Triathlon team to race in Budapest in September. She will race in the Sprint Distance Triathlon, which consists of a 750m swim, a 20km bike ride and a 5km run. As one of 10 girls under the age of 19 to be selected, she joins an elite group of New Zealanders of all age groups up to age 79.



In 2009, Emma was awarded the Taranaki Triathlon Club Junior Female Triathlete of the Year. She was also second in her age group at the Tinman Triathlon in Tauranga in December.

Emma has been training under coach Shane Reed, an Olympian who proudly represented New Zealand at the Beijing Olympic Games. Shane hopes to continue to train Emma and get her in the best shape possible over the next six months! She wants to be at the top of her game.

The team will be in Budapest for one week, with three or four days before the race to acclimatise themselves to the temperatures and time difference. They will also have time to get to know the area and study the course. Emma is joining other 'Taranakians' on the team, including Ryan Dingle, Sandra Sharp, Shorty Clark, Joy Baker and John Eagles. A full list of the members of the Budapest team can be found at <http://www.competitions.org.nz>.

Emma would greatly appreciate corporate sponsorship to assist in her participation in this triathlon. She will need approximately \$6000 for flights, accommodation, race entry fees and NZ Triathlon costs. Any businesses or individuals interested in sponsorship should contact Emma Wilson at [emz248@hotmail.com](mailto:emz248@hotmail.com).

Emma became interested in triathlons after seeing the ITU (International Triathlon Union) triathlon here in New Plymouth. She and her dad made a deal while watching the elite race that by the same time the following year they would have completed a triathlon. They trained together and motivated each other, and the love for triathlons has grown from there. Emma has been competing in them for two years now, and her father is still racing too. Emma's younger brother Nick has even started competing!

Emma finished New Plymouth Girls' High School last year in June, and is currently doing a Bachelor of Sport and Exercise Science in Hamilton. She is loving her studies, but still comes home most weekends to be with family.

By Jennifer Gros



### Greetings all,

When you read this we'll have just had the Taranaki Kayak Classic, which attracted a record number of early bird entries, including lots of families and a good number of lady anglers. Entries came from all over NZ including the South Island, Auckland, Wellington and Bay of Plenty. Stay tuned for my report on the Kayak Classic in the May Issue of TOM.

Meanwhile it looks like the good weather has come to an end for a bit, however those nice crisp April and May days can produce some great fish.

A few Kingies have been caught just out of the harbour over the last month or so, along with good number of Gurnard. We haven't heard from Rookey for a while to record any Tuna so I'm guessing they have bailed to warmer waters.

Surfcaster have been very quiet with not many venturing out, although Shane Dunlop got a nice Snapper a few weeks back a bit over 7kg and the odd Trev has been caught off the river mouth along with one or two Kahawai.

The NZ Angling & Casting Nationals were held last month in Coromandel, unfortunately our numbers were down on previous years but Grant, Jacob and I headed off in anticipation of bringing home some of the silverware. With about 15 or so clubs from around the country attending, competition was going to be challenging as many in the NZACA are theoretically the best fishers and casters in the country. The first day saw the Accuracy Casting event. I fortunately scored high coming second behind the top women's seed. The Distance Casting followed on the fourth day and although I was running about midfield, accumulated points for both days scored me in second place overall in the aggregate (*Yee ha! I finally got something, least not a fish for all my efforts!*).

The fishing terrain was fantastic and looked good where we decided to fish on both days, however we only got throw backs, as the minimum size for Snapper was 350mm, and 450mm for Kahawai. Jacob managed to bag a few Snapper and was fortunate enough for them to be counted in at the weigh station. At the prizegiving Jacob won Second Runner-up in the Junior Boys' section.

Some big Kingies and also big Snapper were weighed in over the two days of competition. Interesting to note many came from kayakers. Next year's competition will be a goody with Orewa being the base for the 2010 Nationals. North Shore Surfcasting Club/Hibiscus Kayak Club are hosting the event in April.

Tight lines  
Debbie E

Jacob Morgan with his award badge Junior Boys' Second Runner-Up.)



# Oakura Pony Club News

Earlier this month Oakura Pony Club had their annual Pony Club camp. This is a great time to bring everyone together, particularly the younger new riders with the older experienced riders who are often busy competing at this time of year. This year we had a huge turnout and nearly all our Pony Club members (and a few extras) joined in. In fact, twice as many arrived on the day as expected! Fortunately the catering wasn't organised until the first day (great idea, Emmalie!).

