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Staunch helper recognised for dirtywork



Warwick Buckman, wearing just one of his volunteer hats, places corokia seedlings in the HELP nursery shade house.

An unpaid morning's work in a Waihi potting shed yields a rank of tiny polythene-clad seedlings. But Warwick Buckman sees hundreds of corokia bushes or manuka, kahikatea or kauri trees taking root in reserves around Waihi and the District.

Alongside workmates like Brian Atger and Ian Bradshaw, Warwick's labour of love is repeated every week at the Habitat Enhancement and Landcare Partnership nursery sited on the Waihi College farm unit – and that's just what he does on Tuesdays. In recognition of his hours and years of community work, he was one of two Hauraki District Council citizen's award recipients this year to be honoured for outstanding service.

Warwick was a founder of HELP Waihi in 1997 – together with other volunteers and supporters from Forest and Bird, Waihi College and local primary schools, Hauraki District Council, and Newmont Waihi Gold – and has chaired it ever since. The society's aim is to improve and restore local natural riverbank and bush areas, with the involvement of school students.

HELP got off the ground with assistance from Waihi Mitre 10, Environment Waikato, the Valder Ohinemuri Trust, and a Lotto environment and heritage grant. For a time there was also Government work scheme funding for two fulltime employees, but the society has since grown to manage its own all-volunteer work team of up to 10 people: like Warwick, most of them "retired".

He recalls that until 2007, "the nursery was a line in the grass with a bit of shade cloth on." Then the two standing out beds were rebuilt, and the potting and storage shed was erected by community volunteers in a single day. A greenhouse and a shade house have also been constructed, with the total facilities able to house about 25,000 young native plants until they're ready to be planted out. Some are supplied to other organisations such as Kauri 2000 and Coromandel Coastal Walkways.



Warwick receives his Outstanding Citizen Award from Mayor John Tregidga

The seeds are gathered by Warwick and his fellow volunteers, or donated by residents who have mature trees on their properties. As well as potting, propagation, and weeding, HELP work includes planting days, maintenance bees and predator control at sites such as the Mangatoetoe and Waitete Stream banks, the Morgan Park Forest and Bird millennium planting, Gilmour Lake reserve, the Waihi Children's Millennium Forest, the Hauraki Rail Trail, and Hutchinsons Reserve at Komata.

Warwick also does spraying and release work with the Miranda Shorebird Centre, coordinates twice-yearly wader bird surveys for the Ornithological Society of New Zealand, and for five years has led annual Forest and Bird surveys in the Kaimai Ranges. He's been the treasurer for the Waihi branch of Forest and Bird since 2004, and a member of the Coromandel Dieback Forum management committee for three years.

Warwick's interest in the environment goes back to teenage years when he had holiday employment with the Tongariro National Park Board. As a geography teacher in Masterton and from 1978 in Waihi, he took tramping groups into the ranges; and he has always loved Hollis Bush on the grounds of Waihi College.

But his volunteer roles branch out further. Warwick has been the secretary of Waihi Heritage Vision since its inception, a member of the Hetherington House management committee since 2007, a St John's Church vestry member for three decades, and was staff representative on the Waihi College Board of Governors for three years.

He received Waihi College Cricket's significant service award in 2012, and chaired the Thames Valley Junior Cricket Association committee for many years, earning the national Sir Jack Newman Award for his service there. In addition, he was part of the Northern District's Cricket Association junior advisory group, and has managed various Northern District teams and tournaments.

Though Warwick says cricket involvement through Waihi College was "an extension of his teaching job" and he's taken pleasure in being on the field since his own school days, he finds it satisfying to see what the young players have gone on to achieve – whether representative selection or an enjoyment of playing through adult life.

As with his HELP and other service roles, "it's not just one person. It's a group effort," he says. "However it's nice to know you are helping to make a difference."

So Warwick was delighted to receive his Outstanding Citizen Award from the Mayor on October 14; his wife Krishna and two daughters sharing in the celebration in the Paeroa War Memorial Hall. "The awards evening was a real buzz, with all the recipients and their supporters."

Along with a plaque, medallion and lapel pin, Warwick was presented with the traditional award gift of a miniature kowhai. It may be hard to pick out in the golden display of about 40 kowhai around the Buckmans' property – but it will certainly be in good hands.

