



NP Positive Ageing, Newsletter - Taupaenui DECEMBER 2025... Issue 130

Kia ora, Talofa lava, Kia orana, Malo e lelei, Fakalofa lahi atu, Talohani, Bula vinaka, Ni Hao, Namaste, Greetings...

May the Christmas Spirit be with you...

*Message...
from
Lance
Girling-
Butcher*



Christmas comes but once a year and when it comes, it brings good cheer, as the old saying goes.

Unfortunately, in a world full of war, Trumpism, scandals and other depressing issues, it's very hard to stay as cheerful as this message suggests.

On the bright side, I hope everyone who deserves a break gets one, that people have an enjoyable time, but they don't overeat or overdrink and that families get together in the Christian spirit that is supposed to predominate.

Looking back over the year it's probably been more gloom and doom than one would really wish but there is promise for the future with indications the economy is improving. We're getting more tourists. The weather is promising and it should be a good summer in Taranaki.

From a Positive Ageing point of view, it's been a difficult time with attendances at our open free forums rising and falling like the waves, the messages have been good. I am sure that our keen supporters are as well informed.

We are a little worried that the issues involving an aging population have been somewhat neglected and the work that we did on our Age Friendly Strategy somewhat stagnant, but we are going to do our best next year to ensure that this is prodded back into life.

On the subject, one of our most positive activities during the year has been to start the process of getting an Abbeyfield home in the city to help meet the challenge in providing accommodation for those over 65. It was with considerable gratitude that we recognise the New Plymouth District Council contribution of \$1.5 million towards purchasing a suitable site.

While we are still trying to find the ideal location, a lot of work has been going on in the background setting up the

administrative team to run the financial appeal and eventually the home and we have been working closely with the national organisation in Nelson towards this end.

One of my grumbles in the meantime, is at this stage of writing there is no sign of the Council reestablishing the old Age and Access working party that has made such a valuable contribution to the needs of this often neglected section of society.

We can only hope that in its drive for economies the new Council team don't forget their responsibility to the aged or to the young.

A few years ago under Andrew Judd the council dropped its Junior Working Party which used to encourage school aged

Continued on Page Two

In this DECEMBER Issue...

| | |
|---|---|
| May the Christmas Spirit be with you... | 1 |
| Government to launch an overhaul of Aged Care | 2 |
| Cheaper parking in NP CBD—an early Christmas present | 2 |
| It's official, Taranaki still leads the country in sunshine hours | 3 |
| Better policing needed for the Police | 3 |
| Cross cultures | 4 |
| Age Concern Taranaki December events programme | 5 |
| Love your hips | 5 |
| Chairs message... Abbeyfield housing - progress report | |

A Newsletter for those interested in improving the quality of life for all persons in Taranaki

Please note: The views/opinions expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily reflect those of Positive Ageing



Taranaki Kowhaiwhai panel - The Hammerhead shark, Mangopare - 'keep positive, see it through'

"Positive Ageing—Taupaenui" is edited by Gordon Hudson. Ph 06-753-9815 or email gordonandjanr@xtra.co.nz

Continued from page one...

youngsters to get involved in politics with assistance and guidance from the Council. It might be a slight extra cost but the value from this far proceeded the effort that was required to keep it going. Keeping rates down, as promised, is a great goal but we need to be careful what goes out with the bathwater.

Anyway, with that cautionary note, have a happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year and let's hope we managed to solve some of the mini issues that make following the news this year so depressing.

We live in a wonderful district in a wonderful country and a wonderful part of the world and at this time we should be celebrating and enjoying these facts rather than constantly worrying overly about what idiots elsewhere are doing

Lance Girling- Butcher.

I always knew I'd get old. How fast it happened was a bit of a surprise, though.

Government to launch an overhaul of Aged Care...

The Government has recently announced a major first step towards New Zealand's aged care system. The overall aim is to improve health outcomes for the country's 900.000 people aged over 65 years and to create a sustainable, accessible aged care system.

Associate Health Minister Casey Costello believes that "*essentially our aged care model is out of date and piecemeal change isn't the solution. We want a system that provides the right type of care in the right place, one that allows people to transition between these types of care, that's easier to navigate and access, that's fair, and that's sustainable and endure as our population ages.*"

The advisory group will deliver an independent report by mid 2026 with changes to the funding model expected to be implemented in 2027.

Costello is hoping that the report will find favour and support from all other parties.

Time will tell....

Cheaper Parking in NP...



Winning the hearts and minds of shoppers and the NPDC Christmas parking initiative.