It all began on Sunday morning of Taranaki Anniversary weekend. Most of the older riders had competed at the Carlyle One Day Event the day before, so they all turned up without their horses, it being customary to give a horse a day off after such a big event. We had six ponies on the first day, a perfect number for two games teams. With the big kids helping and teaching the younger ones, everyone had a brilliant time playing games on and off the ponies. It was a classic Oakura hot sunny day, so after the horses were washed down and penned with



*Molly Lumb in the sack race at Oakura Pony Club camp.*

hay and water we all walked down to the beach for a swim. When we returned it was just in time for our guest speaker, Lara from New Plymouth Vet Group, to talk to everyone about the care of the horse and recognising poisonous plants. This was followed by an hour of hilarious twilight bareback jumping (mostly with the big kids on the little ponies). Everyone was called in for roast chicken dinner and Lil's brazier was lit for evening stories and toasting marshmallows.

Apparently the kids did get some sleep that night. Eventually. I certainly wasn't game to stay with the group, in fact I had a headache just thinking about it, but I hear the adults that stayed enjoyed the luxury of Denise's horse truck.

I managed to sleep in on Sunday morning, and when I roused myself and drove down to the Pony Club it was completely deserted of all life — though I did notice everyone's gear lying around, the shed open, clothing sprawled everywhere, and Denise's truck door open with the keys in the ignition! We're so fortunate to live in such a lovely little township where we can still do that sort of thing. The plan for the morning was a big trek up to Koru Pa, with morning tea and a swim before riding back, having lunch and packing up. Emmalie and Denise (extremely committed parents) walked/jogged alongside the kids on their ponies all the way up to Koru Pa. It was yet another gorgeous day, but as is typical at Koru Pa, the fresh-off-the-mountain water was freezing. But refreshing (well, that's what the girls told me — my feet protested at the cold so I didn't get any further).

After swimming the girls did some bareback jumping, then saddled up for a quiet ride back to the Pony Club, lunch and home. We all had a fantastic time. Thanks to all the parents who were so giving of their time, and special thanks to Denise, who yet again not only taught the kids heaps but gave up her entire weekend without break — you're awesome!

By Diane Alder

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# GETTING WET!



## Oakura Boardriders Club

### A Month of Contests

March certainly was a busy time for contest surfing. The second Taranaki Inter-Club Contest ran early in the month with five teams entered this year. There were some teams taking this very seriously. I won't cast aspersions but some dubious ring-ins resulted in a competition fiercely fought. The Oakura team, who I might add were all legitimate locals and club members, was missing a couple of last year's members but put up a good fight in the small conditions at Back Beach. However they couldn't match last year's second place finish and, although there was not much between the teams, it was the New Plymouth Surfing Club who took the honours once again.

New Plymouth Surfing Club first place, Waitara Boardriders second place, Christian Boardriders third place, Oakura Boardriders fourth place, Opunake Boardriders fifth place.

Next year we are hoping a team from the Patea Club will participate in the competition. We are also hoping that all clubs will honour and abide by the rules! Nevertheless this contest is a great uniting of the Taranaki Clubs and a good day on the beach.

The following weekend the Rip Curl Pro was held at Raglan. I had the pleasure of staying with the O&E Team at a prime house overlooking *Indicators* (a surf break) and, aside from the contest, we supporters had some fun waves on the points and a great weekend. The Team had some consistent results to the quarterfinals with ex-Taranaki resident, Joe Morreti, making the junior final and topping an excellent weekend (thanks to John & Karen Lovell for the hospitality).

The Taranaki Secondary Schools Champs were next, run at Back Beach. Again this was a huge day for the organisers and never without controversy with so many involved, but an important part of getting surfing into the school system. A couple of Oakura Boardriders Club members made the finals with Connor Anderson in the U18, Seth Marshall in the U16 and Toby Brankin in the U14. Good results guys and good for the club and our junior surfers.

*Brent*

### Yet more contests . . .

I write this after a wonderful experience at Oakura School where the pupils and staff were treated to an insight into the life of a professional surfer. Paige Hareb, a past pupil of the school, and her friend and fellow competitor, Sofia Mulanovich, who was World Champion in 2004, talked to the excited children about the highs and challenges (there are some!) of being on the Dream Tour. They were happy to answer a multitude of questions as well as signing autographs for the delighted children.

What superb role models these women are as they spoke of what it takes to be a world champion in a very natural, honest and yet humble way. They truly are an inspiration.

Many of the children were also privileged to have Paige give of her time to help with the final of the four surfing lessons that the Oakura Boardriders Club and I have organised, which I wrote about in last month's TOM. I'm sure there aren't too many



*Jackie Mitchell competing in the Oakura Team at the Taranaki Interclub Challenge*

young surfers who can say they have surfed with one of the world's best! We wish Paige and Sofia every success at the TSB Women's Surfing Festival and I trust you have had or are about to have an opportunity to support this event and catch some of the action.

There was certainly plenty of action at Oakura Beach on Saturday, 20 March for the junior division of our Club Champs. It was so good that many more children participated this year than last year and to see, from the quality of the surfing, that many of them are obviously out catching waves as often as they can.

The surf proved to be quite contestable for our younger surfing competitors who were cheered on by a very enthusiastic and appreciative audience. After the finals many of these children competed again, this time on their bodyboards. They had to impress the judges by performing as many tricks as they could. Standing on your board with a wide grin certainly scored highly!

