



## Pirate ship playground on its way for Acacia Bay

The community has spoken, and a pirate ship playground is what it wants!

Acacia Bay's Besley Park on Wakeman Road is getting a new playground early next year and we have spent the past few weeks asking the community which of five options they prefer.

The five concept plans put forward by playground designers were aimed at children aged five to 12 years old and were shortlisted by the Acacia Bay Residents' Association.

We wanted the community's help choosing the new equipment to ensure the playground reflected the unique identity of the Acacia Bay community.

District parks and recreation manager John Ridd says nearly 70 per cent of people who gave feedback on the playground chose the pirate ship playground as their preferred option.

"A lot of people commented that the pirate ship playground looked safe, had a wide range of activities and was something that would appeal to children of all ages," he said. "I think the idea of a pirate ship really captured people's imagination, and we think children who play on it will use their imagination to make every visit an adventure."

The new playground will replace much of the old equipment behind the tennis courts, but will be located across the road



from the Acacia Bay Community Hall.

We will be putting it here because it's easily accessible and visible, and it will be nestled among the trees which will make for a great environment for children to explore.

Our team is now working with the playground designers to take it from a concept plan to the final design, and construction is likely to begin in March next year.

## Community spirit flourishing

One of the most satisfying things about being Mayor of our great district is watching how our communities react and respond to change.

Building community resilience and empowering communities to develop and grow is one of the core reasons the council has a community engagement team: to offer advice and help foster development.

A standout performer over the past year or so has been the small community of Waitahanui.

Now don't get me wrong, Waitahanui has many jewels in its crown. Not only is it a beautiful lakeside settlement, but it's also home to the famous 'picket fence' alongside the Waitahanui River – even the late Queen Mother fished there! But it's the hidden gems that really make this community shine.

It was not so long ago the community hall sat in the middle of Tutemohuta Reserve barely used.

However, these days thanks to the passion and commitment of Janice Wall, whose family association to Waitahanui spans generations, the once idle hall has transformed into a community hub that is really humming.

The community is coming together to learn a range of new skills with classes being run including Zumba, cooking, line dancing and kickboxing. It's not just classes either – the hall is a meeting place for the Waitahanui Rangatahi Council, the Ratana Choir and touch teams among others.

This is a fantastic example of a community coming together to grow their skills and it is something they should be incredibly proud of. They've fostered a sense of togetherness and it has certainly lifted community spirits. I for one am certainly excited about how they might further develop themselves in the future!

Another event that most certainly brought people together was the Starlight Cinema fireworks extravaganza and laser light show last Friday. I reckon about 7000 people turned out to enjoy the show once again put on by local businessman Peter Smith at Owen Delany Park. On behalf of everyone Peter, I thank you for your generosity. You certainly made sure November started with a bang.

Have a great weekend everyone.

Mayor David Trewavas • dtrewavas@taupo.govt.nz

## Free opportunity to learn about composting



Have you been thinking about giving composting a go? Learn about it with us at one of our free workshops and you could end up with a new composter, just like Susan Morris!

The Nukuhau resident won a Hungry Bin composter after attending our first workshop in October. We are giving one away every month, and all you have to do to be in the running is register for and attend a workshop.

Susan says she was ecstatic to learn she had won the composter and had great plans for it.

She said she learned a lot at the workshop and was inspired to minimise her waste as much as possible.

"It'll benefit my garden, and I don't like waste and hate throwing anything away," she says.

"The workshop was awesome, it had so much information. A lot of the stuff we actually throw away we can use in composting."

The workshops are being run in conjunction with Taupō Community Gardens to teach people how to make the most out of their composting equipment and reduce waste. We're holding them on the first Saturday of the month until May next year, with the exception of January which will be on the second Saturday.

The workshops cover all kinds of equipment, from traditional composters to worm farms.

The next workshop is on December 5. To register to go along, call us on 07 376 0899 or visit [www.taupo.govt.nz/composting](http://www.taupo.govt.nz/composting).

## Emergency exercise a success

It's not every day you get to manage the aftermath of a magnitude 7.0 earthquake, but when we did as part of an exercise on Wednesday we hit the ground running!

It was all part of a Civil Defence exercise based on a major quake that struck at a depth of 30km in northern Hawke's Bay. The earthquake was to have ruptured the ground surface along the Rangiora Fault, and was based on research and analysis that indicated it was a situation that could occur in real life.

While our colleagues in Hawke's Bay were leading the charge, our Civil Defence team's Emergency Operations Centre was in full swing for Exercise Te Matau-a-Māui, to lend a helping hand.

There were multiple agencies involved in the event, responding to different elements of the emergency. For us, this meant declaring a state of emergency, evacuating a lakeside settlement, closing roads and assessing infrastructure for structural damage.

Our Civil Defence emergency manager Ian Connon said the

exercise was a great way to test our capability in an emergency.

"It was great to pull our Civil Defence team together and activate the Emergency Operations Centre," he said. "It is exercises like this that give us comfort we're more than ready to react should there be the real thing."



Email your elected members at [councillors@taupo.govt.nz](mailto:councillors@taupo.govt.nz)

For more information call 07 376 0899 or go to [www.taupo.govt.nz](http://www.taupo.govt.nz)

## What's on

- 13 Nov Taupō District Sports Awards, Great Lake Centre
- 19 Nov Book Talk – 11.30am-1pm, Taupo Library
- Until 30 Nov Art From a Different View, Taupō Museum
- Until 14 Dec Unhinged – multi-media exhibition by Susan Mabin, Taupō Museum

# For more information on Taupō District events visit [www.GreatLakeTaupo.com](http://www.GreatLakeTaupo.com)



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