

**Be a
voice...
not an echo**



NP Positive Ageing, Newsletter - Taupaenui MARCH 2026... Issue 133

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

To succeed, democracy, like justice, has to be seen to be done.

**Message...
from
Lance
Girling-
Butcher**



As popular American comedian Bob Hope once said, it takes guts to grow old, and on this occasion he wasn't joking. Bitter personal experience has shown that aging is no joke but that doesn't mean we should stop laughing.

As the body declines and bits fall off or others do not work as well, our contrary mind can fool itself into believing it is still young.

At the same time, in spite of these physical failures, there are compensations. Many of the inhibitions of earlier years disappear and it's possible to discern interesting patterns in human development that can fascinate and intrigue.

Fashions, for example, seem to operate on the 10 to 20 year cycle that says yesterdays stovepipes will become tomorrow's flares and dress and skirt hems will go up and down like the proverbial.

There are however, others on a more serious level. The latest debate over importing liquefied natural gas is an example.

Following discovery of the giant Maui field in the mid 70s the national government under Muldoon decided to undertake its infamous 'Think Big' projects as a way of harvesting this resource - considered to be one of the largest in the world at the time.

For Taranaki, the most significant of these was the synthetic petrol plant just north of Waitara which was intended to isolate New Zealand from the

movements of energy prices around the globe. It later was reduced to producing methanol as the cost and complications of the petrol process became too complex and costly.

About the same time, a major refinery was built in Whangarie, partly to process the light oils being produced from Taranaki's fields.

Now, as the flow from these fields reduces, the refinery has been shut down, and the government is looking to import gas as a way of keeping the gas fires burning maintaining electricity generation in periods of high demand and low hydro support.

It's the subject of intense political and scientific debate, the results of which are of considerable interest to those of us who live in Taranaki.

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***Our next public Forum
is on Brain Health***

***Held in association with
Alzheimers Taranaki***

See details on Page Seven

See you there...

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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'

Continued from page one...

Obviously there would be significant economic advantage from having such a project in the province, but it does bring with it an enormous risk as this volatile fuel has the potential to cause a major disaster in the event of an accident.

Questions are also being asked about whether there are not better alternatives available at similar or less cost than an LNG plant.

We can only hope that our political masters give it more consideration than Labour did when it decided to walk away from gas exploration without considering alternatives to take its place, leaving us with the expensive and complicated task of replacing gas burning industry and domestic appliances with those powered by electricity.

The result has been soaring gas and electricity prices leaving people scratching their heads about whether national did the right thing when it decided to de-regulate these industries some years ago.

When you look at it, it's almost as funny as the aging process is proving to be.

Making Dementia a priority in 2026...

Problems...

New Zealand is facing a major and rapid growth in dementia numbers to the point that it is putting unrelenting and growing pressure on the country's fragile health system. People with dementia are already taking up much needed and costly hospital and aged care beds.

In 2025 around 83,000 Kiwis were living with dementia. Within 25 years this figure is projected to double to 170,000. The cost will be an eye-watering \$10.65 billion per year.

By 2028, one million New Zealanders will be aged 65 years and over. With a rapidly ageing population, the number of people with dementia is growing at an unprecedented rate.

Prospects...

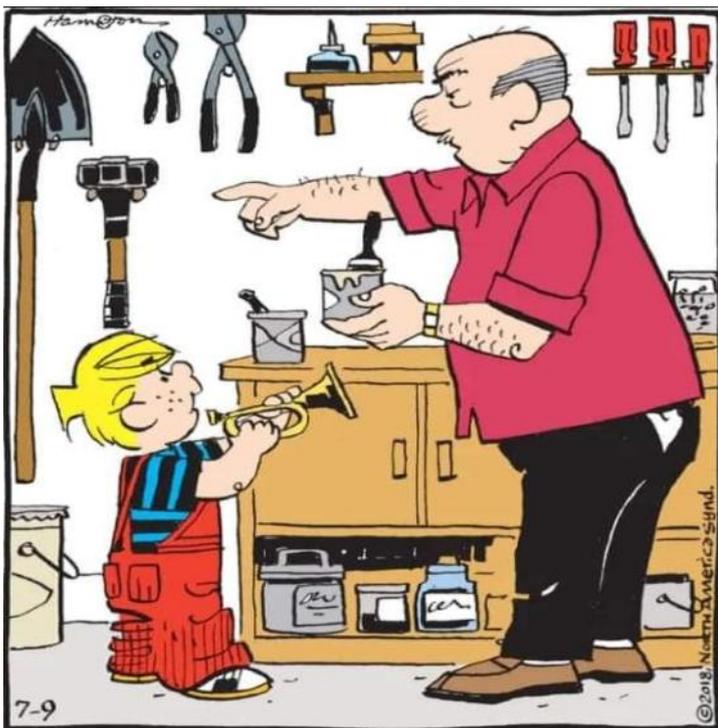
Alzheimers NZ is calling for dementia to be recognized as a national health priority that can no longer be ignored. How appropriate.