The U14 Boys' surfing event was a more serious affair as the conditions weren't as good as they had been earlier when the boys were free surfing. However, they performed very well in spite of the light onshore wind and two-foot swell. Following the contest we adjourned to the clubrooms for a well deserved feed of barbecued sausages and onions and a chance to chat about our surfing experiences.

Unfortunately there wasn't enough swell to hold the senior events on the Sunday so they were postponed till the weekend of 27/28 March, which you can read about in next month's edition.

*Philippa Butt*



*Philippa Butt with the Oakura School Surfing Group.*



### Jnnior Division Club Champs Results:

#### Girls' U12 Surfing

1st Bailey Bruckner  
2nd Poppy Mitchell  
3rd Taylor Mitchell  
4th Eva Davies

#### Boys' U14 Surfing

1st Toby Brankin  
2nd Alex King  
3rd Ben King  
4th Jesse Grayling

#### Boys U10 Bodyboarding

1st Tom Butland  
2nd Hamish Goodhue  
3rd Nick Holt  
4th Reef Thompson

#### Boys' U10 Surfing

1st Jack Mitchell  
2nd Reef Thompson  
3rd Tom Butland  
4th Kieran Cullen

#### Girls' U10 Bodyboarding

1st Eva Davies  
2nd Poppy Mitchell  
3rd Maddie Hardie-Boys  
4th Juliet Squatriti  
5th Taylor Mitchell

#### Boys' U12 Surfing

1st Jack Davies  
2nd Isaac Hardie-Boys  
3rd Gian Squatriti

#### Girls' U12 Bodyboarding

1st Isabel Goodhue  
2nd Bailey Bruckner  
3rd Molly Lumb

#### Boys U10 Bodyboarding

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2nd Hamish Goodhue  
3rd Nick Holt  
4th Reef Thompson

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## Arthouse Cinema Surf Film Festival, April 10-17

It's not every year that Taranaki sees awesome women's surfing like the Women's Pro Tour will bring to Fitzroy. So, we figured Surf Film Festivals are de rigueur in Hawaii, San Diego, Bali and even Yallingup, why not the 'Naki?

Arthouse Cinema, in conjunction with Seasons Cheapskates, announces 20 surf films at the refurbished Mayfair Cinema in New Plymouth! That's a week of brand new surf flicks never before screened or sold in NZ.

There will be four pumping films screened every day at the Mayfair during the surf film festival, April 10-17 2010. There are five women's surf movies that feature really good stories of real women surfing. We have the New Zealand premiere of *Sea of Darkness*, the tale of the original surfers discovering the Mentawis, Sumatra, and G-land, and how it all turned quickly to custard once they started drug smuggling to fund their Lost Boy lifestyles. We feature several art-surf films made by surfers specifically to promote the beauty of the ocean, the grace of surfing, and the preservation of the earth (*The Thread*, *The Present*).

There has never been such a feast of surf films in New Zealand and we are stoked to include *No More Heroes*, an unreleased skate film from Super 8 footage of the skating craze as it swept New Zealand. Grommits are not forgotten with the inclusion of Billabong's *Still Filthy*, and the more contentious elements in modern surfing are dealt with in the documentaries *Bra Boys*, *Bustin' Down The Door*, and the Kelly Slater/Andy Irons face-off, *Fly in the Champagne*. Northshore Hawaii features in *The Arena*, or just pure stoke with no agro in *Finding Aloha*. The first woman to surf Mavericks is interviewed in *One Winter Story*. We meet the *Hana Surf Girls*, a film so new it premiered only this February and the disc is still being pressed by the makers.

We're also showing *Lost Prophets*, *Chasing Dora*, *Shaped...* make your own Alia surfboard; watch Rob Machado get lost in Indo for six months in his film, which took several awards at the X-Dance Action Sports Film Festival only this February. And that's not all. Short films and promos have been thrown in by the good Californians who want us to have our own annual surf festival. Thanks, Yanks! We will tuck these in around the movies for you to enjoy.

All in all a really stoked, amping and briny surf film festival. Where do you get a programme? Available online at [www.arthousecinema.co.nz](http://www.arthousecinema.co.nz) or from a surf shop near you.

All tickets are for sale at the Mayfair (73a Devon St West, New Plymouth, above Matinee) or from our sponsors, Seasons Cheapskates (corner Leach and Gover Sts, New Plymouth). Adult tickets \$15, children (under 12) \$7.50, or catch five great movies for only \$11 each with our Boho Card, available from Matinee or directly from Arthouse when you visit the Mayfair.

At the Mayfair we have 1915 leather seats from the old opera house, beanbags and a retro intermission with ice creams and Jaffas. Come and feast on the waves during the school holidays!