From Saturday, November 29 till January 11, parking will be reduced from \$3. per hour to just \$1.50 with the first two hours free if parking in the Downtown Car Park.

The move will be welcomed not only by shoppers but by CBD businesses as well. So much so, that there is a major push by retailers to make the parking cheaper all year round.

Groups representing older adults too will be pleased with this council initiative and hopefully they will consider extending free parking from two hours to three hours on weekdays.

Then everyone is a winner.



"THERE WAS A 'KEEP OUT' SIGN ON THE FRONT DOOR, SO I CAME THROUGH THE BACK TO SEE WHAT'S GOIN' ON."



Taranaki Kowhaiwhai panel - The Hammerhead shark, Mangopare - 'keep positive, see it through'

Better policing needed for the Police

A strong sense of entitlement, of keeping it all within the 'family', combined with poor decision making. What a disaster for all.



To be fair, the vast majority of the 15,000 strong police force do a great job working to protect the rest of us. Not always successfully, but certainly with good intentions.

The majority of police are far removed from the 'top brass' and do not always think highly of them. Now, they have been let down again by their senior officers.

You would imagine that taking the written complaints of a woman, scorned or not, against a police officer should have immediately been taken seriously, investigated and resolved within a reasonably short span of time and justice done and seen to be done. Sadly not.

The woman concerned and her whanau have been badly let down by the very people that should have listened to her and dealt to the issues involved. Instead the complainant has had years of trauma while she struggled to expose the many breaches involving her former relationship with McSkimming.

How many are involved or at least knew about the McSkimming affairs and the cover ups will probably never be known, or at least, not publicly.

The, at best, unusual decision making by the most senior officers was, again at best, abysmal. That the rather sordid background from such a senior officer as McSkimming was not sufficient to affect his chances of promotion to the nation's top position as Police Commissioner is amazing. The confidence in the top brass at Police Headquarters has been shattered. It will take years to rebuild mutual respect and trust.

And promoting the NZ Police as a great place to work for just got harder when, already, the Police can not keep up with recruitment targets or even manage to recruit more police than they are losing.

Opinion: Gordon Hudson

My New Year Resolutions

I will resolve to work more with neglected children...starting with my own.

I will do less washing and use more deodorant.

A New Year's Resolution is one that goes in one year and out the next.

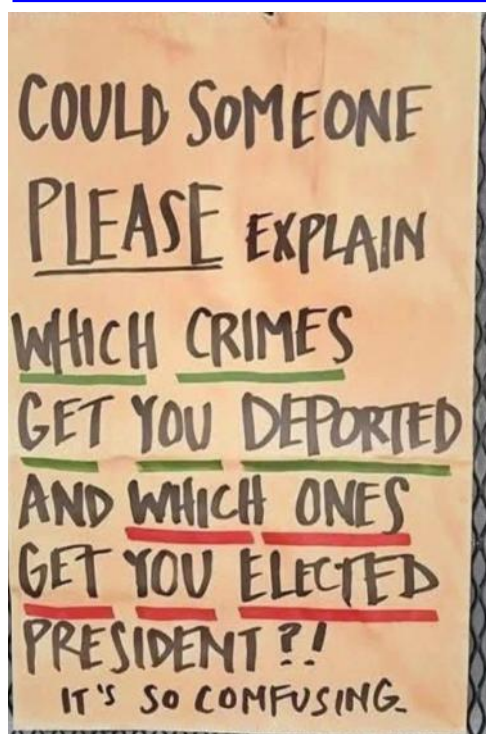


It is official (otherwise who would believe it?) that Taranaki leads Aotearoa / New Zealand in sunshine hours!

Yes, read that again. All I can say is that I have new respect for the great place Taranaki is. To top it off, so much of our fine weather is during daylight hours - when the sun shines. Amazing.

I cannot help feeling a bit of sympathy for those other provinces who get such worse weather. Still. Let's keep it to ourselves. It would be cruel to gloat.