The thrust lies within the [Dementia Mate Wareware Action Plan 2026-2031](#). This has five priority areas:

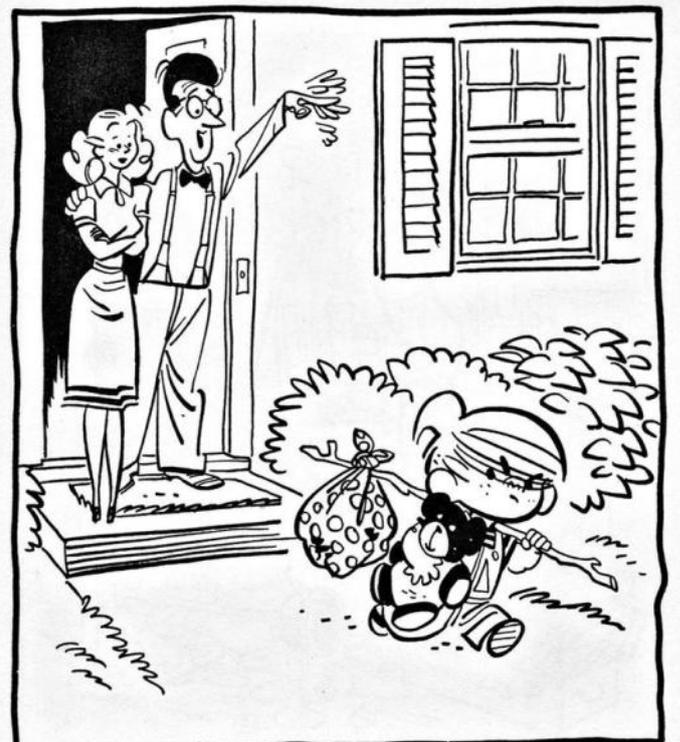
- *Taking action to promote brain health in a bid to to reduce the prevalence of dementia*
- *Ensuring timely and accurate diagnosis and comprehensive management planning for people with dementia*
- *Improving community dementia support services*
- *Better supporting both the formal and informal dementia work-forces*
- *Providing more effective governance for and within the dementia sector.*

This clearly will require realistic funding for both formal and informal community based services to ensure appropriate assessment and treatment for people with dementia and their care partners/family.

Let's not even begin to discuss the lack of support provided for caregivers. Thank you Alzheimers NZ. They need our support.



"ANY REQUESTS?" "YEAH...FETCH ME THAT SLEDGEHAMMER."



"BE SURE AND WRITE TO US WHEN YOU LEARN HOW."

Another delivery of Tim Tams for the Council to chew over...