# GETTING WET!



## NPOB Surf Club

Well, the season began with a hiss and a roar. The roar mostly coming in the form of a Westerly but let's not talk about the roar ... The Club want to say a huge thank you to all of our community for your support and for making this year's New Years Day Carnival another huge success. Without you all the day just wouldn't go ahead. Jandal Day also saw New Plymouth Old Boys (NPOB) with the largest contingent on the streets with buckets in hand! We raised the most of any club. Sponsorship, contra deals and the all-important voluntary workforce that you have all provided again this season, doesn't go unnoticed. We encourage our members to support you as you support us, so please let us know other ways we can also get your name out there as we so value our partnerships with our business community.

The Club has had some fantastic patrolling teams keeping our beach safe this summer and we are leading the charge with so many of our young guards showing interest. We had over 1000 voluntary hours tallied only midway through the season, which was huge. Those final hours are being collated now! It's such a great sight, seeing our junior club members stretching their wings and now having sat their bronze awards, ensuring we have plenty of lifeguards on the road to what the Club is all about. Our Beach Together... keeping everyone safe at Oakura Beach.

NPOB held their own in the early season competitions. We've got a bit to live up to now we have raised the bar.

NPOB Coach, Glenn Anderson, and Club Captain, Ayla Dunlop-Barrett feel the Club is looking strong, and here are some of those outcomes:

NPOB Top Club Taranaki, Top Club Central Regionals, three members in the NZ squad for Worlds in Egypt, Top Region in NZ at Lion Foundation Surf League, seven national titles and over 27 medallists.

Antony North and Byron Reid did a fantastic job getting our young ones really keen. Surf lifesaving at this level is all about beach safety. "Swim between the flags, watch for rips, learn the hand signals if you're in trouble." Surf Sport grows from here but this early critical message is so important and the junior surf team with all these young families had a great season. Ocean Athletes in Mt Maunganui is a big event nationally for our under-14's too. This young team had a great trip away so here's to building on this each year.

Our cadets, rookies and seniors have grown a really special culture at the Club and the strength in these relationships is seen when you spot any group of them together and they're just cracking each other up! The Club is very proud of the work that our seniors have put into guiding this.

Quiz nights, hours fixing IRB (inflatable rescue boat) gear, transport to trainings, sausage sizzles, raffles, personal donations and time, time, time is what we take our hats off to. Thank you all within the Club for how much you give.

Later in the season the seniors showed their colours at the NZ Pool Champs, Northerns, Centrals, Interdistricts and Lion Surf League. By then the season had well hotted up. Nationals followed at Ohope and, as this goes to print, our crack IRB teams are competing at Waipu Cove, defending their national fourth position and some personal titles being guarded jealously!!!!!! The West Coasters do well in the bigger swell so let's pray for just the right amount of that.

We are also so proud to announce that Glenn, Ayla and Dylan have all been selected for the NZ squad with the final team announced this month to attend the Worlds in Egypt! Congrats again, guys.

Thank you again to all those who supported our family photo

fundraiser, proceeds went to the Club and some great prizes from this will be announced very soon.

It's also Surf Lifesaving NZ's 100th anniversary this year so watch this space for upcoming dates in the diary!

We're all keen to enjoy the rest of the year with you so although summer is coming to its close, drop into the Club to find out more or talk to any of our team for more details. We want to keep in touch with our community and to all those in other voluntary groups and sport with an exciting year ahead, we wish you all the best for the rest of 2010.

To the members, coaches, managers, parents and life members of NPOB, here's a huge thank you for all of your hard work, commitment and baking! NPOB is a great club with a passion for where we live. If you have any ideas or queries about how to become involved please contact the Club on 06-752 7776 or email us on [npoosurf@xtra.co.nz](mailto:npoosurf@xtra.co.nz).

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# The Dancing Queens of Oakura

Local sisters Brianna and Emily Breeze are proving themselves to be accomplished Highland dancers. Their medal and trophy haul is impressive for the eight- and six- year-old sisters. Brianna has been doing the fling since she was four years old, and Emily has been watching since she was two years old and participating since she was three.

In March the two girls competed in Wellington at a Highland dancing competition where Brianna was placed second overall in her age group and Emily was placed third overall in her age group. Brianna says she likes Highland dancing because it is fun and you have to work hard, while Emily says she likes getting medals and making new friends.

The girls' mum, Mel, says she got the girls into Highland dancing because her grandfather is Scottish and she liked the fact that the National Scottish Highland Dancing Board was affiliated



*Brianna on the left and Emily on the right display their impressive medal haul.*

back to Scotland. She says it's also interesting and enjoyable to watch. Dad Seamus is Irish but doing a jig wasn't an option!

Brianna and Emily go along to the Lawrie Dance Studio run by another local, Judy Clark. Emily now has lessons with Morgan Bamford, five times World Champion Highland dancer, while Judy teaches Brianna.