Public Notice

Intended Agri-chemical application

Weather permitting, herbicide applications will be made to property administered by Hauraki District Council. This will include Parks & Reserves, footpaths and walkways. Both Roundup and Versatil will be used between the months of November 2015 and March 2016.

This work will be carried out by either Council's C&M Department, contractors or Waihi Walkways.

All applicators will be Grow Safe accredited.

For further details please phone Hauraki District Council on 07 862 8609 or 0800 734 834.

LD Cavers
 Chief Executive
 Hauraki District Council



Meeting invitation Hauraki Rail Trail - Kaiaua to Kopu



The Plains Ward Chairperson, Gill Leonard extends an invitation for the communities between Kaiaua and Kopu, to attend a meeting to receive an update on the status of the Rail Trail project. Please join us on 16 November at 7:30pm at the Waitakaruru Hall.



Dive into summer!

Beach holidays may not have arrived yet, but our heated swimming pools in Ngatea, Paeroa and Waihi will open to the public from November 21.

We have a great team of lifeguards ready to make everyone welcome and safe – 10 of them returning to duty in their home communities, along with our experienced pools supervisor Kariann Treanor. Our popular giant inflatable toys will be back, too.

Paeroa pool users will notice one change. The old bleacher seating which had reached the end of its life has gone, with versatile new tiered seats taking its place. These units will do double duty: at the end of the swim season they'll be taken to Paeroa Domain for the use of winter sports spectators there. The same system is already in use in Ngatea, where it works very successfully.

Kaiaua issues aired at the community meeting

When will the Kopu to Kaiaua leg of the Hauraki Rail Trail get off the ground – or rather, on it? That was one of the questions Kaiaua residents and ratepayers had for the Council and Mayor at our Labour weekend community meeting.

Additional funding is still being secured to cover construction of the cycleway, which had been expected to start this year. But while there's nothing to see yet, progress is being made behind the scenes, Engineering Services Manager Adrian de Laborde reported to the gathering of more than 60 people.

With support from landowners, Waikato Regional Council, and the Department of Conservation, a route has been mapped that works in all their interests, as well as those of trail users and of the feathered seasonal inhabitants that give the ecologically significant Seabird Coast its name.

"Resource consents have been granted, and design work for the bridges has been completed", said Adrian. "We are working with the NZ Transport Agency regarding the construction of a clip on structure to the Piako River Bridge at Pipiroa for pedestrians and cyclists."

Once funding is completed, the project team will meet with landowners to work through their needs, to minimise

impact to them during trail construction and use. We hope to announce good news soon about the start of physical work!

Councillor Gill Leonard said locals' fervour for action – and their wish to have input with planning a terminus – was a positive signal of how much they want and support this unique section of cycleway.

Other concerns aired at the meeting included campervan parking in the Kaiaua Boating Club area, and coastal storm water management and associated erosion problems.

People were also keen to talk rubbish. Regarding the future of the old rubbish dump site, a new survey has shown that it would be more cost effective to completely remove the refuse and remediate the site than seal it off along the seaward edge. The Council will make a decision shortly and apply for the appropriate resource consent, with the aim of having works completed by April next year.

In response to feedback from residents, the bottle bank recently removed from the Kaiaua Boat Ramp Reserve after the introduction of kerbside recycling will be reinstated to meet seasonal demand between Christmas and early February, as a trial. A more suitable location is being considered.

As part of a District-wide initiative, traditional rubbish bins in Kaiaua streets and reserves are being replaced with solar powered compactor bins with up to five times more capacity.

Rates are always a hot topic, and many people weren't aware of the Rates Rebate Scheme which offers a subsidy of up to \$610 to low-income homeowners. Ratepayers can find out whether they're eligible by contacting the Council.

Some of the discussion related to simple or routine things in the community needing Council attention, and we want everyone to remember that a service request can be made at any time! Just click the "Fix It" logo on our website, www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz, or call 0800 734 834 (from within the District).

Most people took the opportunity to keep talking to Councillors, the Mayor and Council staff over a cuppa. "There's always a good turnout, and I feel the community generally appreciate meeting with us, and being able to express any concerns or issues face to face," said the Mayor.

The annual "date" was also a chance for the Boating Club, Rural Fire Force, St John and other community groups to give informative updates on their work and projects, including a community garden planned by the Friends of Kaiaua.