



## COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS HELPING PEOPLE ROUND TOWN

Have you wondered who the lovely folk wandering around town in their bright blue shirts and straw hats are? Go and say hello!

They're our community ambassadors – a group of civic-minded residents who take to the streets during summer to help people out, give suggestions and steer them in the right direction.

The team has been out on the streets in the Taupō town centre since the start of January and ambassador Rosalind Burnett said they love being able to meet new people and show them around.

"We love talking to people and meeting people from all over the world," she said.

They hear some great stories on their travels – ambassador Ellen Kinred said she recently met a man who had cycled to Taupō all the way from Ohakune. "The people we meet are people who want to see something different – they're not the usual," Ellen said. "I'm getting very good at sign language now – a smile says everything."

Rosalind once met a man from her hometown in Scotland and said it was amazing he remembered her from their school days together.

The ambassadors also helped people keep safe by warning



Community Ambassadors Ellen Kinred (left) and Rosalind Burnett on the job.

them of dangers and offering solutions to problems. "We try to make them aware of being safe and take care of themselves," Ellen said.

It's a voluntary job that requires patience, good local knowledge and a positive attitude, and we're really thankful they do such an amazing job each summer!

## FAMOUS FACES AND GOING PLACES

Did anyone catch a glimpse of All Black legend Richie McCaw on the weekend?

One of the bonuses about living in such a beautiful part of the world is we often attract high profile visitors. Most of the time we don't even know they are here! Next month however we know we have some high profile visitors headed our way. You may have seen in the media about the Hollywood A-listers heading to our shores after free nights at The Lodge at the Kinloch Club were included in goodie bags for Emmy winners.



The Lodge opened on January 15 and at least two of the Emmy winners have already made arrangements to take up The Lodge's free offer. They will arrive in Taupō with their children and other family members in March. It is that kind of international media coverage that really puts our district in the spotlight as a must-visit destination in New Zealand. I am sure the locals will welcome them with open arms!

Next month we also have a visit by a representative from the United States Consul General's office as well as New Zealand trade commissioner from the New Zealand Consulate General in Guangzhou, China, John Cochrane.

Fostering international relationships is an important part of our business and on Tuesday the council will be considering sending a trade delegation to China in May. Our relationships with Shaoxing and our sister city Suzhou have flourished over the past few years and they are an important tool to create ties that have mutual strategic benefit.

We have over a dozen businesses and organisations wanting to invest in the delegation which, if approved, will provide them a great opportunity to leverage relationships in China to support our local businesses and significantly progress our economic relationships.

Before I sign off, I would like to wish everyone taking part in the Great Lake Relay the best of luck. This event is celebrating its 21st year and we are proud to welcome the many out-of-town visitors who have taken up the challenge of circumnavigating our Great Lake. I am sure it will be a fantastic weekend.

David

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## SANITATION WORK FULL OF SURPRISES

Have you ever walked into one of our public toilets and wondered how they seem to be so clean and tidy at any given time of the day?

Next time you do, think of Wene Crosbie. Wene has worked at the council for 10 years, and has seen everything you can think of while on the job. For the last four, she's worked in sanitation and this involves more than just cleaning toilets.

She is part of the team that has to deal with discarded animal carcasses, clean up vomit and unfortunately disturb the odd drunk person or visitor trying to take a bath in the hand basins.

"Some of the carcasses are pretty potent," she says. "It's revolting, it really is. You suck it in, hold and hurry up."

She has seen extreme vandalism, with toilets, walls and basins smashed and plenty of tagging.

But for Wene, it's all part of the job and there are plenty of benefits



to doing the work she does.

"We can go into the toilets and have people who praise you for the work you do. It's lovely to hear, you feel good," she says. "You think okay – I can handle another mess."

She considers those who tag in the toilets "little toads" and is always keen to clean it up quickly.

"When we clean the toilets, we want to feel proud of what we've just done. It leaves an impression on visitors and you want that impression to be good. It's part of what helps them to view our town as a beautiful place to visit, and that's what we want."

The vandalism clean-up in the Taupō District costs ratepayers in excess of \$140,000 a year.

## GREAT LAKE RELAY CELEBRATES ITS 21ST

Teams of runners and walkers will take on the circumnavigation of Lake Taupō this weekend with the 21st Great Lake Relay.

About 4500 people take part in this event each year, which sees teams of 10 to 18 complete 155km in sections.

Considered perhaps the most social and scenic relay in New Zealand, it's a fantastic event to watch and take part in!



A second, shorter event sees teams complete the length of the lake – 67km from Pukawa in the south to Taupō in the north. Or for those who are really fit, they can run this leg individually as an ultramarathon!

Get down to the lake this weekend and support those taking part – it doesn't matter which spot you pick, there will be people running it and they will love to hear you cheering them on!

## What's on?

- 20 Feb** Taupō Great Lake Relay, Lake Taupō
- 21 Feb** Nature's Fresh Simple Sunday Fun Day, Riverside Park, 11am-3pm
- 24 Feb** Council Catch Up – coffee with the Mayor, Splashes Cafe, AC Baths, 9.30am-10.30am
- 24 Feb** Blues vs Hurricanes Under 20s, Owen Delany Park, 1.30pm
- Until 14 Mar** Lyrical Waxing – batik exhibition by Ann Hay, Taupō Museum

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

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)