The girls get to wear stunning outfits for competitions and exams. Mel has hand picked the specific tartans each girl wears. They are exquisitely handcrafted and of the highest quality. Brianna's dress tartan is called Blue Scott and Emily's is called Bruce of Kinnard. Mel says Highland dancing has given her girls confidence in life and especially to dance in front of a crowd, whether it be 12,000 people at WOMAD or in a competition. They have also learnt perseverance and how to prepare for something and give it their best. The only downside is getting their hair done in a traditional Scottish knot — ouch!

For more details on Highland dancing contact Judy Clark, Morgan Bamford or Mel Breeze (ph. 752 1111).

*By Kim Ferens*

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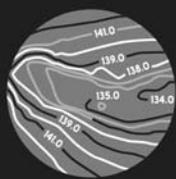
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# Gardening

## TOM Girlz Garden of the Month

This month's TOM garden captivated me from the moment I entered the drive. It is located in Donnelly St and belongs to Shae Martin and husband Clayton Matchett and their two children Rylie and Aiden. The driveway winds down the hill to the Oakura River, through established trees and underplantings of agapanthus and renga rengas. It is like driving into another world and the eight acre property is indeed steeped in history.

First to strike a chord is the villa reportedly built in 1910 and transported to Oakura from Stratford in the 70's. It nestles contentedly in its setting of established trees including oaks, cabbage trees, eucalyptus, pines and pohutukawa. Shae tells me the house has been blessed by the Rev. Albie Martin as the site of the house was once part of the walking track for Maori going to and from Koru Pa and the Marae.

Shae and Clayton bought the property in July 2008, thanks to Nicki Procter. Nicki thought the property was just what the family was looking for and arranged a visit prior to its listing. So a 2.30pm viewing was arranged and by 2.35pm Shae and Clayton were sold! Clayton says that Shae did have to keep her poker face until at least the next day.

The next thing to captivate is the sound of Oakura River. I was fortunate to visit on a day when steady rain had fallen in the early dawn hours and the river was fair rushing along. The family swimming hole was no more, but a whirlpool of sticks, logs and debris was — mesmerising.

Over recent weeks Clayton has been busy with man's best power tool — the chainsaw — felling and clearing vegetation around a nearly overgrown spring-fed pond. He then brought in a digger and had the pond cleared and now a plethora of new trees and shrubs have been planted around the perimeter of the pond, including rimu, totara, lancewood, grasses and flaxes. A few lily pads float. Parakeets screech overhead.

A tunnel house has been resurrected and is home to various kitchen garden delights. Alongside is a refurbished guest house. This building was once a garden centre, Shae tells me — Paynes Garden Centre — tell me more, I say, but Shae doesn't know any more details. Matt Hood helped craft this cottage into a rustic delight.

Overgrown vegetation has been cleared away from around the villa and rather than the typical cottage garden, there is mixed planting of flaxes, dahlias, cabbage trees, hydrangeas and rhododendron, all synching well together. Around the guest cottage is a grouping of cutesy cottage flowering plants, giving a splash of colour. The south side of the villa has its own fernery with various species growing happily in the moist shade, whereas on the north sunny side a herb garden and artichoke bed thrive.

In another corner we find Tank, the rather large dog of uncertain parentage, fishing in the Zen garden. This is a tranquil pond area

### *The cottagey section of Shae's garden*



*Tank taking a quiet stroll through the Zen garden.*



*The sunny northern side of the house.*

where one can take a moment to sit quietly and contemplate.

There are many more things to exclaim over excitedly — the beehive yielding the family a honey supply; the kumara patch (about which Shae is dumbfounded as to what to do); the ancient apple trees with their delicious fruit destined for apple cider and apple crumbles; the avocado orchard; the tree house; the mountain view. And inside the house, the fabulous antiques and character features of the building.

Shae says this property is not a garden, it is just one project after another and the next project is wherever her whim takes her (and her part-time gardener, Richele Lander). I ask if it is overwhelming and she laughs and says the laundry basket is overwhelming but her time outdoors is about light and happiness!

I couldn't agree more.

*Kim Ferens*



*New plantings around the pond.*

**(This month's TOM Girlz garden has a \$10 voucher to spend at The Girlz Garden Centre.)**

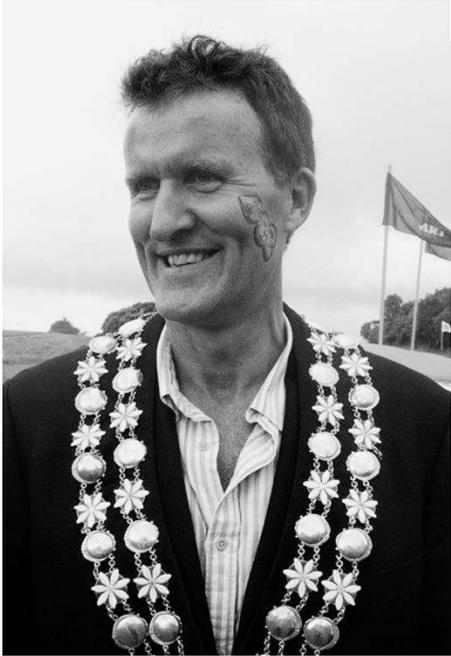
**Around Town with Jennifer**

*Jago Robertson as a tiger at the local Wingspan Festival.*



*Chester Oldfield had a blast at a trip to the local YMCA with Sophia Preschool!*