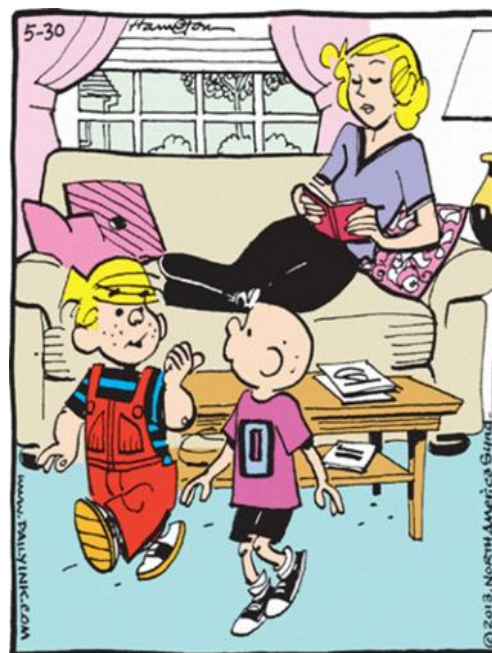
Sort of.



I have an inferiority complex but it's not a very good one.



Bizwaremagic's Funny Quotes



"Mom sure likes learnin' about colors. I didn't even know there was 50 shades of gray!"

Cross cultures

We filed off the bus and gathered on the paepae, shuffling uneasily under the benevolent gaze of the potbellied red tekoteko. I imagined he was laughing at a joke, maybe at us. I don't blame him.

The karanga rang out around the hills answered by our own greeting. Welcomes over, we filed into the wharenui (meeting house).

A kaumatua, in worn corduroy trousers and flannel shirt, cardigan buttoned to his neck, thumped on the wharenui floor with his tokotoko stick and cleared his throat. His rheumy brown eyes scanned the gathering, a grin creased his lined face.

The swell of talk petered away to silence, and heads swiveled towards where he stood at the front of the wharenui, leaning on the gnarled stick. We were an attentive crowd of Maori and Pakeha, young, old and in between. For me, a marae is a warm place of hugs, hospitality and hongi, all witnessed by the benevolent presence of the tupuna whose pictures hang round the walls.

I'm ngāti Pakeha, tauwiwi, but on the marae, they're my ancestors too – fulfilling the centuries old duty of manaakitanga (hospitality) to all visitors on the marae. I know they wish me well.

"Kāore te kūmara e kōrero mō tōna ake reka," the kaumatua intoned slowly, and smiled broadly like a rising sun, enjoying the wit of the words, the music of the reo. The smile shone back from the crowd, relaxed on mattresses and cushions on the floor. A few laughed quietly and nodded.

"What did he say? What's it mean?" Victoria whispered urgently into my ear and squeezed my arm. It was her first time on the marae and she was fresh from London the previous week, very English.

"It's a whakatauki – like a proverb, in English," I whispered back. *"He said: 'the sweet potato does not talk of its own sweetness.'"* "Oohh that's just silly, she said scornfully, *"everybody knows that potatoes can't talk."*



Glossary:

paepae – threshold of a house
tekoteko – carved figure on the gable of a meeting house
karanga – to call out, summon
manuhiri - visitors
pōwhiri – to welcome, invite
kuia – elderly woman
hongi – press noses in greeting
tūpuna - ancestors
manaakitanga - hospitality
kaumatua – elderly, aged
wharenui – meeting house
tauwiwi – foreigner, European.

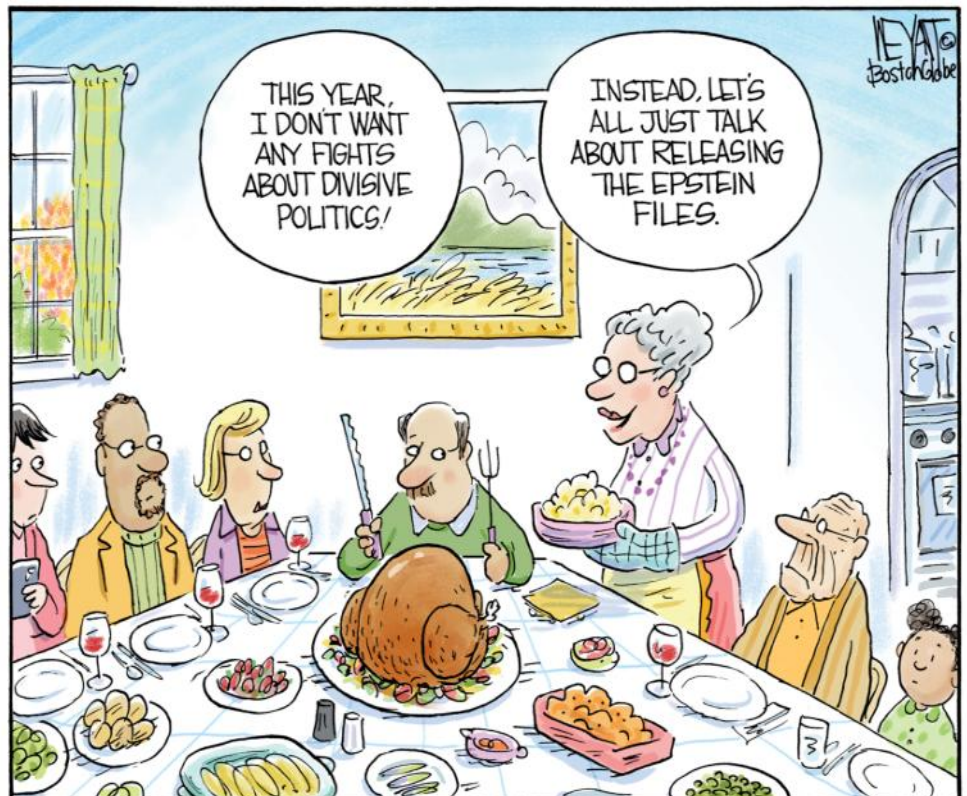
Lindsay Wright is a New Plymouth based writer.

