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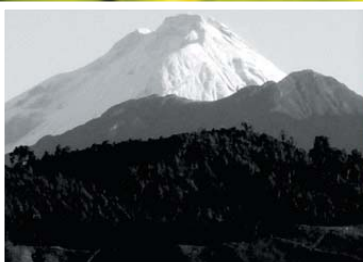
OAKURA

JUNE 2016

## A LOCAL RARITY

A Taranaki Gold Stripe Gecko from Omata raises hopes for the continuation of this rare species in the area.

*More on page 12*



## Leo Baas

*Lifestyle & Rural Specialist*



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TAKE ONE MOMENT

# TOM OAKURA

TOM OAKURA is a free monthly publication, delivered at the beginning of each 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 The TOM*

**Do you have a story of local interest that you'd like to share with the readers of TOM?**

**Phone 0800 THE TOM**  
or click "contribute" at  
**www.thetom.co.nz**

TOM dates to remember  
for July 2016 issue:

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## EDITORIAL

As the balmy weather has lingered seemingly without end, I have been out enjoying the night sky.

A few weeks ago Mark Gee, an astronomical photographer was on TV talking about getting out and looking up into the night sky and enjoying the phenomena that is our Milky Way and I couldn't agree more. It is one of my nightly pleasures taking the dog out for her pit stop before bed and looking up and wondering which star is which. As the year progresses, watching the changing orientation of the constellations in the sky - the most obvious being the Southern Cross or the Crux and the saucepan or Orion.

A fascination for the stars began late for me and it began one night when a friend and I took our kids to stay on farm where we slept under the stars. I didn't do much sleeping but the stars kept me company and I lay watching their progression across the night sky. On another occasion I was on a school trip to Auckland and the teacher had us all look up one night and he named the various stars and surprising for me some were planets. Now I always look out for Mars and Jupiter.

I haven't obsessed about learning all the names and locations of stars but I was glad I watched Mark Gee on TV because he takes the most stunning photographs and time lapse videos of the night sky, some of which feature the Australis Borealis (Southern Lights) and also because he mentioned there is a mobile phone app you can download about stars. This app is so easy to use - you just point your phone at the star and it tells you what it is called - so easy and helpful. You can read all the information you like on the internet of course but I find I don't remember it when I'm outside whereas the app is right at your fingertips. Unfortunately for me I need my glasses on to read the app and I need my glasses off to see the stars so I am a bit handicapped!

Winter time is always a great time to look for stars, there's a brightness to the sky like no other time of year but you need your slippers on. Get outdoors and look up and enjoy the night.

*Kim*



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# Mayor Andrew Judd

Hi everyone.

The Council is gearing up for two days of hearings next week on the submissions received to the Draft Annual Plan 2016/17.

This is when Councillors hear verbal submissions from people who have already sent in their comments on the draft plan, and they can answer any questions we have on the points they've raised.

The response to the draft plan has been fantastic: we ended up with more than 1,100 submissions from the public – both on the formal submission form and through the [myrates.npdcc.nz](http://myrates.npdcc.nz) website. That's a great level of feedback and I thank everyone who took the time to send in their opinions.

It's been particularly helpful to get so much feedback on the three key proposals in the plan: funding for a detailed assessment of options to redevelop the Todd Energy Aquatic Centre, additional funding to develop new business and events in the Council's four main venues, and year-round free parking on Saturdays in New Plymouth's CBD.

Your comments will help Councillors make decisions on these and other features in the draft plan at our meeting on 28 June.

If you're interested in the submissions or the Council's debate of the issues, you're welcome to pop along to the Council Chamber to sit in on the hearings (on 9 and 10 June) or the deliberations on 28 June, or you can watch them live online via [newplymouthnz.com](http://newplymouthnz.com).

*Mayor Andrew Judd*

## Thinking about Subdividing?

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**Puke Ariki**  
MUSEUM LIBRARIES TOURIST INFORMATION



**Oakura Library**

Join us for our monthly pre-school story time Thursday 16th June at 10am. We will have a guest story teller this month!

At the end of term 1 we had our school holiday programme to coincide with Puke Ariki's new exhibition *Ko Taranaki te Mounga*. It was well attended as we made tissue paper collages of our beautiful mountain. As usual the children inspired me with their calibre of art work. Several of them are displayed at the library.

For our next school holiday programme we will be hosting Rob Groat on Wednesday 13th July at 10:30. The theme will be *Voyage to the Deep*.

Also if you haven't been to the museum in a while take the family in for an all new Ruru scavenger hunt. View museum objects with fresh eyes. Who doesn't like a scavenger hunt! Collect your Ruru badge at the host desk when you have finished.

For these and other library and museum events go to What's On at [www.pukeariki.com](http://www.pukeariki.com) or pick up a brochure from us.

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# Building Our Future Workforce

Despite the challenges in the Taranaki economy, we have the fourth highest family household income in New Zealand, following Auckland (\$101,000), Wellington (\$98,900) and Canterbury (94,000). Taranaki's average household income in 2015 was \$93,100. The Waikato region was \$10,000 less at \$83,900.

