

# Tata reels in a biggie

## NZ's top fishing club

THE biggest club in the city has been recognised nationally. Gisborne Tatapouri Sports Fishing Club has been awarded Club of the Year by the New Zealand Sports Fishing Council. The club's 5100 adult members make up 12 percent of the district's population. Add to that the children who frequent the club with their parents, relatives and guardians, it is more than 20 percent of the population, the club estimates. It is also the biggest fishing club in New Zealand. Club captain Dave "Scruffy" Wallace said getting the award was a reflection of what the club gave back to the community. The fishing club won the award out of 55 clubs in New Zealand. "They felt we were best at interacting with the community and members," said Mr Wallace.

Other attributes judges considered included the site of the club and that it continued to grow membership. "We were one of only two clubs that submitted growing membership." The club moved into No.2 wharf shed more than 25 years ago and was the first business in the area. One factor why the club got the award was because it was proactive in the community. "Especially with competitions where we raise money for community groups and individuals who need help including \$25,000 raised for Gisborne Child Cancer this year." Another factor also was the support the club had from its sponsors, said Mr Wallace. The club will officially receive the cup at the end of September.



**CELEBRATION:** Gisborne Tatapouri Sports Fishing Club club captain Dave "Scruffy" Wallace (left) and club president Roger Faber are rapt with the news the Tata has been named club of the year by the New Zealand Sports Fishing Council. Picture by Liam Clayton

## Woman's death still a mystery, police repeat plea for info

THE death of former Hawke's Bay and Wellington woman Kathleen Kawana remains "unexplained". Police have repeated their plea for information about her movements in this district before her death. Mystery surrounds the cause of her death and how she came to be in Ruatoria. The body of the 46-year-old was found in a vacant house on Ngarimu's Hill just south of Ruatoria on August 3. Police released her body to her family earlier this week. Her tangi has been held in Flaxmere. "We have been continuing to support Ms Kawana's whanau as the tangi proceeds," said acting Detective Senior Sergeant Ben Quinn. "We have inquiries taking place in Titahi Bay, as well as in Hawke's Bay, and we are still looking for information about her movements between Porirua and Ruatoria." She previously lived in Porirua. Police earlier said her body had been at the house for some time but no specific timeframe has been mentioned. The findings of a post-mortem examination have yet to be disclosed. The new owners of the house where she was found visited the house on August 3, two days after purchase, and found her body. They told Stuff they found her in the lounge, and immediately called police. In 2005, Ms Kawana lost a six-year-old daughter in a tragic accident at a park in Flaxmere when a large gum tree branch fell on top of her. Anyone with information about her movements in this district are asked to call Gisborne Police on 06 869 0200 or to provide information anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

# Soggy start after water main bursts

by Sophie Rishworth

AT 2.30am today Bulli Street resident Barry Harris woke up to hear his toilet, "gurgling and carrying on". He could see it was wet outside and could hear water hitting the roof. He thought it was raining. But the source of water was a burst pipe that sent water shooting into the sky, all over his house, and piles of sand from under the road washing over his front lawn and driveway. Mr Harris has just bought the home and moved in a month ago. Gisborne District Council (GDC) confirmed a water mains pipe broke on Ormond Road, near Winter Street. More than 30 properties were affected — 27 in Ormond Road, between Atkinson Street and Mary Street, and homes in Bulli Street through to Stout Street. GDC contractors were on site at 3am. Part of Ormond Road was cordoned off as the burst pipe tore out a chunk of the road. Mr Harris said the road outside his driveway was too soft to drive on and the only way out today was going to be on foot.

His garage, where boxes were still waiting to be unpacked, still had inches of water pooled on the concrete floor. Sand from under the road covered his front yard. Mr Harris said he saw flashing lights around 3am when council contractors arrived. He had been up since then, and was trying to get hold of his insurance provider. He was philosophical about the situation, saying "it'll come right, the council have said they are going to clean the yard". Neighbour Chazz Tehei got up at 4.30am to go to the gym, opened the door and saw her driveway completely submerged. "At first I thought it had rained but it seemed too much water. I wasn't sure what to do so I rang my Mum. She said a water main must have burst." Ms Tehei put on her gumboots and walked around the corner where council contractors were cleaning up the mess and fixing the pipe. Her lawn, which she had just mowed, was under water, muddy, and both cars were parked in the driveway in ankle-deep water. She kept her children home from school and the family were stuck inside for the day until the flooding dispersed. Ms Tehei said she was most concerned about her freezer and lawn mower which were in the flooded garage.

# Meurant 'expected to be attacked'

by Wynsley Wrigley

MAYORAL candidate Ross Meurant has responded to a reader posting on social media a New Zealand Herald article from 2002 about a court case involving an assault conviction. The post was made in the comment section of the online Gisborne Herald story of his announcing his candidacy yesterday. "The retaliatory assault conviction I have is of such a low threshold that it is deemed 'clean slate' by New Zealand law and wiped from the record," said Mr Meurant. He had expected to be attacked. "I've been in politics since I left the police. It's a brutal environment but they who cast the first rock must always be

wary of the return barrage. "I fully expect adversaries to traverse my career which includes many allegations." He said there were claims he was an arms dealer. He was fired by Prime Minister Jim Bolger for refusing to relinquish a position on the board of a Russian bank. There were more "contentious" allegations of corruption over the role he played channelling political donations from various New Zealand Fisheries barons to New Zealand First". Mr Meurant said he was engaged by "former schoolmate Winston Peters" as his primary industry adviser and was, at the same time, a shareholding director of Vela Fisheries, a digital map development company.

"This was deemed by many to be a conflict of interests." Mr Meurant said the slate was wiped clean when a Parliamentary inquiry exonerated Mr Peters and himself in what became known as The Scampi Affair. "This saga was later played out in defamation proceedings during which the New Zealand Herald capitulated and TVNZ lost and paid damages to the defamed." Mr Meurant said he could go on. "I have had an astonishingly robust life for a boy who used to milk the cows when the old man got stuck in the local pub. "I look forward to being mayor of Gisborne. My slate is clean." SEE ALSO TODAY'S EDITORIAL, PAGE 13