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GREAT LAKE TAUPŌ
Taupō District Council

COMMUNITY NEWS WITH TAUPŌ DISTRICT COUNCIL 20 FEBRUARY 2015

Countdown to IRONMAN

It's one of our most iconic events of the year, and it's returning to the Taupō District next month!

The Kellogg's Nutri-Grain IRONMAN New Zealand is on 7 March, with thousands of athletes set to challenge themselves on a tough course that will take them anything from eight to 17 hours to complete.

With the date fast approaching, many athletes have already descended on the district to pound the pavements and get a feel for the route. They will battle it out over a 3.8km swim, a 180km cycle and a 42.2km run from dawn on the day of the event.

With half the field coming from outside the country, it is a truly international event with representatives from around the world.

This year is the 31st year for IRONMAN New Zealand, and it has been running in Taupō since 1999.

About 2000 volunteers, most of them local, will be helping out around the course and hundreds more will line the streets to cheer the athletes on.

The race is also used as a qualifier for the IRONMAN World Championship in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii.

This is always a special day for our district and is a huge production for the team at IRONMAN to put together each year. Make sure you get down to the event and show these athletes our community spirit!



Beware – extreme fire risk

While we continue to have a boomer summer here in the Taupō District, there was a timely reminder on Tuesday night that a long run of great weather does have its downsides.



It was probably more a question of when, not if, there was a sizeable fire in the district so when I got the call there was a large fire in grass and scrub alongside the East Taupō Arterial it didn't come as a great surprise.

It was timely too in the fact that our rural firefighting teams were about to start their weekly training session when the call for help came in. Little did they know they would spend most of the night putting their finely honed skills into practice and they wouldn't be getting much sleep!

A big thank you to all the firefighters, forestry crews and helicopter pilots involved in getting the fire under control and those who spent the following day dampening down the hotspots. That was time that you spent away from your families, jobs and other commitments and I can assure you it doesn't go unnoticed.

It was also a timely reminder that the fire risk is extreme and all care needs to be taken.

Even though this fire is thought to have started by a fallen power line, the risk of one starting from something like a carelessly discarded cigarette butt is very real. The fire guys tell me when it is this dry fires can even start by something as basic as starting your car on a dry patch of grass!

Who knows when we will get some decent rain to provide some respite. Please remember a total fire ban is in force. No permits are being issued and if you see any suspicious smoke dial 111. We all need to do what we can to protect our district for us and others to enjoy.

On that note, a big welcome to everyone here for the 20th New Balance Great Lake Relay this weekend. Over 4500 people are expected to take part. We are also starting to welcome in those taking part in the IRONMAN New Zealand event on 7 March. There will be thousands of athletes, supporters and spectators rolling into the district over the next week or so.

It should be another fantastic competition and I encourage you all to get down to the lakefront and watch it all unfold.

Best of luck to all those taking part!

Mayor David Trewavas • dtrewavas@taupo.govt.nz

Getting ready for the...

Great Lake Relay

Want to know the best way to see Lake Taupō? Run around it! The 20th anniversary of the New Balance Great Lake Relay is here this weekend and will see teams running or walking around or the length of the lake.

About 4500 competitors will take part in what is both a scenic and social event. Teams of eight to 10 will cover the 155km around Lake Taupō for the relay. The Nature Valley Length of the Lake Relay will see teams of five to eight completing eight legs that total 67km. There is even an event for the particularly athletic and enthusiastic – the 67km ultra-marathon option!

This year's official charity for the relay is the New Zealand Breast Cancer Foundation, so it's supporting a great cause. Show your support by donating online or supporting someone who is fundraising, and get down to the lake and cheer them on!



Cemetery work begins

Two trees are being felled and the fence replaced at the Old Military and Early Settlers' Cemetery in Taupō early next month.

The cypress trees at the cemetery in Gascoigne Reserve are being removed as they are likely to affect graves in the near future because of their growth. The fence is rotting and needs replacing.

The work has been cleared with the Historic Places Trust.

The new fence will improve the look of the area, which is a point of interest for visitors to the district.

Although we prefer not to remove trees, in this case they are a hazard that has to be addressed. They have no known historical significance.

The tree removal will take less than a day to complete and the fence about a week to replace.

Next step for cenotaph refurbishment

Taupō's cenotaph outside the Great Lake Centre will be adorned with its new granite panels and plaques next week. The cenotaph is being refurbished to commemorate the centenary of World War I this year.

We were successful in attracting a \$144,000 grant from the government's Lottery World War One Commemorations and Environment and Heritage Committee toward the project.

The panels and plaques will take less than a week to install. Once this is completed contractors will wait until 9 March to begin digging up the paving for replacement. This is to avoid interruption of the IRONMAN New Zealand competition. Currently there is a small fence around the cenotaph which will expand to accommodate the paving work which will be in red and black to resemble a poppy, and the official centenary emblem. The symbolic design will help it become an even more special place to remember those involved in World War I, and other conflicts that New Zealand has been involved in.

The refurbishment is a joint project coordinated by the council, with help from the Returned Services Association, Ngāti Tūwharetoa and the Taupō branch of the Society of Genealogists. The grant will also help fund educational activities hosted by Taupō Library and Taupō Museum leading up to and during the centenary.

What's on

- 21 Feb New Balance Great Lake Relay, Tongariro North Domain
- 24 Feb Council meeting, Council Chamber
- 25 Feb Nukuhau Our Neighbourhood event, United Rugby Club
- 28 Feb Across the Lake Swim, Lake Taupō
- 1 Mar Wairakei Estate IRONKIDZ, Taupō lakefront
- 7 Mar IRONMAN, Taupō

For more information on Taupō District events visit www.GreatLakeTaupo.com

Email your elected members at councillors@taupo.govt.nz

For more information call 07 376 0899 or go to www.taupo.govt.nz