What undergirds our strength as a region is not only good industries, but also a very good workforce. Skilled people are essential for the Taranaki economy, whether they are involved in agriculture, engineering, commerce or a myriad of other occupations. What is of concern is that the average age of the technical workforce in Taranaki is within a decade of retirement. That means we must be ensuring opportunities and encouragement is given to new entrants to the workforce. We want our workforce skilled, enthusiastic and enjoying living and working in our region.

There are a number of initiatives designed to prepare our young people for a future career, complementing the excellent work our secondary schools are doing. Taranaki Futures is an organisation I have had a lot to do with forming, aimed at helping students connect to a trade based career here in Taranaki, especially good considering we are experiencing a shortage of some trades. Some students learning really takes off when they are involved hands-on. Another programme which I've initiated is Accelerator. This is a programme that runs during term two, for senior secondary students; to initiate them into business. It is presently being piloted in New Plymouth and Waitara, but interest in Accelerator is coming from other parts of Taranaki as well as the Waikato, Canterbury and the East Coast.

Students are assigned to a business. They go to their placement every Monday from 4-5pm where they meet with business owners and managers, learning the purpose, structure and market for that business. From 5.30pm through to 7pm they go to Accelerator HQ where they have a series of short and powerful sessions on leadership principles and hear the stories of their coaches on how they have journeyed down their career path. The evening finishes in small breakout groups where coaches and students get to discuss and share their thoughts and experiences. The evening session always starts with pizza, as the students arrive at the end of a long day.

Accelerator has over 50 students involved, with 13 coaches and nearly 50 businesses. It's an exciting opportunity for students to get a forensic look at a business that will hopefully help them make their decisions on which tertiary qualification they might pursue. It also helps them build a strong connection with a Taranaki business; and hopefully

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that might be enough to bring them back to our region once they have qualified. Taranaki Futures and Accelerator are about helping our young people find a strong future, and hopefully about Taranaki being part of that future.

**Students and coaches at the Accelerator HQ,  
Devon St, New Plymouth.**



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ENTERTAINMENT FEATURING

## MIDLIFE CRISIS

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# McDonald Real Estate's New Home

Last month McDonald Real Estate opened their brand new office space in Oakura's main street. The new building has transformed the look of Oakura by day and by night. The bright red frontage is definitely eye catching and by night the illuminated property listings brighten the corner. McDonald Real Estate held an opening night and afternoon for businesses and community members. Everyone was invited along to view the new space with plenty of activities, food, beverages, giveaways and entertainment for all.

The new building is certainly a vast improvement on the old, quaint as it was. There is work spaces for all the team, off street parking and a private meeting space for those wanting to discuss property. Daniel McDonald, owner of the property says he, his family, and colleagues were blown away by the support they received from the Oakura community over the opening weekend, particularly the local businesses that lent their support. He goes on to say that they are all really proud of their new office, and very thankful for the comments and well wishes received over the past few weeks.

"The new office is proving to be a great space for our staff and clients, and the location provides fantastic exposure for our listings. The enquires we are receiving from properties in the window have never been stronger, and we are desperately seeking new listings in the village to satisfy that demand.

"We would like to extend a huge thank you to all of those who worked on our building, in particular the main contractor, Mike Childs Builders/New Style Homes."

Congratulations to Daniel and his team for a job well done.

*by Kim Ferens*

Opening night celebrations.



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# SPORTS

## Oakura Pony Club

*Rider profile:*

### **RYLIE MATCHETT**

Rylie has been a member of the club for several years and has steadily grown as a rider and competitor. Her gregarious personality and infectious positivity will be missed by her club mates as Rylie is sadly bound for warmer shores. She and her family will be returning to Hawaii, also depriving the local horse owners of the services of her dad, Clayton Matchett, our local equine vet. Clayton has been an extremely important member of the local riding community, in fact he is so in demand that we suspect he is heading back to his spiritual home so that he can finally find time for surfing. They will be missed.

A few questions for Rylie before she leaves us:

*What do you enjoy most about owning and riding horses?*

The bond that I share between myself and my horse and the feeling of having the cooperation of such an amazing and powerful animal.

*So far, what has been the highlight of your riding career?*

Competing at Horse of the Year and meeting all of the equestrian community.

*What three words best describe your pony?*

Cooperative. Different. Forgiving.

*If your pony could talk, what three words would he use to describe you?*

Understanding. Eager. Loving.

*Where is your favourite place to ride?*

Definitely the beach, during sunset on a clear day.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Our local BP petrol station very generously supports the pony club by holding a key for the grounds for the use of casual riders. The staff at Heydon Priest collect for the club the small fee we charge and receive and reimburse the deposit each time a non-member wants to use the facilities, ensuring they sign the consent form as well.

Without the support of Heydon Priest in this way it would be very difficult for the club to continue to operate. Thanks Heydon Priest for your generosity.



## Karaka Hill and Vanessa Way - an Oakura Success Story

A surprisingly successful Hanoverian horse stud has its roots in Oakura where John Macgrath and his previous partner Sally Conquest set up the Karaka Hill Stud more than 20 years ago. Readers of the TOM and followers of horse eventing will be familiar with the initials KH which precede many successful eventer/dressage horses - KH Arvan being the most successful and well known. There are others - KH Ambrose, KH Allandro, KH Arion.

