



THE NEWSLETTER

**Lake Okareka
Community Association (Inc.)**

July, August and September 2017

www.lakeokareka.org

The Newsletter

of the

Lake Okareka Community Association (LOCA)

Issue 2, September 2017

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DISCLAIMER STATEMENT

The views and opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the LOCA Committee.

Front Cover:

From left to right: Luca Batenburg and Craig Carter

Lake Okareka's two youngest volunteers—see page 15 for further details.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT—SEPTEMBER 2017



We've had a busy six months as your LOCA Committee. It's a big thanks to all the Committee members for all your efforts and so many others who continue to work, often unseen and behind the scenes, to make Okareka a great place to live.

Some highlights from the first six months:

≡ We now have a strategic plan and thanks for all your feedback. The plan is not set in stone, and we want to keep hearing your views on what is important to you and what you think we should be focussing on. Really we want to build on what's special about our place – looking after our natural environment and supporting the vision of a pest-free community, continuing to develop our walking and biking tracks and ensuring that the right infrastructure is in place to support visitation to Okareka, supporting our local community groups and volunteers in their work, and developing really strong and constructive relationships with the Department of Conservation, local councils and our community board, iwi and others. It's remarkable how much feedback I get about how engaged, positive and constructive it is working with the Lake Okareka community and this is something we should look to protect.

≡ Through our partnership with the Lakes Community Board, we have been provided with an AED (defibrillator) that will be placed in the area of the Acacia Rd jetty and will complement the one already available in Steep Street; we also secured funding to support the local tennis club with its clubroom development; and funding to purchase some of the 'goodnature' self-setting traps to support neighbourhood pest control. The traps will shortly be available for residents to use. And we're looking to amend our constitution to make it easier for our community vote using a proxy.

≡ We have put a lot of time and effort into working with both the Regional Council and Lakes Council on the serious issue of our very high lake levels. Through working with the Regional Council in particular, we have been able to help develop some temporary solutions and help the Regional Council communicate more effectively through our networks, and especially through our Lake Okareka Facebook page. There's lots more to be done here – as an immediate issue that needs ongoing attention, and as a longer-term solution is developed. But excellent relationships are in place with the key agencies so we think the platform is there to progress this.

Our next priorities are to explore a connecting bike/walk track up to Tarawera Rd – both to keep our kids off the main road, but also to open up another recre-

ation opportunity; to push ahead with discussions with key groups about how (or if) undergrounding our powerlines is an option for us; and to work more closely to support our fantastic groups (primarily Landcare Okareka, Forest and Bird, the Botanical Society) who are involved in pest and weed control. The abundance of tui, dabchicks, kereru, and mistletoe is a testament to all they do.

One thing we do always need is more families and individuals who can give a few hours to help with our work running the local campgrounds (the money from this work comes straight back into the community) and helping both Forest and Bird and Landcare with their working bees. These are great opportunities for families to give a bit back, for school students to gain some valuable community work for their CVs, and to meet people. Please contact either Sandra Goodwin or Geoff Palmer to hear how you can help - geoff.palmer@xtra.co.nz or sgoodwin@actrix.co.nz.

It feels good to be heading into Spring!

Henry Weston

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TIKITAPU PEST CONTROL PROJECT



Despite the wet weather and slippery conditions the programme for the 2017 Tikitapu Pest Control has proceeded as planned on 6th and 7th August, with the Pindone bait put out into the bait stations and the Feratox® (cyanide) strikers nailed to trees. Stations were topped up two weeks later and it is intended to clear the stations of any remaining bait on 1st and 2nd of October. We are extremely grateful to our volunteers who have attended working bees this year and delighted to welcome some new people to the team. Thank you all very much for your support.

At this stage we have found 33 possum and 1 wallaby carcass and expect to find more when the stations are cleared. The self setting traps have killed a further 42 possums. Monitoring will be repeated in November to see how successful the baiting and trapping has been in reducing rat and possum numbers. Although there should be no bait in the stations after mid October, the area must be treated with caution until the signs are removed, approximately mid February.

The pesticides used are effective and safe when properly handled. The use of bait stations and strikers allows for the pesticides to be made available to target pest species while at the same time restricting accessibility to native and non-target species. However, there is a risk of poisoning to humans and non-target animals such as dogs if the bait is handled carelessly or eaten. Poisoning can occur through eating baits or poisoned animals.