*Mayor Peter Tennent gets into the spirit of the Wingspan Festival with a tiki face paint!*



*Fletcher Ferguson catches a wave at the afterschool surfing lessons provided by the Oakura Boardriders Club.*

*Paige Hareb enjoying the afternoon with Juliet Squatriti and Mckenzie Williams at the Oakura Boardriders Club afterschool surfing lessons.*



*Emma Brown and Julia Chrighton enjoyed selling Dairy Milk at a local festival to benefit their school camp.*

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## Local practitioners offer free clinic for children

Taranaki Community Complementary Therapies Clinic is hosting a free clinic for babies, children and teens up to 18 years of age. It will be held on the first Saturday of each month from 10am to 12pm. The next clinic will be Saturday, May 1 2010 at Village Health, 11 Old South Road, Okato.

Natural health care and complementary therapies are utilised by many people to regain and maintain health and wellbeing. Access to natural health care at a professional level can be difficult or out of reach for lower income families. This community clinic offers greater access to complementary therapies for families and their children within the Taranaki region.

These health professionals focus on the whole child by addressing physical, emotional and behavioural concerns to support health and wellbeing.

Natural therapies are useful in the treatment and prevention of many common health conditions including: colds, flu, rashes, eczema, asthma, emotional concerns, anxiety, behavioral concerns, nutrition, insomnia, immune system issues, digestion problems, bed wetting, nightmares, back problems, fears and phobias, headaches, colic, reflux, earache, sleep and feeding issues, head asymmetries, and for postnatal check ups and much more.

Call 06 752 4826 or email [healthychildren@villagehealth.co.nz](mailto:healthychildren@villagehealth.co.nz) to schedule an appointment at the next free clinic. All enquiries will be treated confidentially. You will be seen by professionally certified and trained practitioners within the community who are volunteering their time, experience and knowledge to work within the framework of complementary therapies.

The practitioners participating include:

*Anastasia Spurdle M. Ost., B.Sc. (Human Biology), B.Ph.Ed.*

Anastasia believes that treating children to remove strains accumulated at an early age from situations such as intrauterine molding, birth trauma, reflux, illnesses and falls leaves the child in the best position to cope with life. Osteopathy, when applied to children, is therefore to return the child to pre-injury state but also as a preventative therapy so the child can grow, develop and learn without these potential impeding factors. Mother of two.

*Annalisa Johnson CH, CMT*

Has been working with children for over 10 years. Annalisa uses foods, Herbal Medicines (such as teas, tinctures), Homeobotanicals, Flower Essences and Craniosacral Therapy and Reiki to enhance and bring balance into children's lives. Mother of two young children. Certified in Therapeutic and Clinical Herbal Medicine, Certified Relaxation Massage Therapist, Reiki Practitioner, Trained in Craniosacral Therapy.

*Kate Evans*

Connecting with children of all ages, she uses education and various modalities to balance and clear their energy system. Mother of three. Trained as a Reiki Teacher, also offers Reiki workshops specifically aimed at 9-13 year olds. EMF Balancing Technique Accredited Practitioner, Reiki Master, Energy Therapist.

*Meegan Care Dip. Psychosynthesis Counselling*

Holistic Therapist and Counsellor experienced in working with children and teens within a wide range of physical, psychological and developmental issues. Mother of two young children. Psychosynthesis Counselling, EMF Balancing Technique Accredited Practitioner, EFT Practitioner, Pranic Healing.

*By Jennifer Gros*

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## Students camp at Vertical Horizons

On 9 and 10 March, the Year 5 and 6 students of Oakura School embarked on their school camp to Vertical Horizons for the night.

Leaving at around 9.00am and arriving at camp about an hour later, the children and parents went to their cabins to unpack and get ready for the numerous activities planned ahead!

The activities available at Vertical Horizons included the flying kiwi, archery, the zip line, orienteering, kayaking and grass karts. The students were split into seven groups, each group doing one activity at a time.

After running around all day and trying new things like the flying kiwi, all students and adults could go and have fun on a long mudslide, landing in a deep pool of mud! Some people didn't like getting all muddy, so for them there was a fantastic waterslide landing in a freezing cold lake!

At night, the students had two activities to complete: the nightline (a walk at night following a rope in the pitch dark), and a bush walk to see the fantastic glow worms lighting up a large cave!

The weather was fantastic for the two days of camp and it was a great experience for the students, parents and staff.