These horses are progeny of the stallion Anamour who as a three year old was imported from Germany and to which John had a share. There are more than 1500 progeny of Anamour. Anamour was a Hanoverian and produced offspring with exceptional movement, temperament and style. Karaka Hill Sports Horse Stud has been awarded Exceptional Performance from the Hanoverian Society for John's support and promotion of the Hanoverian breed.

Anamour died last year but his successful offspring still compete at the top level today.

The success of these horses is also attributable to the dam Waitangi Wind.

One local who has experienced first hand the exceptional talent of KH Arvan is Vanessa Way, locally, nationally and internationally renowned horsewoman.

Vanessa's involvement with Karaka Hill began more than 25 years ago when she began working part time with Sally at their vet practice (clinics in Fitzroy, Vogeltown and Westown now combined as NP Vet Group). Vanessa has always had a love and obsession with horses and 18 years ago moved to Oakura. Since then Vanessa's life has been immersed in perfecting her craft of raising top eventing and dressage horses and competing at the highest level. Latterly this has also involved coaching clinics worldwide such is the respect Vanessa's skills are held in.

In 1998 Vanessa was competing in an eventing competition when her horse took a jump badly breaking its neck and also Vanessa's back in five places. The horse didn't survive but Vanessa did and has changed her competition focus to dressage.

Vanessa bought KH Arvan when he was a two year old and for more than 10 years competed with him winning NZ Dressage Horse of the Year twice and NZ Grand Prix champion. For the last two years KH Arvan has been competing with Molly Lumb and has won NZ Young Rider champion with her and was reserve champion this year where his retirement was announced and KH Arvan was given a heroes send off. Molly now cares for KH Arvan and is a full time employee of Vanessa's where she divides her time between these work commitments, her own horse and extramural studies.

K H Arion is one of Vanessa's current horses. KH Arion was hand reared by John when his mother died - a most unusual feat to successfully rear a foal by hand. KH Arion is

A blue business card for Tony Walker Plumbing. The card features the company name 'Tony Walker Plumbing' in white, with 'Certifying - Plumbing &amp; Drain laying' below it. The name 'Tony Manager' is also present. The address '166 Wairau Road, Oakura' and phone number '0274773030' are listed, along with the email 'tswalker@xtra.co.nz'. The background of the card has a pattern of blue circles of varying sizes.





**From left KH Arvan and Molly Lumb, KH Ambrose and Abbie Deken, and right is KH Arion and Vanessa Way.**

the last horse bred from Anamour and Waitangi Wind and in the last competitive season (2016) was the undefeated winner for the entire season. He is six years old so we can expect to see more great things from him and Vanessa.

So as well as KH Arion, Vanessa has six other horses she trains here in Oakura. These horses are all treated as top athletes with rigorous daily training. Vanessa and her team are up at the crack of dawn and finish up about 9pm. A typical day could see the horses riding to the beach for strength training and mental agility or the destination maybe some other accessible track around the village and Vanessa assures everyone she does go back and pick up her horses poo. Vanessa has a few acres to train her horses on and an arena for schooling. To finish a horse to Grand Prix standard takes about five years of training - a very large commitment to a horse!

Vanessa aspires to compete at the Olympics one day, has nearly achieved this goal in the past having been selected for the NZ team but her horse pulling up lame has kiboshed this dream. Vanessa says she has many competitive years left in her (just look at Sir Mark Todd at 60+) and there are many milestones to achieve along the way - World Games being one.

Vanessa and her horses are international travellers. KH Arvan has competed in Australia, France and the UK. Vanessa has worked with the UK team for eight years and currently teaches around NZ. She is the only recognised NZ Equestrian Federation Elite Dressage coach. This has seen her coaching for the World Games and Olympics including an up and coming star of the NZ team Clarke Johnstone who placed 5th at Badminton last month.

Next door another couple of champions reside - KH Ambrose and Abbie Deken. This year the pair placed 4th in the Horse of the Year Dressage Grand Prix. Abbie and KH Ambrose are also in the NZ Equestrian Accelerator Squad.

So from a couple with a dream to breed sensational horses here in Oakura a dynasty of top flight horses has resulted. Sally has moved on but John remains here in Oakura and his colourful past is a slice of Oakura history. John is well into his retirement years, but is still active in the community. He currently volunteers at the hospital as a 'blue coat worker' (now outfitted in a black coat) - this work is meeting and greeting patients as they enter hospital.

John set up the Oakura Panel Shop and is well known by long staying locals for his donkey Pedro. Pedro was a feature of the panel shop and also the annual Christmas parade. Chris Curd would lead Pedro at the front and Pedro knew exactly what was expected of him. You may see John out and about with his Great Dane who is nearly as big as a donkey. John tells a funny story of coming home one day and finding the Great Dane had eaten the couch - it was in pieces all over the floor!

*by Kim Ferens*



### **INTERCLUB TOURNAMENTS**

A sensational sunny Oakura welcomed the bowlers for the Glen Valley Joinery sponsored triples played on the 30th April. An Adam Collins skipped team of Kerry McGovern and Brian Green prevailed on the green edging out the trio of Jim Priest, Steve Muller and Bill Marshall.