The risk to dogs remains until the carcasses have completely decomposed. Please remember that the area is a Scenic Reserve and therefore dogs are not allowed in the reserve at any time.

The presence of warning signs indicates that pesticide residues may still be present in baits or animals. The removal of signs will tell you that you can resume normal activities in the area. If in doubt, check with DOC.

What do I do if I suspect poisoning?

Always contact your local doctor, local hospital or the National Poisons Centre on 0800 764 766.



These risks can be eliminated by following these simple rules:

DO NOT handle any bait
DO NOT allow CHILDREN to wander unsupervised in the treatment area
DO NOT bring DOGS into this area
DO NOT take ANIMALS for eating

I am always delighted to have new people to add to the volunteer list. The project relies on volunteers assisting in the field and it would be greatly appreciated to have some more local people involved. Please contact me if you would like more information or to be added to the volunteer list.

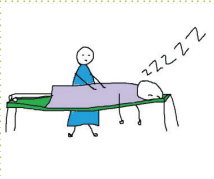
Frances Blakely jandfblakely@gmail.com Phone: 362 8480

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Daylight saving starts 24th September so it is almost time for spring tennis!

2017/2018 Annual Subscription due 1 October 2017

The subscription is a family sub for the year from 1 October 2017 to 30 September 2018 and remains at \$100. New members are always welcome.

Payment is requested into the Clubs' Westpac A/c 03-1552-0130369-00. Reference "Sub" family name. **Please e-mail confirmation of deposit** to craig@spurdle.nz

A combination lock will again be used and paid up members will be advised of the combination at the Friday coaching sessions. If you are not attending please contact Craig Kilmister so that the combination can be confirmed. The combination lock to the court will be changed from 30th October 2017.

Spring coaching for children

Coaching for children starts Friday afternoon 27th October and runs for eight weeks. The proposed sessions are as follows:

Session 1	4 pm to 4:30 pm	for players up to 7 years
Session 2	4.35 pm to 5:35 pm approx	for players up to 9 years
Session 3	Approx 5.45 pm to 7.00 pm	for 10 years and over

Please register your interest ASAP by advising the names and ages of children and indicate which session they are likely to attend. The coach may move a child into another session depending on ability.

The cost is \$40 per child for session 1. For sessions 2 & 3 the cost is \$50 per child.

Please pay the sub for coaching separately from the annual sub & put the name of your child as a reference.

UPDATE ON LAKE LEVELS

Unprecedented rain has caused Lake Okareka to rise to levels that we haven't seen since the 1960s. Even with the existing pipeline to assist water flowing from Ōkāreka to Tarawera via Waitangi stream open to full design capacity in June under emergency works the lake levels remained high.

After consulting with Lake Ōkāreka Community Association and directly affected landowners, work began to install an additional temporary pipeline and pump to increase flow to Lake Tarawera. A major part of getting the pump up and running was protecting the stream banks from erosion which we will continue to monitor.

The pump has been operating for an entire month and in good weather conditions we can see the lake levels reduce by up to 10mm per day but the continuous rain is not helping the situation. Without the emergency actions of opening the valve to its maximum design capacity and operating the pump for the temporary pipeline (4th August), the lake level would have been approx. 180mm higher than what we currently have.

Unfortunately it looks like more rain is on its way so please look after each other, check on any neighbours who may need assistance and take extra care on the roads around the lake edges. Anyone who needs welfare assistance or temporary accommodation can contact Rotorua Lakes Council for help on 07 348 4199 (24 hours).

To receive regular updates, check on lake levels and video/photos of the pump and pipeline visit projects.boprc.govt.nz/projects/managing-lake-okareka-water-levels. Let's hope spring brings more sunshine and less rain.

