

Building Services' customer survey

MANAWATU District Council is seeking feedback from people who have dealt with Building Services in the past six months. The customer survey – a first for the district – is part of the department's commitment to providing an effective, efficient and friendly service regarding applications for Project Information Memoranda (PIMs), building consents, Certificates of Acceptances, Certificates for Public Use, Code Compliance Certificates and building complaints. Regulatory Supervisor, Karel Boakes, said 650 survey forms are to be posted this month to those customers who had received a building consent or Code Compliance Certificate since October last year. The survey form will also be available at the customer service desk at the council's administration building in Manchester Street, Feilding, vices. Approachability and friendliness, efficiency and timeliness, formal communication, technical skill and competency, information and education and value for money were some of the services to be rated.



"Hopefully, we will get a good response," said Ms Boakes, "as the Building Services team has done particularly well lately as shown in a number of previous surveys." She said a 50 percent response would be significant and provide some good feedback. "It won't take long to complete – about 10 minutes at the most."

Accident reinforces dangers

THE tragic events of Anzac Day will be long-felt by the RNZAF 3 Squadron and the wider community and we can only offer our deepest sympathy and support to the families of those who died in that terrible accident.

I had the privilege of representing the Manawatu District at the funeral service at Ohakea – a ceremony that brought great credit to the RNZAF and the families of those lost and will, I am sure, ease the grieving period a little for those concerned over the next few months.

The accident reinforces the inherent dangers of serving in the armed forces and makes us in this region realise how important the relationship is between our community and the Defence bases at Linton and Ohakea. This is also accentuated by the numbers of Defence per-

sonnel who live throughout the Manawatu with their families and play an important role in our social fabric.

On a different note, the trades and applied technology graduation was held last week in the Regent Theatre in Palmerston North and was a credit to all concerned. Such an event is vitally important for the region as it

ensures Manawatu has a source of trained trades people coming through in our workplace. Our challenge is to be able to pay them enough to stop the drain of talented young New Zealanders moving to lucrative overseas job opportunities.

The Manawatu Garden Festival continued its growth as a key event for the district and Manfeild Park and was once again a great success and congratulations must be extended to all involved in its organisation.

One last thing: With the Draft Annual Plan meetings coming to an end this week, council is hoping that all submissions will be in by 5pm on Monday. We welcome any submission and for people to come along to council and speak to them.



MAYORAL COMMENT
by Ian McKelvie

District briefs

MAC development proposals available

AS a result of public interest in proposed developments at the Makino Aquatic Centre, described in the Draft Annual Plan, the Manawatu District Council has made available a list of "Frequently Asked Questions" as well as a copy of the business case supporting the development concept. These can be found on the council's website, www.mdc.govt.nz. Hard copies of the business case can be collected from the council's administration building in Manchester Street or the Feilding Public Library. Draft Annual Plan submissions close at 5pm on Monday.

Albert James – Local Hero

PARKS and Reserves Manager, Albert James, was surprised and embarrassed to receive his latest award – a Kiwibank Local Hero Medal (left) for outstanding contributions to the Manawatu District. "It's nice to be recognised," said Mr James, "but you can't do this without the help of other people. That's one of the key things." The award recognised his tireless work for the community and involvement with the Keep Feilding Beautiful Committee. He had earlier received a New Zealander of the Year Achievement Award.



Rates: Last day of final instalment looms

THE last day for payment of the third and final instalment of the Manawatu District Council's 2009-10 rates is **Friday, May 21**. A 10 percent penalty will apply to the outstanding balance of the instalment as of **Saturday, May 22**, unless a prior direct debit arrangement has been made with council. Anyone paying by automatic payment is urged to ensure their payments are sufficient to clear the remaining balance due by Friday, May 21.

Rates rebate and remission reminders

RATEPAYERS who have yet to apply for their 2009/10 Rates Rebate are reminded that applications need to be received by MDC by **Wednesday, June 30**. Applications received after this date will not be eligible for the rebate. And those ratepayers who have yet to apply for their Farming As One remission for the 2010/11 rating year also need to send in their applications to the MDC by **Wednesday, June 30**. Applications received after this date will not be eligible for a remission for 2010/11 and it will be applied to the 2011/12 rating year.

Missing dog traps returned

AN APPEAL by the Manawatu District Council for the return of some missing dog traps has proved successful with two of the steel-wired cages resurfacing. Council is unsure of the whereabouts of about eight traps because of a missing register and is keen to collect those cages no longer required by property owners who faced problems with wandering dogs. Principal Environmental Officer, Colin Perrin, appreciated the return of the two cages and said council was willing to collect, at no cost, other traps not in use.

Bulk refuse collections

BULK refuse collections will be held in Rangiwahia on Saturday, May 8, and Pohangina on Saturday, May 15, at the former skip bin sites from 9am to 11am. Normal waste disposal fees apply.



SIGN language taster courses are currently being offered to the public at the Feilding Public Library as part of New Zealand Sign Language Week. NZSL tutor, Jackie Davidson, of Feilding, who is running the free introductory courses until next Wednesday, is seen with Carla and Drew Bennett at a session earlier this week. Course times for the remainder of the programme are: Tomorrow, 2.30pm-5.30pm; Monday and Tuesday, 10am-11am and 2pm-5.30pm; Wednesday, 2pm-5.30pm.

Safety measure on busy road



GOING... going... gone! A stand of Australian Blackwood trees and some multi-stemmed pines have been pruned and felled as a safety improvement measure on Halcombe Road near the Halcombe Cemetery. Road- ing Team Leader, Jim Mesty- anek, said the Blackwoods

had grown out over the road with the foliage being struck by bigger trucks using the busy arterial route to State Highway 1. "We wanted to clear that canopy and make it more manageable and at the same time take out the pine trees which were not growing in the healthiest of

places." Mr Mestyaneke said the work had also provided better access for people using the cemetery after some motorists experienced difficulties in negotiating the turns, entries and exits. Further alignment improvements on Halcombe Road are also being considered.