Allan Bridgeman and Rex Phillips defeated Jim Priest and Roy Phillips in a winner takes all final to capture the Collins Trophy. Well done to both teams in reaching the final.

Oakura has successfully retained the Thursday Wanderers competition with an excellent 75% win ratio. Oakura has won this trophy five out of the last eight years. Congratulations to all bowlers who participated.

The Oakura Championship Triples combination of (Allan Bridgeman, Brian Wickham and Mike Vickers) and Championship Pairs representatives (Wayne Robinson and Ray Haslip) were both eliminated from their respective Champion of Champion competitions in close first round losses. Good effort boys, you have made the bowling club proud.

### **CLUB NEWS**

The AGM for the Oakura Bowling and Social Club will take place at 2pm on Sunday 26th of June. Club awards will follow the AGM along with prize giving and club acknowledgements.

My team highlights for the season would be the winning of the mid-week Avery Cup and achieving 2nd place in the interclub Premier Trophy (Div 2) competition. On an individual performance, Adam Collins being selected in the Taranaki representative team and Allan Bridgeman reaching the semi-final in the Champion of Champions singles competition are two of the clubs' finest season successes.

As this will be the last column for 2015/2016 season, thanks to all that have assisted in the day to day running, green and surrounds maintenance and administration of the club over the past year. The club is a great asset for the wider Oakura community and everyone is looking forward to September when the bowling action returns.

*The Underarm Bowler*

# GETTING WET



The season finished off with our senior prize-giving, a great night had by all, some more so than others . . . Congratulations to everyone who picked up an award and a big thanks to JC and Bridget for the clean up on Sunday.

Special mention to Jenna Barrett who received the David Lean Trophy, Champion of Champions, Nicky Spicer for Club Person of the Year and Jason Peacock who received Volunteer of the Year. Both Nicky and Jason have both tirelessly worked on the club re-development, along with working full-time and raising families.

I'm sure everyone has noticed that the clubrooms are now up and running with only a few final tweaks to go. We had our first wedding a few weeks back which looked amazing, a gorgeous venue on a stunning Taranaki day. Any venue queries should be sent to [npobsurfclub@xtra.co.nz](mailto:npobsurfclub@xtra.co.nz)



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Friday, 24 June from 4pm onwards we are having a Club Open Day, a great opportunity for everyone (members and non-members) to come along and check out what has been happening. We will also use the opportunity to thank all our sponsors and funders. Would be great to see a big turn out. An official opening is being planned for later in the year, details to be advised.

We have set the date for the AGM, Friday 29 July, 5.30pm at the clubrooms. Any nominations for the board should be sent to [npobsurfclub@xtra.co.nz](mailto:npobsurfclub@xtra.co.nz)

NZ Pool Champs this year will be held from the 7th – 9th of October in Auckland, everyone from under 11 to Masters can enter. Training dates to be advised. A great excuse to stay fit and healthy over the winter months.



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# Oakura Boardriders

Wow, it's been an epic summer - the sun has just kept shining. Sadly and inevitably a small taste of winter has arrived (until the snow comes of course). In my heart I have to say I'm hoping this is just a shower that will move on and summer will roll back in.

We've had great waves, great sun and not too much wind, which is pretty special. The club as you all know has been hectic, lessons full to the brink and Friday night meets a real success.

The whole vibe on the beach this year has been real nice to be a part of, heaps of families, lots of surfing and loads of memories made. Again it's a credit to all that we have built such a cool community for us all to enjoy. We have already started working on ways to streamline the chaos for next summer!!!

In amongst it all we have been able to get small bits done, but would like to see it finished. We rely heavily on volunteers, time for us is always hard to find. Hopefully by the time you read this a working bee or two has helped get stuff done!

It has been another successful year from our coaching team. Our kids are so lucky to get such an extensive array of personalities and skills from our guys. BC (Brian Clark), Paige Hareb, Johnno and Rose, Neil and Cole from Vertigo did a stellar job teaching all that took part in the lessons. We've seen some serious improvement and a lot of fun out there. Along with all that, BC gave a lucky few some pretty cool 'history of surfing' lessons as well.

Thank you to our coaches, you're awesome.

The Friday night sessions have finished now but we aim to meet once a month. The last Friday of the month each month the club will be open for potluck etc.

Many of our groms have been going well especially on the contest circuit - Tom Butland and Ariana Shewry showed the rest of the country how to surf big waves in the last couple of comps in Raglan and Stent Rd.

Oakura School took handfuls of the positions in the Yr 5, 6, 7 and 8 school comps. We have a very strong young group which constantly gets underpinned by more juniors every year. We will be a serious force in the years to come.

## GEAR SWAP AND SALE

We would like to make this an annual event to help all members find and sell gear. Kids grow so fast and generally the gear needs replacing well before it has really been used. Any sports gear can be sold or traded, so come along it will be a great way to help each

other out. We will open the club from 3pm till late on Saturday 4 June. But if you are after some gear for your kids contact the club and we will try to help out where possible

Re the skatepark, lots of you have been asking but there isn't much to say right now. Design has been done (and its epic to say the least), tenders have been sought, funding applications have been made. It's all very much a time game. The Council Officers have been great making sure deadlines are being kept so it's slowly but surely evolving. The plan is to start building early summer. We will of course keep everyone informed once we have more specific dates. On a side note, we have received sponsorship donations already from Naki Cloud for the skate park so thank You Naki Cloud! Its going to be an epic park.