Ngā mihi,

Hariata Ngatai

Marketing and Communications Advisor

Bay of Plenty Regional Council Toi Moana

M: 027 588 8170 **DD:** 0800 884 881 ext 7445

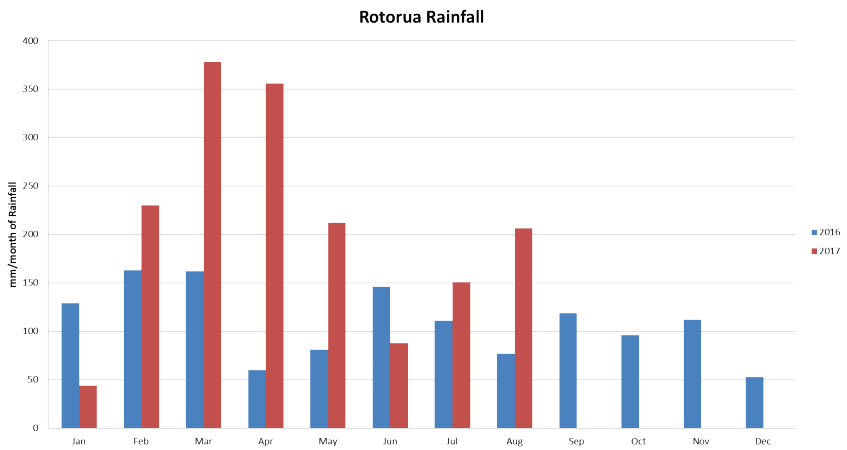
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UNUSUAL WINTER VISITOR

Briefly this winter we had another unusual visitor to the lake, a Kotuku (White Heron) one of New Zealand's endangered native birds. These birds breed only at Whataroa in the South Island and disperse widely over the country in the winter, they can often be seen over at the coast around Pukehina and Mataka. One is often seen at the Ohau Channel.

It was pure luck that I saw the bird. There was a few of us down at the lakefront celebrating Bob Van Boven's birthday, Dave Scott first saw it and gave me a nudge to look towards the lake as it glided into the Acacia Rd lakefront to land in the flooded area behind the raupo. The Kotuku stayed a short while and then flew off towards Boyes Beach.

I was busy lamenting the things you see when you do not have a camera handy when the bird came back. So I raced home and got a ride back down to the lake just in time to see the bird heading towards the end of Acacia Rd. In hot pursuit we went off down the peninsula and decided to walk down the walkway to see if we could find it. The bird was here stalking around looking for a meal and seemed unperturbed by people.



Mike Vincent (photos also supplied by Mike)







Lake Okareka Preschool News

AGM held 19 June

Our new Board Members are Sarah Bray Chairperson, Amanda Mutton HR Chair, Carl Iverson Treasurer, Melanie Loveless Secretary, Sarah Assen and Shelley Barbour and Debbie Hayward as General Board Members.

Movie Night

The children had a movie night here to see their favourite movie Moana. This was very popular social evening where the children could enjoy a picnic tea, treats such as popcorn and seeing their friends.

MIGS Gym

We had a trip to the Gym to experience the equipment and to have fun moving with our friends. This was an opportunity for parents to see what the gym could offer their child in encouraging physical development skills through play in a safe and fun environment.

Grandparents Day at Preschool

We share the invite with Lynmore School for Grandparents to visit Preschool on Friday 8th September. The children are encouraged to introduce their special visitors at Preschool.

Farewell

We will have a farewell for Abbey Garden who graduates to school at the end of the term.

Thank you to Ian Bowyer of Okareka Works for the repairs to our entrance gate and for moving our back fence to eliminate the erosion hazard.

Contact Preschool on 362 8606 or email office@lakeokarekapreschool.co.nz

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Preschool Board and Teaching Team



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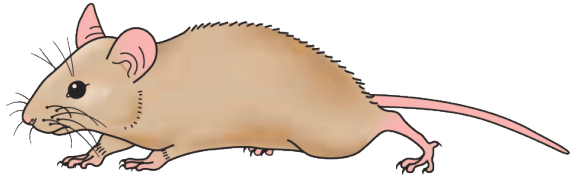
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1000TH RAT!!

Regular readers will know that we have been trapping predators around the lakeside since 2013. In August we caught our 1000th rat and it was fantastic that it was in a trap monitored by our two youngest volunteers Craig Carter and Luca Batenburg. At the time of writing our catch totals are:

Man hours	944.40
Rats	1012
Hedgehogs	163
Ferret	35
Stoat	5
Weasel	2
Feral Cats	6
Mice	111



The high lake levels has played havoc with the traps with many of them being moved to higher ground a number of times and the vast majority of the traps down the walkway being temporarily shut down until the water level recedes. Hopefully we are still making enough of an impression on the predators to protect the birds during this year's breeding season. There has been a mallard hybrid hen with a brood of ducklings in the flooded area behind the raupo during the last week of August.

