

Catholics reach into their pockets to help Haiti relief efforts

Local Catholics are doing their bit to help the people of earthquake-ravaged Haiti. The Catholic parishes of Wanganui had a special collection at their masses two Sundays ago and raised \$2,344 for the Haiti Appeal. St Mary's parish priest, Monsignor David Bell, was thrilled with the response to the spot collection. "This was a wonderful spontaneous response and

the parishioners hope it will go some way toward relieving the suffering of the Haitian people," he said. "The proceeds will be forwarded to Caritas who have workers in the field in Haiti, and are one of the agencies holding a special drive for funds in New Zealand and elsewhere."

Caritas is the Catholic agency for justice, peace and development. The international Caritas network is appealing for US\$42 million to provide Haiti quake survivors with food, shelter, medical help, and clean water. New Zealanders have contributed NZ\$150,000 toward a global Caritas total of US\$33 million so far. The January 12, magnitude-7 quake killed up to 200,000 people and left up to three million people hurt or homeless in the western hemisphere's poorest country. Monsignor Bell described it as devastating. "You can't imagine what it has done to Haiti. The loss of life, and everybody is affected in some way. "And a lot of the churches will have suffered damage."

Dinosaur footprints discovered in South Island

GNS Scientists have found 70 million-year-old dinosaur footprints in northwest Nelson. They are the first dinosaur footprints to be recognised in NZ and the first evidence of dinosaurs in the South Island. There are six locations over an area about 10km in length where footprints appear. At one location there are up to 20 footprints. Further details of the discovery will be published in the December issue of the NZ Journal of Geology & Geophysics

More, including photos and video footage, is at <http://www.gns.cri.nz/news/release/20091106footprint.html>

- Rural Bulletin

Council Comment

Bringing the community closer



It was another stupendous result at the Wellington Races last Saturday with Kevin Myers' horse, Stupendous, coming a thrilling third in the \$1million sprint race. Wanganui is well served by our racing fraternity – the owners, trainers and magnificent horses. Well done!

This week heralds the first of the full Council meetings for 2010. True to form, this election year looks as if it is going to be as feisty as ever. It is not a matter of which horse will cross the finish line first. It is more a matter of, which corner of the boxing ring will the Wanganui punter support.

So the battle begins. On the agenda of this week's meeting we are discussing Hells Angels' headquarters, legal issues relating to the Wanganui port, the future governance and management of Cooks Gardens, the new Council/Pasifika Working Party,

the village of Satitua and our contribution to the tsunami effort, a relationship with China, the proposed open sculpture competition, the Splash Centre, broadband initiatives and Wanganui Gas. With such a diverse array of issues to discuss, we should have a most stimulating meeting.

Mayor Michael and Councillors are now looking more outwards (China, Satitua, Pasifika) than any time over the past five years. It is refreshing. However, our main focus is always Wanganui. We must always be focused on maintaining and growing the best of Wanganui's resources and keeping a sharp eye on our finances. Our traditional revenue earners – rents and dividends – are now more dog than 'cash cow'. We have to find funds from outside our district – from government, funding agencies, national sponsors – for any

projects. The Splash Centre, Boardwalk, Airport redevelopment and Southern Gateway project are examples of 'outside' funding successes. I am hopeful that the government will smile on us again with funds for a fast broadband project. Fingers crossed!

Wanganui has been showcased once again this past weekend, with the annual Ratana celebration attendees staying in our district. This is a unique cultural, religious and political event that really puts us on the map. It is a huge tribute to their forefather, the prophet T W Ratana, that the movement has so much power and momentum almost 70 years later.

Wanganui may not be the wealthiest district in NZ, but it surely has the greatest culture and heritage.

- Dot McKinnon, Deputy Mayor



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World Cancer Day next Thursday

Did you make a new year's resolution to reduce your cancer risk?

You may be surprised to know you will reduce your cancer risk if you resolved to lessen your alcohol intake, avoid sunburn, maintain a healthy weight, get more exercise and quit smoking. "The Cancer

Society hopes you keep up your resolution this World Cancer Day," said Chief Executive Dalton Kelly.

"Each year 12 million people are diagnosed with cancer and 7.6 million people die of cancer. If no ac-

tion is taken, the worldwide cancer burden is projected to reach 26 million new diagnoses and 17 million deaths by 2030, with the most rapid increases occurring in low and middle income countries," he added.

The good news is that approximately 40% of cancers are potentially preventable. The risk of developing cancers related to tobacco use, heavy alcohol consumption, excessive sun exposure and obesity can be significantly reduced by avoiding the dangers and by

encouraging healthy behaviour such as regular exercise and healthy eating.

Dr Jan Pearson, Health Promotion Manager at the Cancer Society gives support to every New Zealander who has made a New Year resolution to tackle one or more behaviours that puts them at increased risk of cancer.

She says "New Zealanders are fortunate to have a fantastic range of quit smoking initiatives that are easy to access, as well as a range of healthy and nourishing fresh foods. We are also able to enjoy an outdoor lifestyle that encourages us to have regular exercise. This outdoor lifestyle does mean we need to protect ourselves from the sun and to SLIP, SLOP, SLAP and WRAP during the daylight saving months, especially between 11am and 4pm. We also need to be aware that over-consumption of alcohol can increase cancer risk - so if you resolved in the New Year to reduce the amount of alcohol you drink, well done!"

The Cancer Society has a range of resources and information to help you make healthy lifestyle choices. We are part of the international and national network of organisations committed to reducing the incidence of cancer.



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