As always we need some stress relief! We are organising a few events over winter and info will follow shortly (over the weeks) regarding these nights. We have a Mid Winter dinner, potlucks and our 25th anniversary. All will be big and fun so don't miss out, numbers will be limited.

This year again we have been inundated with work and requirements. It's no small feat to organise our food and bar, coaching, events, meetings, admin and parties etc. There are really so many people that have helped out it would be very unfair to miss out one. Without all the volunteers help, their positive energy and loyalty it would not work. The people that give their free time or juggle the not so free time to help are simply amazing. It's hard to quantify what a little help does but we have created happiness for many, memories for loads and futures for kids so that is a very rewarding set of words to give time for.

Thank you all for everything that has been done and achieved again this summer.

A quick message with thanks to our friends at Primo Wireless. I'm not sure if all of our club members realise it, but for the last 12 months Primo have supplied all our WiFi (install and usage) free of charge! As the first term drew near they contacted us to see if they can offer the same or better their service for the forthcoming season. To make a long story short they will now sponsor fibre (install and usage) for the next 12 months and also make a free access point from the club for beach users etc. They will also offer a sponsorship deal for any member joining their service back to the club. So a big Thank you from all of us to the team at Primo! As the TOM goes to press I am on the Gold Coast, being a regular returnee the weather and waves are a worthwhile attraction, but when the weather cooperates at home, the Naki is hard to beat.

*Brent Anderson, Oakura Boardriders,*

*John Shewry, for some of the words ...*

*Luke Florence, President, 027 493 0819.*

*Paul Lobb Secretary, 027 244 4297.*

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## BRENDA BALLINGER MEMORIAL AND DR DAVIE CROSS COUNTRY RACE.

On Saturday the 7th of May, a number of Oakura School students participated in the Brenda Ballinger Memorial and Doctor Davie Cross Country race at Highlands Intermediate. Oakura School students placed very well. The Year 5 and 6 team won the School Challenge Cup and consisted of the following runners: Zach Phillips-Lim (1st), Daniel Lewis (6th) and Gabrielle Carthew (7th). The Year 7 and 8 team were placed second in their grade with Robbie White placing first and Finn Kennedy placing eighth. Well done to all competitors that represented Oakura School.



Lucy Clark-Smith and Charlie Bridges setting devices.



Zach Phillips-Lim receiving the School Challenge Cup from Paul Ballinger.

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## YEAR 7 AND 8 SCIENCE

This year at Oakura School every Year 7 and 8 student is participating in a science project that is helping our environment, both locally and globally. Students have chosen to work on one of the following projects.

The Kiwi Trust science group is working to help locate and count kiwi on Mt Taranaki. On Thursday 12 May this group travelled to Lucy's Gully in Oakura to test acoustic recorders to locate kiwi. Eighty kiwi were released into Egmont National Park and two female kiwi have been located so far using these recorders.

Some students are working with DOC in Project Hotspot. This project is about raising awareness of four threatened species around Taranaki - the Reef Heron, the New Zealand Fur Seal, Orca and the Little Blue Penguin. They are involved in analysing data and counting sightings of these marine animals. They are broadening their knowledge about marine life and ecosystems and are planning a field trip to learn about our local marine reserve, Tapuae.

Our third project has students working online on the VLN (Virtual Learning Network). This project is called Our Health, Our Environment. These students are collaborating and working in small groups with students internationally to research and suggest possible solutions to global environmental issues such as deforestation, overfishing or damage to coral reefs. Students are set a task each week and work online to develop their ideas, share local research and to problem solve around these issues. Students are interviewing experts in their chosen field and will conduct scientific research into what is happening locally in Oakura and New Plymouth.

by Katelyn Haire (age 12) and Theo Keenan (age 12)

**FOOS Raising Funds for Sustainable Vegetable Garden**

**Oakura School**

# Market Day

**WILL TAKE PLACE ON**

## 12.6.2016

**at**

**Oakura Hall**

**Sunday 8:30am - 12:30pm**

Books, DVDs and more

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Food

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WE NEED YOUR UNWANTED STUFF!!! ANYONE CAN DONATE GARAGE SALE ITEMS - PLEASE DROP THESE AT THE OAKURA HALL ON FRIDAY, JUNE 10TH 3PM - 7PM AND DURING SATURDAY, JUNE 11TH 8AM - 12PM. THANK YOU



# Oakura School Market Day

*Are you always looking for a good-quality bargain?*

*Is your home brimming with items too good to throw away, but no use to you anymore?*

*Do you like to support our school and community?*

*Well, have we got the solution for you!!!*

**Oakura School Market Day,**

**Sunday 12 June 2016 (8.30am-12.30pm at Oakura Hall).**

Oakura School is raising funds to establish a sustainable living vegetable garden at school. We would love all your good quality pre-loved toys, furniture, tools, clothes, sports equipment, books, etc to sell on our stalls. Please ensure all your kindly donated items are in good condition. Unfortunately, we are unable to take electrical goods due to new Health & Safety regulations.