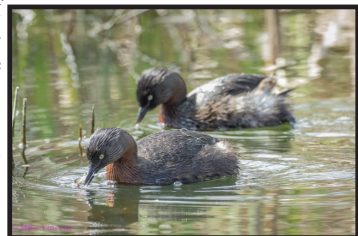
We are planning a new initiative this spring using 30 Goodnature traps we purchased after a donation of \$5,000 from the Lakes Community Board. These traps will be the foundation of a trap library that will be run by LOCA. These traps are self-setting and do not require weekly monitoring. Traps will be installed by LOCA volunteers and initially be loaned to households for a three month term. It is our aim to get these in people's gardens throughout the community. Literature suggests you need one every 50 meters. If you are interested in having a trap on your property please ring Mike Vincent on 027 3628 376.

Craig and Luca are not the only young people working to protect the environment. Euan Robinson is committed to achieving his Duke of Edinburgh' award and to this end has to complete two hours of environmental volunteer work for a year. Euan regularly contributes his time to the Tikitapu Reserve pest eradication program and to Okareka Landcare.

It is good that we are getting a cohort of young people working to protect the environment as this is a task that is like painting the Auckland Harbour bridge - it never stops.

If you would like to help with predator control please contact me at the number above.

Mike Vincent



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If you see a swarm hanging, please let me know because these creatures are having a hard time. A normal colony will produce about \$700 worth of honey in a season so they are precious apart from the pollination they do. Please call Bryan on 3628224 or 0272224623.



LANDCARE OKAREKA REPORT—SEPTEMBER 2017



The very wet weather and the high lake and ground water levels has not helped with many further plantings over the autumn/winter months.

We have plants waiting to go into the ground, but until the ground dries out and lake levels recede we will not be able to do

much more planting.

The only area dry enough for planting will be the new garden areas that have been created adjacent to the new walking track going across Boyes beach. Thank you to those hardy souls who have turned out for Landcare Okareka working bees in what has at times, been not very pleasant conditions.

In the meantime, the rat and other animal pest trapping team are still continuing to trap pests - Congratulations everyone in the team doing this work on passing the 1000th rat trapped. A huge thank you to everyone involved with this project.

It is very heartening to mention that we have some very keen young people who are helping out with rat trapping and also with Landcare Okareka and LOCA Walking Track Working Bees. Thank you so much for your interest and assistance.

All of the environmental projects happening at Lake Okareka appreciate everyone's interest and help. Read more about all of these projects - rat and animal pest trapping, Rotorua Forest & Bird pest control project to help protect native birds and mistletoe in the Tikitapu Scenic Reserve between Tikitapu and Okareka; what you can do to help in your own backyard with rat trapping and bait stations - elsewhere in the Lake Okareka Newsletter.

Watch out for the Landcare Okareka notice boards advertising Working Bees. Usually they are held on the 4th Saturday of each month. Let me know if you would like to be on the email list - slgoodwin.nz@gmail.com or give us a call 362 8865.

Hoping for some fine weather to help dry everything out soon - so we can get into doing more planting. Looking forward to seeing some of you at the coming working bees.

Sandra Goodwin

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RAT BAIT AND BAIT STATIONS—SEPTEMBER 2017

Thank you to everyone who has been rat baiting over the last few months. There is plenty of rat bait available and it is a very good idea to keep the bait stations stocked up to help protect nesting and fledgling bird life over the next couple of months.

Ditrac rat bait provided by Bay of Plenty Regional Council is, once again, available to individual property owners, to support enhancing the biodiversity at Lake Okareka. We are especially interested in getting even more lakeside properties involved with rat bait stations. We believe that we are seeing the benefit of both the rat bait programme on private land as well as the trapping programme in the lakeside reserve areas.

If you are interested to have a bait station on your property, but maybe feel that you do not come to your property often enough to keep the bait station full, please contact us. We may be able to work out a partnering system with someone who lives here permanently, and is prepared to keep your bait station filled.

Ditrac is a poison, and care must be taken when using it.

How to Use Ditrac Bait:

It is recommended that bait be fed in a type of bait station, fitted with a locating rod, that does not allow the rats to carry baits away to be stored. The baits have holes in them and they thread onto the rod. Rats and mice eat the bait in the bait station. The bait station protects the bait from the weather. It means also that bait cannot be eaten by non-target species such as birds, dogs, cats and children.

