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Season's greetings from the Mayor and Councillors



What does a Mayor's Christmas wish list look like? It's been a while since I wrote one, and a new bike, slingshot or pocket knife are no longer at the top. But a lot of my wishes have been realised over what has been a good year for the District. There have been economic and wellbeing improvements, and a growing positivity. The award-winning Hauraki Rail Trail is helping to make Hauraki a "must visit" for New Zealanders and overseas tourists, and the iconic Paeroa Post Office is back in use as a vibrant Info Hub. Behind the scenes, I'm particularly pleased – as residents will be – that our water upgrades are almost complete.

At the same time, I'm conscious that it's been a difficult year for farmers, who are a very significant sector of the community. This affects our towns and businesses, too.

Financially and emotionally, Christmas can be a time of extra stress, and we often need to remember that it's not about commercialism and expensive presents. In my family, our children still look forward to a gift they've received since they were young: a box of Roses chocolates. This was a real once-a-year treat!

If I sat down and wrote a personal wish list today, it would only have one thing on it: family and friends. Every Christmas I appreciate being able to share a festive meal, pull crackers, and squabble over doing the dishes with my family because I know many people are not so privileged.

Whatever your own traditions, make the most of celebrating them with the people who are important to you. Relax and recharge your batteries together, and enjoy the beautiful place we live in.

On behalf of our councillors and staff, I wish you a happy, refreshing and safe festive season.

John Tregidga - Mayor, Hauraki District



We're flying the flags

We may not have two turtle doves to pull out this festive season, but we do have two flags a-flying in front of the Council office at Paeroa.

One is the current New Zealand flag customarily on display there. The adjacent pole bears the design top-ranked by voters of the five alternatives proposed in the Government's recent first referendum – Kyle Lockwood's silver fern in black, white and blue. It will fly there in place of the usual Hauraki District flag until March 24, 2016; the date that polling closes on the second binding referendum.

This will give people the chance to view both options in a real-life situation and consider their symbolism and colours before choosing which flag they prefer in March. The design that receives the most votes will be the official New Zealand flag.

The two flags were offered at no cost to Council by the Flag Consideration Project, but there are strings attached. For fairness of comparison they must be flown together at the same publicly visible location, at an equal height on separate poles. That means we can't fly the potential new flag at our Council offices in Ngatea and Waihi, as each has only one flagpole.

However, the free flag offer is also open to any organisations, schools, businesses or residents able to meet the criteria, and suitable venues in those towns are being considered. So keep a lookout!

For more information on the Flag Consideration Project go to www.flag.co.nz.



Make a splash this summer

You can't buy much for \$1 – but it will get you entry to our community swimming pools during January.

The special price includes the use of three whopper inflatable toys, complete with slides, obstacles, and even palm trees, which are afloat most days during the school holidays. They're rotated around the Ngatea, Paeroa and Waihi pools, providing variety and different levels of challenge for kids and grown-up kids.

You're welcome to bring a picnic and make a day of it; and for an extra treat, poolgoers can enjoy yummy ice blocks and refreshing drinks that are available on site. For families with babies and young children, we also sell *Little Swimmers* so nobody has to worry about accidents.

We encourage locals to make the most of extended public hours during the holidays, while schools aren't using the pools. Members of our friendly lifeguard team are on the poolside at all times, though children aged under 8 must be also be actively supervised by a parent or caregiver.

At Paeroa and Ngatea, the lifeguards – who are also qualified swim instructors – run holiday *Learn to Swim* classes in the balmy 27 degree water. In Waihi, the swimming club offers lessons, as well as coaching and competition opportunities.

Independent lane swimming is available too from 6am to 9am, and in lunch-hour during term time.



For more information about opening hours and pool services, check out the Council website www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz or pop into one of the pools and see why they're the coolest places around!

HDC Service timetable for 24 December 2015 to 1 January 2016

	Thursday 24 December	Friday 25 December	Saturday 26 December	Sunday 27 December	Monday 28 December	Tuesday 29 December	Wednesday 30 December	Thursday 31 December	Friday 1 January
All Council Offices Paeroa, Waihi & Ngatea	8.00am to 12 noon		Closed				8.00am to 4.30pm		Closed
Waihi & Paeroa Library	9.30am to 12 noon		Closed				10.00am to 4.30pm		Closed
Ngatea Library	8.00am to 12 noon		Closed				8.00am to 4.30pm		Closed
Swimming Pools - Paeroa - Waihi - Ngatea	6.00am to 9.00am (lane swimming) 9.00am to 5:30pm (public swim)	Closed	11.00am to 5.00pm (public swim)				6.00am to 9.00am (lane swimming) 9.00am to 5:30pm (public swim)		Closed
Paeroa Transfer Station	12.30pm to 5.30pm	Closed	12.30pm to 5.30pm		Closed	12.30pm to 5.30pm	Closed	12.30pm to 5.30pm	Closed
Waihi Transfer Station	Closed		10.00am to 4.00pm		Closed		10.00am to 4.00pm	Closed	
Kerbside Refuse and recycling collection	Refuse & recycling Waihi & Waikino Refuse only Karanghake Mackaytown Paeroa		Refuse & recycling Whitiroa		Bags & glass only Whitiroa		Refuse & recycling Ngatea Kaiaua Waitakaruru Refuse only Kerepehi & Turua Bags & glass only Whitiroa	Refuse only Waihi & Waikino Refuse & recycling Karanghake Mackaytown Paeroa	