In addition to the enviable range of pre-loved goods above, which will be available to buy at fantastic prices, on sale will be artwork custom-made by Oakura School pupils for this stellar event, mouth-watering baking and fudge, seedlings, coffee and moreish treats from our own café, doughnuts, raffles, face painting and the ubiquitous sausage sizzle (kindly sponsored by Leeana at Oakura House of Travel, and ably manned by the good guys at the Oakura Fire Brigade).

Please drop any donated items to the supper room in Oakura Hall between 3-7pm on Friday, 10 June and 8am-12noon on Saturday, 11 June. Friends of Oakura School (FOOS) would also LOVE any and all help offered to assist with set-up, sorting goods on Saturday 10 June, or manning the stalls on Sunday 10 June. Please contact Maryanne on [us2@orcon.net.nz](mailto:us2@orcon.net.nz) to volunteer, or write your name on the volunteer spreadsheet in the Oakura School office.

Thanks! And see you there!

*The FOOS Team, Oakura School pupils and teachers*

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Email: [holli@petsittingplus.co.nz](mailto:holli@petsittingplus.co.nz)

- June** 10 Jump Rope Display 9am.  
 13 Minstrel Show 9:15am.  
 15 People Savers First Aid course for Year 5/6.  
 16 Amazing Race for Year 6 at Oakura.  
 30 Cycle Training Room 3.
- July** 5 Astronomical Learning 12-1pm.  
 All welcome to have lunch with your child  
 and look around the school.  
 8 Term 2 ends.  
 25 Term 3 begins.

## BOT UPDATE

The start of term 1 saw Kelly Madden join the teaching team here at Omata. I would like to extend a warm welcome to Kelly along with all the new families to Omata School. I look forward to meeting and working along side you all.

It was brought to the attention of the Board that Viv Norris has been a member of the Omata school staff for 20 years now. We all thank Viv, both past and present families for creating all those wonderful first memories; "First teacher, first day of school," etc. We look forward to the creation of many more memories. Each Board meeting we receive the student council report which always leads to much discussion and highlights the level of self-management evident within the school.

The Year 5-8 Camp gave all students the opportunity to experience many different facets of education, which cannot be duplicated within the four walls of the classroom. Having our own piece of bush with the outdoor classroom really brings learning to life. Many thanks to all the parents and staff, that make this event possible.

Looking forward, the Board, in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, are at present working on the development of our new 10 year property plan. This will help to place our school in the best possible place for the future, from buildings, roll growth to ICT and development of the grounds.

## ANZAC COMMEMORATION

At 11am on the 15th April Omata held its second ceremony of remembrance for the school and community. It was a lovely day and we had a good turn out. Our thanks to Mr Bryce Gordon, from the NP Brass Band, for playing the Last Post and Reveille. Also thanks to Sergeant Shane Gadsby from the NZDF, and Pat Murphy for their thoughtful addresses. It was a very moving time.

*Karen Brisco, Principal*



**ANZAC Commemoration Day.**

## COVER FEATURE

# Omata School Bush Reserve

At the end of last year our Omata Bush Reserve what given KNE (Key Native Ecosystem) status by the Taranaki Regional Council. This was the result a student initiative in 2014 when Grace Glennie and Megan Jones explored the possibility of getting outside support to help protect our bush reserve while participating in a science centred rich learning topic based around our 'Bush Classroom'.



**Toby Shanley from TRC flying a drone to get an aerial view of the bush reserve.**

The reserve area is smaller than the usual bush remnant given such recognition by the TRC however it does meet the KNE goals: to 'Protect, Enhance and Promote,' especially the promote as it provides real environmental learning context for our students and community. This is also a continuation of the work carried out by Mike Norris who established the reserve as a bush classroom many years ago while he was the principal at Omata School.

The reserve is special because it is a remnant of Taranaki coastal forest. There a many large pukateas and tawa trees, with the canopy filled in with many kohekohe and mahoes. When preparing the KNE, TRC scientists surveyed the area and identified forty-two native plants, species including the regionally distinctive divided fern.

The KNE provides us with a five year development plan with Regional Council support. The number one priority is to deal with the immediate threats; exotic plant invaders, with includes the usual suspects, *tradescantia* (wandering willie) *periwinkle* and *old man's beard* just to start with, along with the mammal invaders; rats, stoats and possums.

Trapping is now underway once again with the delivery of new stoat and rat traps and our student trappers are being trained up to manage these. We have also made a fresh start in removing *tradescantia*.

One of the species we hoped to find is the relatively rare and threatened Taranaki Gold Stripe Gecko. During a student overnight camp in the school grounds in term 1 this year the Year 7 and 8 students did a spotlight search of the reserve. Nothing conclusive was found, however our searchers were not particularly stealthy. Last week however we were able to confirm that Goldstripes are found in Omata when Mrs Rachel Campbell who lives across the road from the school opened her back door in the morning and much to her surprise a gecko fell onto her shoulder. The Gecko was brought to school, a photo was taken and sent off to the TRC for identification which confirmed, yes, we did have a Goldstripe Gecko. This gecko was subsequently released into the flax on the margins of the bush reserve. I suspect it was out looking for a mate, lets hope it finds one. Since then this gecko has generated considerable interest and featured on the TRC Facebook page and also caught the interest of the Taranaki Daily News. This little creature has served us well as it has really kick started the 'Promote' part of our KNE.

