



KEEPING OUR DISTRICT SPARKLING

Did you notice how good our district looked last weekend?

It didn't happen by magic! Our team was busy cleaning up all the litter ahead of the Kellogg's Nutri-Grain IRONMAN New Zealand event and we think they did a great job!

Litter and fly-tipping has been increasing across the district this summer and our team spends a lot of time cleaning up rubbish and messes that we, as a community, shouldn't be making.

We collect a staggering 1.8 tonnes per week. This includes everything from pizza boxes left alongside rubbish bins to boxes of beer bottles left in parks and reserves to takeaway containers dumped in car parks.

Parks operations manager Andrew Moor said the entire parks team helped out with the litter effort – everyone from gardeners to lawn mowers to sanitation workers – because litter was everywhere and a clean district was what we were all aiming for. The problem was, it just kept piling up!

"We were picking up litter all week before IRONMAN and on Saturday morning, more had appeared in the places we'd just been," he said. "It's a real struggle to keep on top of it."

There were some major problem areas, he said, such as Reid's Farm, the parking bays along Lake Terrace, Spa Thermal Park, Control Gates Hill and Broadlands Road.

"People throw takeaway rubbish out their windows and litter blows off trailers on the way to the dump," he said. "We really want people to take care with how they dispose of their litter. If we all do our bit, we can live in a beautiful place that people want to visit."

THE TAUPŌ DISTRICT IS BUZZING



I'm sure everyone can see what a great summer we have had in Taupō and the central region – there have been people everywhere and town has been full of visitors and tourists. The cafés and restaurants have been busy (I have seen this through my own observations and from chatting to owners and staff) and the shops

have had a better summer than they have had for some years, so let's hope that continues!

I recently met a family member at Taupō Airport flying in from Auckland on a Saturday and the plane was packed! It was good to see Air New Zealand servicing the route on the larger 50-seat aircraft to cope with the higher demand, and the Wellington flights via Sounds Air were busy as well. All in all, the airport was busier than I have seen it in a while, which is great to see.

Last weekend I watched yet another exciting IRONMAN and what a perfect day it was. Well done to the council's policy and operations manager Gareth Green on his very first event, what a great achievement after a huge year of training in the lead up to this. A hearty congratulations also to the other four council staff who took part – Scott Devonport, Debbie Hodgson, Colin Little and Greg Hadley - from all the councillors. It's great to know that IRONMAN New Zealand is alive and well in our district and we are excited to be the home of this elite event.

And to add my spoke to the wheels of change, regarding the new flag... yes that delicate subject! Please remember to vote for the right reasons – not whether you like the politicians, the party who instigated it, the design, or are just against change. The most important thing is to vote, as we may not get another chance. Unfortunately the money's already been spent and it's done now, so let's use it wisely and look to the future with our own new proud identity.

Rosie

Councillor Rosie Harvey • rharvey@taupo.govt.nz • 07 376 0899

ARBORISTS KEEPING OUR GREAT OUTDOORS GREAT

Have you ever seen our arborists 20 metres up a tree and wondered what their job is all about? There's more to them than meets the eye!

Arborist Ian Ashmore has been maintaining trees for 26 years and is a passionate advocate for the trees in our district.

He is part of a small team of arborists who look after all the trees in council parks and reserves from Mangakino to Turangi and beyond.

It's no easy task – it's hard work and involves some dangerous equipment.

"There's a lot of physicality involved," Ian said. "You're dealing with chainsaws and chippers and you're up in a tree or out on the ends of branches at times – it's not your average workplace! You're also working with mother nature so you can't predict what's going to happen."

Ian said part of his job involved talking to the community about trees. As a trained specialist, he could identify dead, dying or dangerous trees, but it could be hard to get the message across to the community at times.

"One of the things I love about our community is how much it cares about its trees," he said. "However, it can be difficult to explain the complexity of some of the tree issues we're dealing with, so we really want people to trust us to do to the best for our trees. One of the hardest things is balancing what you know is best for the tree, with what some members of the community want because often the two clash."

People often wanted trees topped for views, he said.



"We know topping is bad for trees and causes more issues than it resolves, but it's an educational process for the community learning about proper tree maintenance."

He said although it was challenging work, he still loved it after all these years.

"I'm still learning every day. I love the machinery, the guys I work with – I'm not stuck in an office all day so I get to be outdoors and see the whole district," he said.



SHOW OFF YOUR BOMBING SKILLS

Ever thought you were a bit of an expert in how to make the biggest splash when it comes to bombing? This is the competition for you!

The first New Zealand bombing competition is here this weekend at Wharewaka. It will be on both Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 7pm. It will be the first event of this kind and is open to the public.

What's on?

- March 12** Taupō Wellbeing Fair, Great Lake Centre
- March 12-13** NZ Bomb Comp, Wharewaka Point
- March 13** Waipahihi Botanical Reserve 50th Anniversary,
- March 13** Children's Day Teddy Bears Picnic, Riverside Park
- March 17** St Patrick's Day Picnic at twilight, Tongariro South Domain
- March 18-20** New Zealand Jetski National Championships, Kinloch
- March 19** Turangi Sweet Sounz, Tokaanu Tailrace
- March 20** Greenlea Rescue Helicopter Open Day, Taupō Airport

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