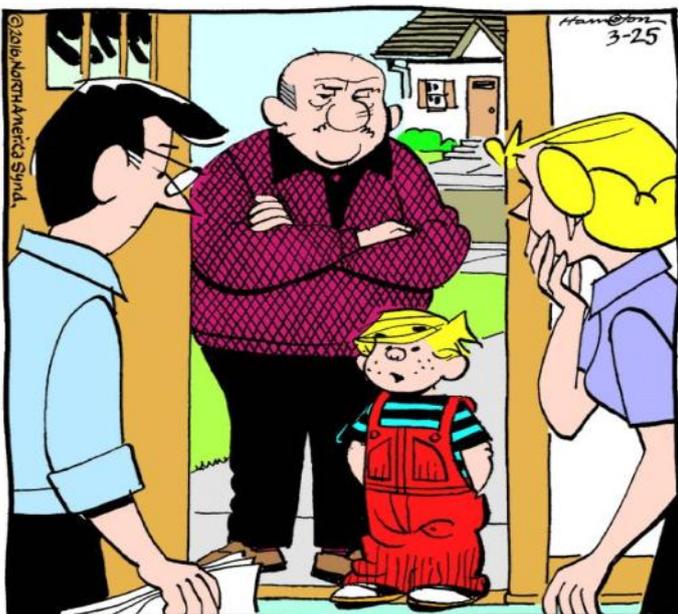
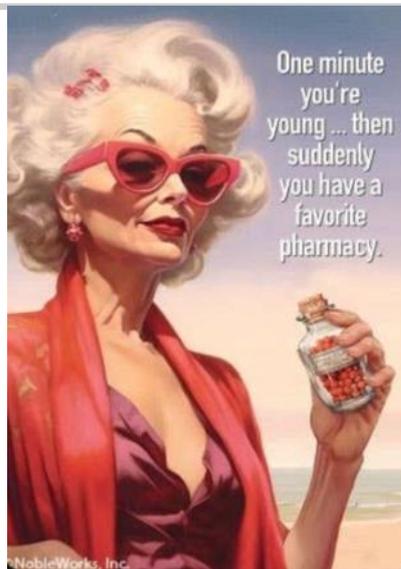
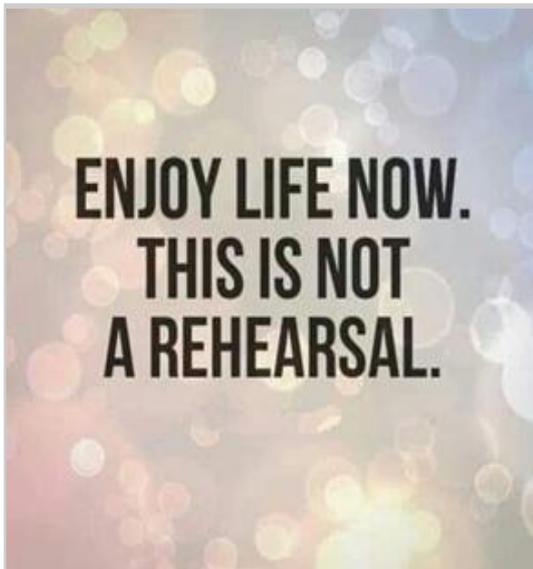


Nothing seems to be as easy as it first appears. Those Tim Tams along Devon Street West do seem to be a really good idea for the safety of cyclists but damaging to local businesses and to cars inadvertently hitting them.

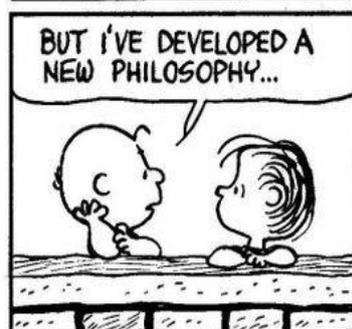
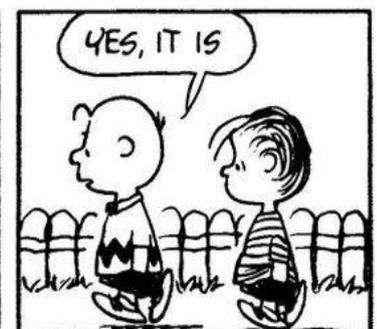
Further research by Council staff seem to agree that the safety factors are very positive. Councilors tend to agree and are currently trialing lower rubbery type Tim Tams that are kinder to car tyres.

Who ends up paying will be interesting. Evidently Waka Kotahi and the Council are mulling that matter over a coffee and more Tim Tams.

On a more somber note,.. If the issue of Tim Tams are one of our biggest issues in New Plymouth when clearly there are so many other far more important ones to worry about, then we should start looking at the bigger picture and the major issues facing our wonderful city.