*Molly Cattell (12 years)*



*Oliver Williamsen on the flying kiwi.*

## Beach clean-up

On Monday, 22 February Oakura School held their annual Beach Clean-Up. The school holds this event as a contribution to the welfare of our community. All 11 classes were allocated a certain part of Oakura Beach to clean up between Ahu Ahu Road and Oakura River.

The students walked from school down to their section of the beach where they cleared the area of rubbish, leaving our beach clean and tidy, before heading down to Oakura River for a swim and an afternoon of fun and games, including a sausage sizzle that was kindly run by FOOS (Friends of Oakura School).

The day is always enjoyed by everyone, and the school is proud to be able to do something for the Oakura Community.

Oakura Beach is a fantastic part of our community and it is important that we keep it clean so we can continue to enjoy it!

*By Amy Benton*

*Some happy beach cleaners (left to right): Moss Cattell, Aiden Matchett, Henry McKenzie, Eva Hilliam, Rachel Cave.*



## Senior school swimming sports

On 2 March, Oakura School senior students held their swimming sports at Okato Pool. All sorts of races were held, from serious strokes to relays and bodyboard races. The stars of the day were Angus White and Molly Cattell, who won the two-length freestyle championship. They were awarded a trophy engraved with their names. Obviously the two swimmers put in a really good effort to achieve this. Overall it was a very successful, fun and exciting day for the whole senior school.

*By Jessie Webster*

*Teacher Gillian von Sturmer starts the girls' freestyle race.*




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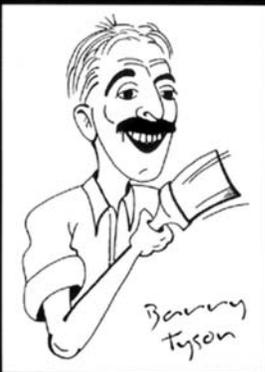
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## Upcoming Events

### April

- 19 Term 3 begins  
Life Education
- 20 French and Spanish Lessons begin
- 29 Rotary Reading begins  
Playgroup 9–11 am

### May

- 2 Pumpkin Harvest Festival 11 am–2pm  
All welcome
- 5 Year 1/2 Ball Skills 1 pm
- 12 Year 2/3 Ball Skills 1 pm
- 13 Playgroup 9–11 am

## Swimming

What a successful swimming season we have had this year. The pool has been well used by the community over the holidays and weekends, and closed on 23 March. Classes have had very few days when they have been unable to swim. Students have made great progress with water confidence, stroke development and life-saving skills. We would like to extend a huge thanks to Lil Logan and her team of parents who have kept the pool sparkling clean and safe for everyone to use. Without these volunteers it would not be possible to keep our pool running.

## Omata Pumpkin Harvest Festival

Join Omata Home and School for a fun family day at our Inaugural Pumpkin Harvest Festival on Sunday 2 May, 11 am–2 pm.

Many giant pumpkins have been growing in our district over the summer. Come and view the largest and smallest of these, guess the weight of the heaviest pumpkin and enjoy our produce stall, fabulous food, and a wonderful array of entertainment including live music, quick fire raffles, pony rides, side car rides, bouncy castles and lots of other fun things.

So join us for a great family fun day out. EFTPOS available.

## Camp Poem 2010

By Sam Poles Smith (aged 10 years)

Walking down the pitch black bush, Home of the Glow Worms, Tripping over hidden objects.  There goes another whistle, Meeting at the meeting point, What are we doing now?  Seeking for clues in orienteeing. Finished.....!, is all I hear.	Sitting around the blazing camp fire, Toasting marshmallows over the blazing hot embers, Humming the unknown campfire songs.  Shoving down food like life depends on it.  Jumping into the freezing cold pool for a morning swim, I see now why they call it Ice-Breakers!!!
---	---

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Welcome to Benjamin Bryant Dixon, beautiful baby boy born on 13 January 2010. He is the son of Megan and Sam Dixon. He is a very easygoing little guy who loves talking and watching big brother and sis play. Otis (3) and Hannah (2) have really taken to their little brother, wrapping him up in blankets and helping to clean up little messes.

*Photo by Jennifer Gros*

## FOCTS

**(Friends of Coastal Taranaki School — Home and School)**

We would like to welcome new and old families to our next meeting. Please come and have your say on how and what you would like to see fundraised money being spent on. Maybe you have some new ways you could help raise money for your kids' education.

Next Meeting: 29 April, 7pm in the staff room.

Su Hammond: ph. 06-752 4497 [hammond.su@gmail.com](mailto:hammond.su@gmail.com)

Kelly Luckin: ph. 06-752 4199 [LUCKS@xtra.co.nz](mailto:LUCKS@xtra.co.nz)

## WOMAD comes to Playcentre

The middle weekend in March is a weekend that many Oakura families look forward to with great anticipation. It is the weekend that WOMAD comes to town, World of Music, Art and sometimes Dance. Although there was no dance at WOMAD this year, there were some amazing stilt walkers, and we were lucky enough to have one of them come to visit us at Playcentre! Emily Buttle is the director of the Empress Stilt Dance Company, and while her staff were in bed sleeping, tired from a weekend of stilt walking, she kindly volunteered to show us how she could walk on stilts.

