

# Site for new park HQ having ground tests

THE long-awaited new Te Urewera visitor/information centre is one step nearer to becoming reality with initial geo-technical investigations under way. The location of the new facility, which is a collaboration between Ngai Tahu and the Department of Conservation, is being kept under wraps at this stage. DoC partnerships manager for Eastern Bay of Plenty Mike Jones said the geo-technical investigation was the key next step. He said until everything was set for the build to begin, Ngai Tahu and DoC would continue to explore the concept design. Geotechnical investigations are performed by geotechnical engineers or engineering geologists to obtain information on the physical properties of soil and rock around a site to design earthworks and foundations for proposed structures and for repair of distress to earthworks and structures caused by subsurface conditions. A geotechnical investigation will include surface exploration and subsurface exploration of a site. In an earlier Wairoa Star article Tuhoë Te Uru Taumatua CEO Kirsti Luke said she hoped it might be opened before the end of the year. The new facility will house many taonga and artefacts formerly on display at Aniwanuiwa and in storage since 2012. Both DoC and Tuhoë are collaborating to provide a proud Te Urewera-Waikaremoana visitor experience. Ms Luke had said the facility would offer a greater insight into the Tuhoë-Te Urewera relationship. When the new facility is up and running the visitor centre at Aniwanuiwa will move to the new site. The DoC headquarters will remain where it is. This includes service rangers, the visitor assets of huts, tracks and structure maintenance programmes and biodiversity work.

# Sex case not proved

A WAIROA man has been acquitted on three charges of entering a house and committing sexual offences against a woman as she lay in her bed. Kevin Rihia Gilbert, 33, was not found guilty by a Gisborne District Court jury of entering a property to commit an offence, indecent assault and sexual violation by unlawful sexual connection. The charges related to events on May 21, 2012. The defence case was that if the incident happened, it was not committed by Gilbert. The court heard the woman went to bed at 11pm and later felt a man kissing and touching her neck and using his fingers to violate her. She initially thought it was her boyfriend and then realised it was another man. When police told Gilbert they had DNA evidence from the woman's neck identifying him, Gilbert said he had kissed her consensually the day before.

# Theft of sports gear bad look for Wairoa

YOUNG thieves appear intent on spoiling things for junior rugby with two thefts targeting sporting property. The first occurred at Lambton Square when Wairoa JAB were hosting sides from Taradale. During the afternoon the changing rooms were entered and a number of the visiting teams' items taken including an iPad, iPod, two Kathmandu jackets, a pair of Yans shoes, trackpants and T-shirts. The changing rooms were locked but access was gained through a small gap between the top of the wall and the ceiling. Wairoa JAB committee member Melissa Kaimoana said it was appalling and embarrassing for JAB and the wider community. The committee had some strong leads and had shared these with the police. "We aren't in the habit of door-knocking and telling parents their children are thieves, but we can't do anything more," she said. "These kids went out of their way to get into the locked changing rooms and then we heard that they went on to the college to watch rugby and bragged about it. "It's very frustrating as these children were unsupervised and they have gone unnoticed as supporters were at the game doing what they should be able to do — enjoying the game." Kaimoana said if the items were not returned, the committee would look at ways of compensating the Taradale players who lost property. A police spokesperson confirmed police were working with the JAB committee to recover the stolen items. They had been given five names and were working with the parents of these young people. The police spokesperson said all the parents were supportive of the investigation and once the offenders were determined they would be dealt with by Youth Aid. Meanwhile, an up-and-coming rugby star who featured in The Wairoa Star last week is appealing for the return of his boots after they were stolen. Connor Edwards took his boots to school for after school training and they were taken out of his bag. They are described as blue and red with white stripes and while they were not brand-new, they were his pride and joy.

## Quick News

WAIROA Police were called to an address at Waihua where they had received reports of a 16 year-old man causing problems. He was brought to the police station for a mental health assessment. The result of this assessment was unknown. AT approximately 10am on Saturday morning Wairoa Police were notified of a man wandering around town in his dressing gown. Police could not locate him. ON Saturday afternoon Wairoa Police were called to Churchill Avenue after a former partner had gone to a woman's house uninvited. Police issued the man with a police safety order which banned him from going to the address for five days.



The Tiaho School Eco-warriors are campaigning for change and met with Wairoa Mayor Craig Little to discuss their waste disposal concerns.

# Pupils put waste plan to council to cut costs

TIAHO School Eco-warriors are leading a charge for schools to pay less to have their recycling taken to the landfill. The students will make a submission to the Annual Plan to seek a positive change so schools are not charged at the same rate as businesses. The students met with Mayor Craig Little and explained their concerns around waste disposal saying they wanted all schools in the district to benefit from their proposal. Tiaho currently encourages students to take home any rubbish they have from lunches but this 'Zero Waste' policy does not teach good recycling habits. The Eco-warriors are determined to find a sustainable solution to waste management at their school and started with a survey of what rubbish accumulates from lunchtimes. They visited the landfill to find out more about what happens to Wairoa rubbish. The students discovered there was a very good recycling process at the landfill and more waste could be recycled than they had realised. The students, who describe themselves as leaders of change for a better world, would also like recycling bins provided. The Eco-warriors want to lead by example to reduce, reuse and recycle.

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