**Together, we can,
and do,
make a difference.**

It turns out that when asked who your favorite child is, you're supposed to pick one of your own. I know that now.



For More Funny Quotes Visit:
www.bizwaremagic.com



LEAT
Postcard



Taranaki Kowhaiwhai panel - The Hammerhead shark, Mangopare - 'keep positive, see it through'

Activities in December...



AQUA WALKING: Tuesday: 2, 9 and 16: 10-11am - It's amazing! Great for improving stability and fitness. Held at the Methanex Pool, Bell Block. Cost \$4. Please register with Pauline (06 759 9196) **prior** to entering the class.

Our pool party and pot luck finger food lunch will follow the class on December 16th.

Aqua Exercise returns on JAN 20, 2026.

WARM UP WEDNESDAY 10: held at 33 Liardet Street, NP. 9.30-11.30am. "Warm up" with us and enjoy great music and some tasty hot soup and toast. Gold coin donation. First class for 2026 will be on 28 JAN.

DROP IN CAFÉ / SOCIAL MORNING: Thursdays, 4, 11, and 18: 9.30 - 11.30am. Held at Age Concern premises, 33 Liardet St. Socialise, connect and make friends. Varied programmes. Restart on Thursday 22 2026.

AGE CONCERN TARANAKI CHRISTMAS LUNCH: Wed 17 at Ngamutu Golf Course, 11.30am. Cost \$35 includes your buffet meal. Let the office know as soon as possible as number are limited.

INGLEWOOD Social Afternoon: Thursday 13 and 27: 1.30—3.30pm Held at Lifegate Centre, 6 Mamaku St., Inglewood. 'Connect' and enjoy a lovely afternoon tea.

COASTAL CONNECTIONS OKATO Tuesday 2: 1 - 3pm at the Hempton Hall Supper Room. Lovely food, great company, excellent guest speaker.

WHAT'S ON IN WAITARA:

FRIDAY 5 and 12: Singing and fun and afternoon tea.

Christmas Party on December 12. 1 - 3.30pm, Senior Citizen's hall. 3 Warre Street, Waitara.

Contact: Pauline Julian
Age-Connect Service Coordinator
06 759 9196 or 0800 652 105
pauline@ageconcernaranaki.org.nz

Office Hours:

9.30-1.30pm Monday to Friday.

Love your hips...

Are you at risk?

Unless you've injured yourself in a fall, avoiding a fall is probably the last thing on your mind.

Falling over shouldn't be considered part of the normal ageing process, but we need to be realistic. As we grow older, underlying conditions or problems, with balance, strength or mobility do increase our risk of falling.

Each year, one in three people aged 65 and over will fall. For people aged 80 and over, the risk increases to one in two. That said, many falls are preventable.

One of the ways everyday New Zealanders are reducing their falls risks is by attending exercise classes especially designed for them.

Community group strength and balance classes will support participants to improve their strength and balance and help them live stronger for longer.

Strength and Balance classes...

Participants not only benefit physically, but socially as well.