Bait stations are available by contacting Mike and Sandra Goodwin 362 8865 or email sgoodwin@actrix.co.nz. We have a new type of lockable bait station, like a small suitcase. They also have locating pins for the bait. Cost of these is \$20.

Do you have a bait station already? That's great if you do. When you collect your bait you will need to confirm your name and address and the address of the bait station. We need to update our data base about bait stations and where they are located throughout Okareka – and many thanks to everyone who has done this so far.

How do I get bait now? Bait is available in labelled, zip lock bags, containing 12 rat baits. This is enough bait to fill one bait station twice during a month. Bait stations should usually not be filled more than twice during a month, otherwise you are wasting bait and feeding potentially dead rats and mice.

If you require the bait or a lockable bait station for \$20, please contact Mike and Sandra Goodwin phone 362 8865, 2 Pryce Road or Rod Stace phone 362 8523, 30 Summit Road.

Please phone first to arrange a suitable time to collect bait or a bait station.



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MOUNTAIN BIKE TRACKS AND JUMPS IN TIKITAPU SCENIC RESERVE

There have been a number of reports to DOC concerning the increasing level of unauthorized tracks and bike jumps being constructed on Public Conservation Land at Lake Okareka. Several sites have been inspected and found to have an unacceptable level of vegetation removal, earthworks and construction of structures for jumps.

While it is great to know young people are out enjoying being in the reserves this must not be to the detriment of the environment or public safety. Any construction must be authorized under a management agreement, either as an individual or potentially in collaboration with a group such as Rotorua Trails Trust.

I'm happy to discuss this option with anyone interested, however in the meantime it is requested that all structures be removed as soon as possible and there be no further track development or vegetation removal without authorization. Sites will continue to be monitored and I'd appreciate hearing from anyone with information, concerns or questions.

Margaret Metcalfe
Senior Ranger , Community
Department of Conservation
Phone: 3497437
Email mmetcalfe@doc.govt.nz



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NEW EDITIOR

Murray Walker is the new editor of The Newsletter. His first edition will be the December 2017 issue.

Murray can be contacted on
021 0821 3250 or
mweltech@gmail.com.



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The Lake Okareka Volunteer Rural Fire Force

Hi all

It's good to see the days are getting longer and warmer again, although it would be nice to see a lot less rain. Daylight savings is just around the corner, which is a timely reminder of the need to check that the smoke detectors in your home are all in working order. Also, don't forget to get your chimney swept if you have been using your fire a lot over the winter.

While we have been experiencing significantly wet conditions over our winter, British Columbia in Canada has been experiencing its worst fire season on record over the Northern Hemisphere summer. At the beginning of August, 81 Fire and Emergency New Zealand personnel were deployed to Canada to assist with the effort to contain and control the hundreds of wildfires, some of which have been burning for over two months.

An Incident Management Team, consisting of 21 people including myself, were sent to three different fire complexes during the deployment where we set-up and managed the complex and fire operations for over 20 fires. One of these fires covered an area of over 500,000 hectares.

The twelve fire crews (consisting of five firefighters per crew) were sent to one of the more demanding and prolonged fires, Elephant Hill, and spent the duration of their deployment at this fire which covered some 187,000 hectares. Andi Uhl, Ray Doyle, Stu Lyall and Roi Toia from the Okareka and Rotoiti Fire Forces, along with Anthony Young from Timberlands, were one of the crews.

The conditions were extremely dry and daily temperatures were between 33-38°C, although on one day, the fire crews experienced an extreme drop in temperature down to 3°C along with some hail and snow. On a number of occasions, people were evacuated from homes and relocated, as weather and climatic conditions stretched resources and the fires broke containment lines. The fires in Canada are massive and on a completely different scale compared with vegetation fires here in New Zealand and even Australia. The smoke clouds from the fires went some 30,000-40,000 feet into the atmosphere, and the smoke haze could be seen across British Columbia and into Alaska. The cost for managing the fire response in British Columbia to date is in excess of C\$400 million.

Safety, as always, came first and foremost, as the Incident Management Team and crews negotiated not only the usual fire, equipment, conditions and terrain hazards but also the wildlife. Black bears in close proximity to fire crews were a regular threat, and a cougar (the four-legged kind!) took a stroll through camp one night.