"MR. WILSON WANTS TO SEE HOW YOU GUYS COPE WITH ME."



In favour of Ageing...

Growing old is a privilege not everyone gets to experience. We need to make the most of that privilege.

- *We get to retire if we want and if not can also work 'just for fun'*
- *We have time to help others*
- *We can pursue our dreams*
- *We have more time to spend with whanau and friends*
- *We can share our knowledge and experience*
- *We can make new friends*
- *We can enjoy Winston's Gold Card benefits*
- *We can feel more comfortable in our own skin*
- *We can determine our own agendas re jobs and recreation*
- *We can enjoy being ourselves—we have no need to impress*
- *We can help out others less fortunate than ourselves and there are plenty of them.*
- *We can learn new things by ourselves or with others.*

Most of all, we have time to contribute to our whanau and community—so many opportunities.

Over 50?

**Share your knowledge/skills
Make new friends
Join New Plymouth U3A!!**

**With over 50 different groups
Monthly general meetings and
numerous chances to socialize...
What more could you want?**

Ph: 022 683 0610—u3anewplymouth.co.nz

Citizens Advice Bureau

Te Pou Whakawhirinaki o Aotearoa



**Community House
32 Leach St (next to YMCA)
New Plymouth**

**06 758 9542
0800 FOR CAB (0800 367 222)**

**newplymouth@cab.org.nz
www.cab.org.nz**



Waimanako has Moved!

Taranaki's support hub has moved. Their new cafe base is now in the Tasman Club (with amazing views across the Tasman!) 35 Octavius Place. You can head there for good coffee or a great lunch and also for support - there is always someone there to talk to.

Opening Hours : Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 9am-4pm and Wednesdays 1pm-7pm

Taranaki Retreat also offers other support - residential, outreach, coaching and more; head to taranakiretreat.org.nz for more information. Free workshops every week!

For those struggling for food, their food truck Waimanaaki offers good home cooked food every weekday: Mon, Thurs, Friday 10am at the Cathedral, Tues 10am at Marfell school. Wednesday 1pm at the Cathedral.



**SUPPORTING COMMUNITY
WITH SURPLUS FOOD**

OVER 65'S FREE STORE

Fortnightly Wednesdays, 1.30-2.30pm

On the off week of NZ Super - SuperGold card required

Methodist Church Hall
66 Liardet Street, Central

EVERYONE IS WELCOME, NO BARRIERS OR JUDGEMENT

PLEASE BRING YOUR REUSABLE BAGS



f : ONTHEHOUSE.NP

WWW.ONTHEHOUSE.ORG.NZ



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

Activities in March...



AQUA WALKING: Tuesday: 3, 10, 17 24 and 32: 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.

WARM UP WEDNESDAY 11 and 25: 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.

DROP IN CAFÉ: 5, 12, 19 and 26: 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 OUTING: Wed. 18, 11.30am at Sunworld Restaurant. Cost: \$22.90 pp Please let Pauline know in advance.

MEN'S GROUP: Monday 16; 11.30am Blokes catch up with a BBQ at 33 Liardet Street. \$5 koha.

INGLEWOOD REGULAR ACTS...

STEADYAS YOU GO: Every Wed. 10.30am - Strength and Balance classes. Just \$3. per class Inglewood United Church.

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

WHAT'S ON IN WAITARA:

FRIDAY 6, 13, 20 and 27: Singing and fun and afternoon tea. 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@ageconcerntaranaki.org.nz
www.ageconcerntaranaki.org.nz

Office Hours:
9.30-1.30pm Monday to Friday.



Keep our local businesses
in business...

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 think my wife has started to show the first signs of Alzheimers...

She said she can't remember what she ever saw in me!



Thinking Big... How big can it get?

The following stats are from two respected journalists in last Sunday News...Andrea Vance and Vernon Small.

For those of us having difficulty in reconciling our home budgets - prioritising the priorities and deleting further wish lists, the Government of the day have a few projects and priorities of their own.



With 11,926 projects worth \$275 billion in the pipeline, we have far more on our plate than our economy can deliver. Smaller projects worth less than \$100 million are 99% of the number in the pipeline.

