

Greater interest in local politics

INTEREST in the Manawatu District Council's 2010 local body elections is higher than in 2007, with 14 candidates already indicating their availability eight days out from the close of nominations.

Deputy Electoral Officer, Janine Hawthorn, said the Feilding Ward would be hotly contested, with nine candidates to date having put their name forward for the five available seats. Ten candidates stood for the ward three years ago.

"Such interest indicates a growing increase in local politics and democracy in the town," she said.

No elections are yet required for the Kairanga (three required) and Kiwitea-Pohangina (two required) Wards, but that is expected to change before nominations close at noon on Friday, August 20. Five people stood for Kairanga last time and three for Kiwitea-Pohangina.

Manawatu District Mayor, Ian McKelvie, is again being challenged by Councillor Steve Gibson.

Mrs Hawthorn said people traditionally left it to the last week to send in their nomination, but she warned that this allowed little room to manoeuvre if a nomination was not validated.

"Cheque payments can sometimes hang people up," she said, "because if the bank does not clear it for whatever reason, then the nomination is no longer valid. Candidates should allow plenty of time for the cheque to be cleared."

Local Elections 2010
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She also reminded candidates that they could submit a 150-word candidate profile with their nomination paper so it could be posted out to electors with the voting documents.

"If someone leaves their nomination to the last minute and forgets about the profile, then they may be at a distinct disadvantage," said Mrs Hawthorn.

Nominations received by 9am yesterday were:

District Mayor: Steve

Gibson, Ian McKelvie.

Feilding Ward (five members): Joyce Bailey, Matt Bell, Bryan Cresswell, Steve Gibson, Tony Jensen, Klayne Leitch, Kester Olivecrona, Russell Parker, Mark Waterson.

Kairanga Ward (three members): Kara Lummis, Howard Voss.

Kiwitea-Pohangina Ward (two members): John Baxter, Craig Manning.

Electors will receive their voting documents from Friday, September 17, with completed forms to be returned by noon on Election Day, Saturday, October 9.

Nomination forms are available from the Manawatu District Council office, 135 Manchester Street, Feilding, or from the council website, www.mdc.govt.nz.

Up-to-date information on nominations received is also available on the website's front page. Manawatu District Council electors will also cast votes for the Horizons Regional Council and the MidCentral District Health Board.



FEILDING resident, Dennis Rodgers, discussed contents of the Manawatu District Plan with Senior Planner, Kirsten Pike, following the recent release of the plan's Discussion Document for public consultation. Urban growth, non-residential activities in residential areas and working dog numbers in the rural zone were issues

raised by Mr Rodgers at an information-sharing opportunity in the Feilding and District Information Centre last Friday. The public have until Friday, September 17, to comment on the document, which sets out the rules and policies for how people can develop and use land. People attending the Farmers' Market Days on August 20 and

September 10 will also have the opportunity to discuss the document. Copies of the Discussion Document are available from the council's office on Manchester Street, Feilding Public Library and Makino Aquatic Centre, online at www.mdc.govt.nz/districtplanreview, or by phoning (06) 323-0000.

Survey feedback positive

BUILDING owners, builders, developers and designers have responded in a largely positive manner to the Manawatu District Council's recent Building Services customer survey.

Nearly 100 respondents indicated ratings of "good" or "very good" in 53 to 80 percent of all topics covered.

The survey was part of the Building Services 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 enquiries.

Regulatory Supervisor, Karel Boakes, said the responses indicated that the department was particularly successful with its "duty offi-

cer" customer service delivery, competency of staff and provision of information available to the public.

"There was some interesting feedback emphasising a request to review our processes and efficiencies and to keep working on our working relationships," she said.

"In response to this, we can assure customers that we audit and review our processes regularly and are always looking at improving efficiencies."

Ms Boakes said MDC and PNCC had also initiated a Building Services Liaison Group in an attempt to improve working relationships. www.mdc.govt.nz

The group - consisting of council staff and local designers, builders and developers - met for the first time late last month and would meet every three months.

"It provides an opportunity to discuss issues and communicate information."

Ms Boakes said the area where feedback highlighted the least satisfaction was "value for money" with comments focussing on relatively high costs for small projects.

"We have been informed by the Department of Building and Housing that changes to the Building Act, Schedule 1 (exempt building work), are expected in the New Year and these may affect small projects."

More detailed survey results are available from the council's customer services desk or on its website www.mdc.govt.nz



SEVEN new works by local artists are on display in the foyer at the Manawatu District Council's administration building as the result of an ongoing partnership between council and the Feilding and District Art Society. The five acrylic and two oil paintings will be open to public view for the next two to three months and allow the artists to showcase their talent. The artists represented in the latest collection are Lois Price (Birdseye View of Nelson Hills), Enid Roberts (Kereru and Silvereyes and Gateway to the Manawatu), Barbara McKimmie (Paris), Wanda Burge (Lifted Up) - pictured, Romuald Rudzki (The Birth of High Abstracts) and David Taylor (Fragments).



Manawatu District briefs

Rongotea water survey closes tomorrow

RONGOTEA ratepayers have until close of play tomorrow (August 13) to respond to a survey regarding a voluntary water supply for the town. The residents have been asked if such a supply would benefit Rongotea in the long term and whether they would be interested in connecting in year one at the lower cost or in the future. An information-sharing session in the Rongotea Library last week drew about 50 people.

Bulk refuse collections

BULK refuse collections will be held at Waituna West this Saturday, August 14, and Pohangina on Saturday, August 21. The collections will be carried out at the former skip bin sites between 9am and 11am. Normal waste disposal fees apply.

Foggy night at the Makino

A FOG machine was put to good use in creating the right atmosphere for the "Oh, SHAME" party for tweens and teens at the Makino Aquatic Centre last Friday. About 125 revellers enjoyed some old school musical videos of the Backstreet Boys and Spice Girls as well as the water canon and the inflatable special, Octonut and Spanner. The next themed party is the "Pirates vs Ninjas" clash from 7pm to 9pm on Friday, September 17.

Artistically Creative Need Financial Help?

Creative Communities Scheme

Applications for the above are now being called for.

Applications for arts and culture purposes only can be made by groups or individuals within the MDC area.



Application forms and further information are available from:

Manawatu District Council
Private Bag 10-001
Feilding 4743
Telephone: (06) 323-0000