For further information please see www.livestronger.org.nz or contact Hilary Blackstock via email...hilary.blackstock@sporttaranaki.org.nz



THE good CAFE

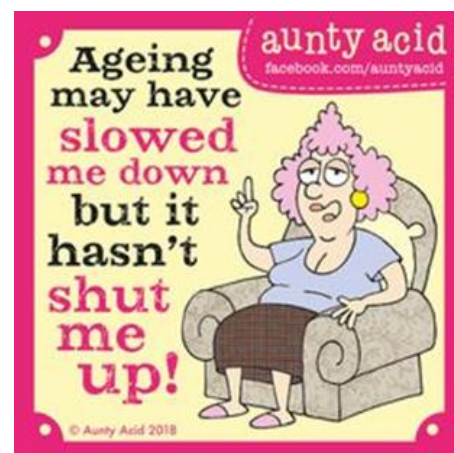
The Good Café is where you can enjoy a delicious breakfast served by loving volunteers, and do a good deed by donating generously for your breakfast.

Based at St Mary's Church's Vicarage, the atmosphere is welcoming, warm and busy where people from all walks of life enjoy great food while supporting local, national and international humanitarian causes.

The Good Café appreciates that some people are unable to donate. This is fine. You are welcome to enjoy breakfast.

Tuesday mornings

7.30 - 10.00 am
(Last orders at 9.45am)



I never thought I'd be the type of person who would get up early in the morning to exercise. I was right.

Remember December 1 is the annual FOODBANK APPEAL, in your area from 3.00pm. What a timely great cause...



Chair's message...

I recently had the opportunity to attend the Abbeyfield New Zealand (ANZ) National Conference that was held in Nelson.

There were approximately 60 attendees from a wide range of regions up and down the country. Abbeyfield NZ now has a strong working relationship with the Community Housing Funding Agency (CHFA) which is proving to be very beneficial all round and especially to Abbeyfield Properties Ltd (APL). Some of the smaller Abbeyfields with less than the optimum 14 residents are finding things more difficult with the fewer numbers, and are looking to increase their capacity where possible.

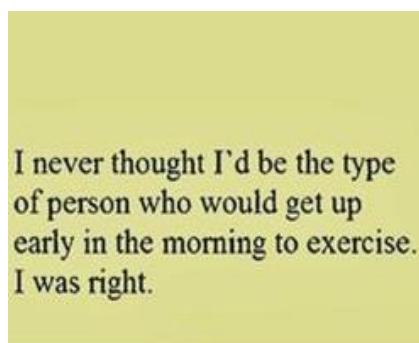
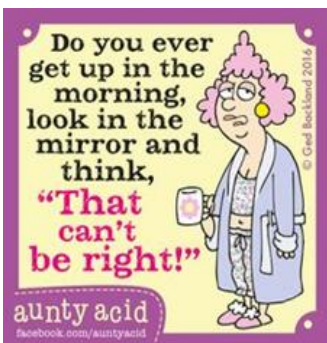
The question was asked at conference shouldn't "Abbeyfield" be more widely known and promoted? The response to that from the ANZ chair was, please keep in mind that Abbeyfield in real terms only look after approximately 200 elderly folk nationally, so we need to keep it in perspective numberswise to the overall housing needs for the elderly.

The latest Abbeyfield House in Katikati opened up at the beginning of November. A great result from a very small but very dedicated team over a seven year period. The Katikati house now make a total of sixteen operating house around the motu, with another twelve in various stages in their planning.

As far as the Abbeyfield New Plymouth District (ANPD) goes, it is now an Incorporated Society with Charitable Status which in turn of course means that it is a legal entity as such, and gives it some substance when talking to others about the ambitions of getting the first one established here in New Plymouth with an end goal of more being set up around the maunga in the years to come. The ANPD has a very strong and stable committee with a great range of the desirable skillsets required for the project.

Currently, the ANPD is still seeking a suitable site, and after some discussion with ANZ it has been agreed that an option of building up, i.e. two storeys is viable, bearing in mind the seemingly lack of affordable and suitable 2000 Sq M sites.

Have a great Christmas and New Year... Wally Garrett - Chair, N.P. Positive Ageing and ANPD



Positive Ageing NP

Your 2025/26 committee is:

Co Patrons - Peter Tennent and John Major

Chair - Wally Garrett

Deputy Chair - Richard Andersen,

Secretary - Stephanie Hansen

Committee - Michel Archer, Brian Eriksen, Lance Girling-Butcher, Gordon Hudson, Kate Knuckey, Margaret McCall, Callum Williamson

Newsletter - Gordon Hudson.

www.positiveageingtrust.org.nz

NP Positive Ageing is proud to be supported by:

COGS: Community Organisations Grants Scheme,

Ministry of Social Development,

New Plymouth District Council,

Pub Charities—New Plymouth

We are most grateful for their ongoing support.



A trust of older adults interested in improving the lives of other older adults by providing information, educational opportunities and advocacy when and where needed.