*Pat Murphy*





## COASTAL TARANAKI SCHOOL

### NAKIBOTS

Austin Pollard has returned from his big adventure to the VEX Robotics world championships - the Olympics of Robotics! Austin is very proud of his government endorsed NZ representative pin.

The event in Louisville, Kentucky was a world record breaking event - 1072 teams competing across the different classes from elementary school right through to VEXU - the university grade of competition - the biggest robotics competition ever.

The Nakibots team were in the VEX IQ Elementary school category, with 300 other teams. Austin and Conor Eager (FDMC) represented the club, participating in a number of challenges - Programming Challenge, where the students write the robot's programme and then it must self-drive through the set challenge. Skills Challenge, where the students drive their robot to get the highest possible score. Teamwork Challenge, where students participate with another team to get the highest combined score.



Above and below: Nakibots team, Austin and Conor.



It was an intense programme which required full concentration and participation for 3.5 days of competition. The boys performed extremely well in a challenging environment unlike any that will ever be seen in New Zealand, let alone little wee Taranaki. (The Louisville convention centre has buildings covering 11 hectares, there were teams from over 30 countries, and the children had to negotiate and organise a strategy with all their game partners, alter robots and programmes on the fly to troubleshoot and improve possible scores, and they were constantly under time pressure - one minute to get the highest score possible requires skills, precision, practise and nerves of steel). The ethos of the work being that of the children, and not of their parents and teachers is very strong. The children were interviewed twice by the judges about their robot design, the programming and the way they collaborated to design and build it. Some teams were disqualified due to failing this very important stage.

The outcome for the Nakibots was: Programming Challenge 30th; Skills Challenge 71st; Teamwork Challenge 57th.

Placing in the top 25% in each category - an outstanding result. In addition, Nakibots won the Competition Energy Award (how apt, for kids from Taranaki), which is presented to a team that displays a high level of enthusiasm and passion at the event.

Key criteria: the team maintains a high level of excitement and energy throughout the event; the team's passion for robotics enriches the event experience for others; students understand and explain how they work together to develop their robot.

Coastal Taranaki School is very proud of this result - it's epic!!

### AN INSPIRATIONAL JOURNEY

Three year 7 and 8 students travelled to Palmerston North to attend the National Young Leaders Conference.

Neika Thomson felt that she was offered qualities that she could use in the future to help her become an effective leader. She was touched by the stories of speakers who had lead troubled lives and moved forward. One was a woman who had lost an arm and now was a professional dancer.

Taylor Koboski said she learnt a lot from the experience and would definitely like to go again.

The inspiration for potential young leader Ropata Taylor was "learning to do the right thing - not just the easy thing" which says it all really.

*Sharleen Valentine*

PHOTOGRAPHY KIRSTY KOBOSKI





# Spotswood College

Greetings to the Oakura and Omata community!

My name is Martyn Knapton and I am Acting Principal in the absence of Mr Bowden who is on refreshment leave this term. During this time Mr Bowden will be visiting several schools in New Zealand looking at their teaching and learning programmes and feeding back to our school community to tweak and transform what is already an innovative and forward thinking school.

## IMPROVING TEACHER PERFORMANCE THROUGH TEACHING AS INQUIRY

Teaching as inquiry is a key part of the New Zealand School Curriculum. It involves teachers being part of an investigation into their own practice to improve outcomes for students we teach. It's a 'no-brainer' but research tells us that when we improve our teaching we improve outcomes for students. We believe, at Spotswood College, that improving our teaching practice is crucial to our school's development. And it works! Every teacher here has a success story in the things we have tried and improved.

Our literacy results have seen some significant improvement. NCEA results are our best since NCEA began.

Our Maori student achievement improvement has been huge.

## A TEACHERS STORY

My name is Ryan McFadyen. I am the Year 11 Dean and Assistant HOF Maths and my area of inquiry in 2015 was around improving Merit and Excellence results of Level 1 NCEA students. Part of this was about me developing processes around:



- Academic interviews;
- Academic monitoring;
- Parental engagement through Merit and Excellence evenings.

As a result we saw improvements in the number of students gaining NCEA Endorsement at Level 1 NCEA.

## RECENT OVERSEAS TRIPS

The Languages Department took our Japanese and Spanish students overseas. The Spanish trip had a great time and loved their time in Barcelona. The Japanese trip was a bit more eventful as their arrival coincided with a large earthquake which sadly claimed many lives.

## SPORTING SUCCESSES

### NEW ZEALAND REPRESENTATIVE:

Congratulations to Libby Houghton who was a member of the New Zealand Under 17 Women's Beach Volleyball team that took part in the Asian Under 17 Championships played in Thailand in early May and who were placed 11th in their competition.

## TARANAKI SWIMMING REPRESENTATIVES

Congratulations to Jaxon Madden who was selected for the Taranaki Age Group Swimming team that participated in the New Zealand Age Group championships held in Wellington during the April holidays.