The Playcentre mothers decided that it was safest for all of us to sit up on the hill to watch. We looked on with intrigue as Emily, sitting on a high wooden box, slipped her feet into sneakers that were attached to a pair of stilts. Then with a little help from a friend she stood up, towering above us. The children squealed with delight as Emily jumped, spun and kicked her legs up high. We were all mesmerised by her elegance, poise and bravery.

Afterwards we had a discussion in which we discovered that stilt walking in the rain or wind is not advisable, when stilt walking you have to keep moving or you will fall off, and that it is advisable to have a helper in front of you to clear the way. We also decided that making our own stilts would be a fun project for the children next term. Lastly we discussed the origins of stilt walking, which I think is still up for debate around the morning coffee table.

Speaking of which, if you have been meaning to call in for a visit, Playcentre is open for all parents and children (0–6 years). Our sessions are 9am–12pm on Monday, Wednesday and, as of next term, Friday as well. No need to book, just come along for a cuppa, a chat and a play.

## Decision makers hosted by Sophia Preschool

Sophia Preschool recently hosted the Teachers as Decision Makers Seminar at the Oakura Pa. There were international guest speakers and more than 80 people attending the seminar, consisting of early childhood teachers from all over Taranaki and as far as Whanganui. The presenters were world renowned writers and researchers in early childhood development with books published and sold internationally.



According to Adrienne Wilkins, owner of Sophia Preschool, "The seminar focused on an inquiry approach to learning, with teachers constantly reflecting on their practice, these being concepts at the heart of the Reggio approach to early education." The event was organised, hosted and catered by Sophia Preschool, with beautiful homemade food enjoyed by all the attendees.

A group of American teachers attended the seminar as part of their study tour. They were visiting Reggio-inspired centres in Auckland, and came to Oakura specifically to view Sophia Preschool because of its outstanding reputation.

*By Jennifer Gros*



*The giant leap.*

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## OAKURA CLUBS & GROUPS

### Bellydance

Every Thursday at Oakura Boardriders Club. 7.15 to 8.30pm.  
Contact Rosalina at 027 739 1380.

### Country and Western Club

Every 1st and 3rd Friday from 8.00pm. Contact Betty West,  
89 Wairau Rd. Ph 752 7816.

### Hurford - Omata - Oakura Rural Women

Meet 2nd Wednesday each month at 1.00pm. New members  
welcome. Contact Jean Kurth 751 2274.

### Indoor Bowls

Mondays 7.30pm at Oakura Hall.  
Ring Mike Vickers 752 7881.

### JKA Karate

Tuesdays at Oakura Hall 5.30-6.30pm.  
Thursdays at Oakura Hall 6.00-7.00pm.  
Contact Jim Hoskin 752 7337.

### Mini Groovers

Tuesday mornings 10.00am, Oakura Hall.  
Gold coin donation.

### Oakura Pool Club

Meets every Wednesday evening 7pm @ Butlers Reef over  
winter. Ph Stu 752 7407.

### Okato Squash Club

Monday Club Night.

### Omata Playgroup

Every 2nd Thursday, 9.00am at the Omata Community Hall.  
Ring 751 2308 for next session date. All parents and pre-  
schoolers welcome.

### Playcentre

Playcentre, Donnelly Street.  
Monday and Wednesday, 9.00 to noon.

### Plunket Coffee mornings

Wednesday, 9.15am to 11.00am (please arrive before  
10.00am). During the winter months, held at attendees homes  
- please contact Bob Fleming 752 7048 or Fe Burkett, 752  
1132, or Claire Florence, 752 7889 to find out where.

### Senior Citizens

Meet Tuesdays in St James Church lounge for cards and  
bowls. All welcome. Phone 753 5705 for enquiries.

### St James Church, Oakura

Morning worship 10.00am, 2nd and 4th Sundays of the  
month.

### St John's, Omata

Morning worship 10.00am, 2nd Sunday of the month.

### Tai Chi

Evening classes starting 1st week Feb, Thurs 6.30pm, St  
James Church, Weds 10.30am. Ph Joanna Smith Holley 752  
1016 for details.

### Volkswagen Club

Events range from car rallies, the YMCA climbing wall,  
camping, BBQ get togethers and sharing good family times  
and knowledge.

Contact Brian Goodhue,  
the El Presidente 752 1290, email podsnail@xnet.co.nz

### Yoga

No classes on Saturday and Keith Plummer is taking Tuesday  
night from 7:30 to 9pm (same time). At Oakura Hall,  
beginners are welcome. ph 752 7050.

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