Chance to honour community heroes

Do you know of an outstanding community volunteer or a young achiever who deserves recognition?
From July 1 to 30, nominations will be open for the Council’s 2015 Citizen and Young Achiever Awards.

The annual Citizen Awards acknowledge the service of Hauraki residents who have committed substantial time and effort over a sustained period to benefit their community. Last year’s recipients included volunteers who have made a difference through firefighting, sport, service clubs, town promotion, and preservation of local history, to name just a few ways – and our past awardees may spark thoughts of unsung heroes you know of.

The awards are presented at a gala evening which since 2006 has also celebrated the achievements of local 13 to 25-year-olds. Candidates for these honours can be nominated by schools, alternative education centres, youth groups, service organisations, or sport, recreation and culture clubs.

Nominations for both sets of awards must be received by the end of July, on forms available from our offices or on our website. Don’t leave it too late! Our judging panel needs time to ensure that any awards given truly reflect the value of the recipients’ efforts.

This year’s presentations will be made in the Paeroa War Memorial Hall on Wednesday, October 14.

Young achiever maximizing his opportunities

Ever wondered where our past Young Achievers are going with their talents?
James Bray was the head boy of Waihi College when he received a Hauraki District Council Young Achiever Award in 2009. He stood out as an “all-round good guy” – in the classroom, on the sportsfield, in leadership and mentoring roles, and as a qualified volunteer lifeguard of three years.

The following January, when James was Waihi Beach Surf Club head lifeguard, he and a clubmate were commended for their bravery in rescuing three boogie boarders swept out to sea in huge surf at Bowentown. One of the men plucked to safety said the boarders had tried in vain to get to shore. “Without those boys in the IRB I don’t think I would have come back in.”

James has since received a number of surf lifesaving honours, including the Bay of Plenty-Coromandel Lifeguard of the Year award in 2013, and has served as Surf Lifesaving Bay of Plenty’s eastern region lifeguard supervisor. The now 23-year-old is also helping to save lives wearing a different uniform, in his new role as a fulltime St John ambulance officer. He started as a volunteer in Waihi when he left school, and trained locally to attain a diploma in ambulance practice. “Then I did casual and relief work throughout the Hauraki-Coromandel, which led to being appointed as a permanent at Waihi station this year.”

Around his shifts, James is completing a Bachelor of Health Science (Paramedic) degree through Auckland University of Technology; and continues his active surf club involvement as director of lifesaving at Whangamata.

Looking back, he says his Young Achiever Award was special. “I was stoked, and my parents still have the framed certificate on the wall. It’s nice to get recognition for volunteer work – though that’s not why you do it. I think it highlights the opportunities there are for young people, and raises the profile of the community organisations involved.”

James says the opportunities and encouragement he had as a teenager had a huge impact in shaping his life, skills and prospects. “Both surf lifesaving and St John share similar values to mine, and build personal values. I’ve had a lot of opportunities and mentors, and as a result I enjoy being able to help people in situations when often, no one else can.”

Wood collecting under fire

Did you know we have about 120 District reserves? These are classified as historic, recreation, and scenic reserves; as well as local purpose reserves for the likes of drainage, water conservation, and esplanade access.

But we have no firewood reserves where people can top up on free household supplies – it’s illegal to cut or remove vegetation from reserve land. So if you see this happening at any time of day or night, please call the Council immediately.

Thanks to public tip-offs, we’ve been able to cut short the efforts of some recent offenders, in different reserves. One man was even garbed in hi-vis and equipped with a trailer and chainsaw, claiming he had permission.

In another instance, the wood targeted had already been cut by Council contractors as part of management work, and was earmarked for Lions Club fundraising. Council staff and contractors who work in reserves will always be clearly identifiable, and have signwritten vehicles. Please help us to maintain the reserves for everyone’s ongoing benefit.

Does your arts project need an extra hand?

Want to stage a play? Teach Māori carving? Paint a street mural? Host a music festival? Run photography workshops?

These are some kinds of projects in the Hauraki District which have received Creative Communities funding over the past years. If YOU have an arts initiative on the drawing board which would “engage and benefit the community”, a Creative Communities grant could help it take shape.

The Council administers this local funding on behalf of the Arts Council of New Zealand, and is currently accepting applications for assistance. The deadline for the current half-year is at 4.00pm next Thursday, June 25.

Priority is given to projects or events that offer broad community involvement, promote cultural enrichment and diversity, or enable and encourage young people to actively participate in the arts. Both groups and individuals can apply for funding, provided individuals are New Zealand citizens or permanent residents.

More information and application forms are available through the Council website on http://www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz/news_page/2015/may/ccsfunding, or from any of our Council offices.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Property for Sale - Turua
Hauraki District Council is offering a property for sale at 3 Metai Street, Turua. The land area of the section is 1012m². The buildings on site are 120m² shed and a 58m² sleepout. Asking price is $139,000 for the property.

To arrange a site inspection please contact Dennis Lees, Property Manager, Ph. 07 862 8609 or 027 4875 609.

HDC NEWS

FRIDAY, 19 JUNE 2015

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2009: James Bray after receiving his Young Achiever Award, pictured with Outstanding Citizen Award recipient Mary Smeaton.

2015: James is now a fulltime St John ambulance officer.

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