A handful of unfunded megaprojects account for the largest share of the total. The driving force, according to the recently released National Infrastructure Commission should be the demographic and economic changes.

An ageing population should require relatively less spending on education and transport for instance and greater spending on health and hospitals.

Transport alone will need \$12 billion a year by 2030 and \$56b for major roads over the next 20 years.

Please, no one mention the urgency of climate control, the significance of 'future proofing' our people and resources and playing our part in pushing for international unity - if it isn't already too late.

Once again, we are reminded that the issue of tim tams in our city isn't right up there. Is it?

Opinion... Gordon Hudson



Waimanako: The Hope Centre...

Taranaki's kai and support hub.
Naumai, haere mai, welcome to "Te Huinga, the Gathering". It is part of Taranaki Retreat - supporting people going through challenging times. A real community support.

The Hope Centre is based at 33 Devon Street West, and operates 5 days per week. There is also an excellent range of food and beverages for a koha.

Waimanako/Hope Centre is a 'Pop In' support hub - here to help people through the tough stuff. A good safe place for all. The retreat also offers a peaceful residential space to recover.

Help the Taranaki Retreat help others.

Dennis The Menace By Hank Ketcham



"NEED SOMEBODY TO CHEER YA UP ON A RAINY DAY, MOM?"



The Council's libraries are great places to visit for a browse and a chat. But not everyone can, at all times, be able to physically visit their

library of choice.

That is why the libraries have volunteers who will deliver books to eligible residents for free!

People needing this wonderful service can choose from a wide variety of fiction, non-fiction and audiobooks.

Just call 06 759 6060 or email: housebound@pukeariki.com to join.



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

Collaboration... Chair's Message - Wally Garrett...



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

When I was young, I used to always associate the word 'collaborator' with wartime France, The French resistance and the German Nazis. Of course had very bad connotations if one was accused and proven to be a collaborator. Of course collaboration can be used in a very positive fashion in which I will mention here.

Currently there are representatives from Enabling Good Lives, the Taranaki Disability Information Centre Trust, Age Concern, Grey Power and Positive Ageing meeting on a monthly basis. This is to facilitate the collaboration on a review of a document called the Age Friendly New Plymouth Strategy. The current strategy began 2017 and was set for ten years.

This extremely well constructed and thought out document, covering an extremely broad range of topics, is being brought up to date. This is also whilst attempting to be a little more representative of a wider cross section of today's community needs, without detracting from its original purpose. The Age Friendly New Plymouth Strategy originally come out of a World Health Organisation initiative circa 2003.

The Strategy set out the commitment for the NPDC, Positive Ageing and a number of strategic partner, to work together to ensure the the needs and interests of people as they age, are met. The document itself is 40 pages long and carries a wealth of information, a lot of ideals, some of which have fallen by the wayside over the years through no ones fault. With so many of the ideals relying on them them being carried out by volunteers, it is no small wonder that they have been lost to the depths of time.

Finally, it is very important to recognise the difference between "Aged" and "Age" friendly. The intention of the strategy is that New Plymouth is a friendly city to people of all AGES and abilities.

Free Public Forum... Brain Boost Workshop

Thursday, 26th MARCH

10.00—11.30am

At the new venue...

Plymouth International Hotel

Presenter... Gill Lambert
Community Educator
Alzheimers Taranaki

This session is relaxed, supportive and suitable to anyone interested in learning more about brain health.

You will have the opportunity to consider what you are doing well and what you'd like to change.

Plenty of parking there at no cost.
No need to register
Tea and coffee available

Promoted by...
Alzheimers Taranaki

Sponsored by...
NP Positive Ageing Trust



Positive Ageing NP

Your 2025/26 committee is:

Patron - John Major

Chair - Wally Garrett

Deputy Chair - Richard Andersen,

Secretary - Michael Archer

Committee - Brian Eriksen, Lance Girling-Butcher, Gordon

Hudson, Kate Knuckey, Margaret McCall,

Joy Southee and Callum Williamson

Newsletter - Gordon Hudson.

www.positiveageingtrust.org.nz



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.



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