## INDOOR VOLLEYBALL

Congratulations also to our three senior indoor Volleyball teams on their efforts at the 48th New Zealand Secondary Schools senior championships played in Palmerston North from 3-8 April.

The senior boys' team was: Michael Anderson, Robert Fox, Tawera Baker, Joseph Pui, Jonah Naborisi, Ronan Avery, Ben Willis and Keegan Joe. They finished in 15th place.

The senior girls' green team was: Libby Houghton, Sophie Willis, Hikaru Han, Adelaide Campbell, Tanwen Edwards, Siteri Naumotu, Chloe Knight and Larissa Wilkinson and finished with a Silver Medal.

The senior girls' gold team was: Casey Carass, Montana Bennett, Sophie Bowden, Baylee O'Donnell-Martin, Taylah Williams, Paris Brown and Catriona Oates. The team finished in 16th place.

## SPORT TARANAKI FUTURE CHAMPIONS PROGRAMME

Congratulations to Libby Houghton (Volleyball) and TK Tohi (Boxing) on being selected into the Sport Taranaki "Future Champions" Tier 1 programme for 2016. Congratulations also to Aidan Zittersteijn (Indoor & Lawn bowls) on being selected for the Tier 2 programme.

## SCHOOL VISITS AND OPEN EVENING

Our teachers look forward to working with Oakura and Omata students in the next few weeks as they visit our school. **Our Open Evening is on the 10th AUGUST, 7 – 9p.m.** and we welcome any prospective students and their families to come to the evening and take a look at the opportunities and what we offer at Spotswood College.

Ngā mihi nui

*Martyn Knapton, Acting Principal*



**Japanese tour students with their billets and Principal of Hatsukaichi High School.**





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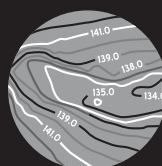
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Ph 021 297 5465 or [nakifit@gmail.com](mailto:nakifit@gmail.com)

**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.

**Move It or Lose It - fitness classes.** Oakura Hall, Wednesdays & Fridays, 9.30am, Contact Gloria 752 7442.

**Oakura Bowling and Social Club.** Bowling tournaments begin September through to April with both mid-week and weekend games. For information contact Steve Muller on 06 757 4399.

**Oakura Playcentre.** 14 Donnelly St, Oakura. Sessions run Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 9am-noon during school terms. Visitors welcome. Ph Kate Garner on 021-254 4769.

**Oakura Pony Club.** Contact Robin King ph 751 0300.

**Oakura Pool Club.** Meets every Wednesday evening 7pm @ Butlers Reef over winter. Phone Chip 027 621 4999 or 752 1004.

**Okato Squash.** Club nights on Mondays from 7pm, everyone welcome, phone Darryl Gibson, Ph 06 752 4804.

**Omata Playgroup.** Meets every Thursday, 9.00am at the Omata Community Hall. Ring 751 2308 for next session date. All parents and pre-schoolers welcome.

**OMG Oakura Meditation Group** - meets on the first Thursday of the month at St James Hall 7pm, all welcome call Kate 0272037215.

### Oakura Tennis Club

Monday 9am-2pm - Ladies Midweek Competition.

Tuesday 3pm-5pm - Junior Coaching.

Wednesday 3pm-5pm - Junior Coaching / Hot Shots Tennis.

6pm-7.30pm - Ladies practice night.

Thursday 5.30pm-7.30pm - A Grade players practice.

Friday 4pm-8pm - Junior Interclub competition.

Saturday 9am-4pm - Soffe Cup and A grade Competition.

Contact Club Secretary, Jackie Mitchell on 06 752 7013.

**Pippi's PT and circuit training,** every week day morning 9.15 -10.15am and Tuesday and Thursday evenings 5.30 - 6.30pm. Teen-age crossfit/boxfit sessions on Tues and Thurs 4.15 - 5.15pm. More details call Pip 022 104 1851.

**Probus Club.** Meets once month at Kaitake Golf Club rooms on the 3rd Friday of every month at 10am - 11.30am. Contact Barry Goble 752 7254, or Betty West 752 7816.

**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.

**Val Deakin Dance School.** Oakura Hall. Monday afternoons, Pre-school dance classes 3:30 - 4pm. Beginners' Ballet dance class 4.45pm. Contact Val on 752 7743. Also classes for pre-schoolers to adults in ballet, jazz, tap, modern and ballroom (beginners to advanced) at the Dance Centre in New Plymouth.

**Volkswagen Club.** Regular events range from car rallies, the YMCA climbing wall, camping, BBQ get togethers and sharing good family times and knowledge. Contact President: [kirk@taranakivw.co.nz](mailto:kirk@taranakivw.co.nz) and Secretary: [bryan@taranakivw.co.nz](mailto:bryan@taranakivw.co.nz)

**Yoga Classes.** Oakura Church Hall, Wed at 9.15am, Fri at 6am, (call Kate to book your class), Fri at 9.15am. Everyone welcome. Contact Kate Evans 027 203 7215.

**Zumba Fitness.** Each Wednesday during school terms - 6.30pm to 7.30pm, Oakura Hall - everyone welcome, \$5 entry. Ph Ange on 021 222 9683 for enquiries.

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