There was a mix of nationalities in the camps including Canadians, Americans, Mexicans and Australians in addition to the New Zealand contingent. Accommodation was definitely no frills consisting of tents and sleeping mats. The fire camps often housed between 200-400 people, with one complex housing 900 people at its peak.

The deployment lasted for 4½ weeks with personnel returning to New Zealand on the 6th and 10th of September. It was an incredible opportunity for us to participate in the deployment and the experience for all involved was invaluable.

If you have been thinking about joining the Fire Force, please come down to the fire station at 7.30pm on a Wednesday night when we do training or phone me on 3628874. You can also go to our website: www.okarekaruralfire.com.

Phil Muldoon
Chief Fire Officer



Phil Muldoon—Resource Unit Leader



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UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT



SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

**Saturday 14th October 2017 at 4.00 pm
at the Lake Okareka Community Hall**

The Special General Meeting has been called by the LOCA Committee following a request at the Annual General Meeting in February 2017, for changes to the LOCA Constitution to allow for proxy voting and to only permit one vote per family subscription.

(See proposed changes to wording of LOCA Constitution on the next page)

This Special General Meeting
will be followed by a

Spring Social Get Together

from around 5.00 pm

LOCA Committee will supply ham, buns and salad and refreshments.
All Financial members of LOCA welcome to attend.

S. Goodwin
Secretary



Proposed Changes to the Lake Okareka Community Assn Inc Constitution - Sept 2017

Section 12. Annual General Meeting

Remove clause 12.3

Section 14. Procedure at General Meetings

Make additions to clause 14.2

14.2 At any General Meeting each financial member present at such meeting shall be entitled to one (1) vote, with one vote per household subscription allowed.

Additional Clause 14.3

14.3 Where any member entitled to attend and vote at a General Meeting is unable to attend the meeting, that member may appoint a proxy to attend and vote on his or her behalf. The proxy must be in a form prescribed by the Committee, signed and given to the Secretary before the start of the meeting.

Changes to clause 14.3 which becomes 14.4 Voting:

14.4 Voting at all General Meetings shall be by word of mouth, or by show of hands, unless a ballot shall be demanded by a majority of the members present. All votes at such meetings must be cast in person at any General Meeting. Proxy voting complying with clause 14.3 will be permitted.

Remove .

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LAKE EVENTS AND CLOSURES

Rotorua Lakes Council (RLC) manages all lake reserve booking for events, working closely with the BOP Regional Council (BOPRC) who manage activity on the lakes. For information on what events are coming up in the area, go to <http://www.rotorualakes.co.nz/lake-events-and-closures> or visit <http://www.rotoruanz.com/visit/whats-on>. Both RLC and BOPRC appreciate the impact events can have on the location they are held, both positive and negative. If you have feedback that you would like to offer or you wish to discuss events happening in your area, please email the RLC community events team at Community.Events@rotorualc.nz or BOPRC at Jo.Kapua@boprc.govt.nz

Martin Croft

Events Manager

Events & Venues Rotorua

D: 07 351 8654 **M:** 027 249 8670



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Local Builder—34 years' experience, Licensed Building Practitioner: additions, alterations, renovations and maintenance work. Contact Phil Muldoon, Mob. 021 890 508, Hm. 362 8874.

Accommodation—Ngamihi Lodge Luxury Bed and Breakfast, 6 Pryce Road Lake Okareka, email: info@ngamihi.co.nz

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Avon—my name is Caroline Wingate and I am an Avon representative. If you are interested in Avon please contact me on 3628 207, 021 148 9986 or cwingate@slingshot.co.nz.

Babysitter—my name is Lucy Phibbs and I am 16 years old. I am available for babysitting for daytime and evenings. I am enthusiastic and great with kids. **Phone: 3628 897.**

Free—Marque available for community events. **Phone Cathy Lines**, Licensed Salesperson, Okareka & Tarawera Specialist. First National Real Estate. Mob: 021 033 7707 or after hours on 3628 112.

Sharpen your chainsaw on my electric grinding gadget for free or I will do it for \$5—**phone Bryan on 3628 224.**

Pet Feeding Services - Pet feeding services over the holiday season and throughout the year, \$7 per visit includes indoor plants watered and mail collected. Limited boarding pens may be available—**phone Carol on 3628 702.**

Heather Horton (Artist) - Watercolours, Oils, Pastels and lead-lighting work can be seen in the studio. Works are for sale, or can be ordered—**phone 3628 165.**

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