



Grey Power Wanganui Inc Newsletter

Affiliated to Grey Power New Zealand (Inc)

www.greypower.co.nz

'President Don's Report' ...



Hi Grey Power members

Christmas and New Year celebrations are not far off and will have a certain influence on all of us. There is a tendency to over indulge at times which encourages a little follow up guilt feeling. This always brings me to read about the importance of exercise in our lives.

It is interesting to note that many of the experts in health always talk about exercise and after listing several forms come to walking as one of the best forms. I have a retired neighbour who walks every day generally just prior to lunch - a great example. I go to the gym as regularly as I can, and feel guilty when I don't go. However, any form of exercise - bowls, golf, yoga, aquarobics, gardening - to name a few, contribute to our well being.

Grey Power is involved in many aspects of our city organisations. I attended the 'Empowering Volunteers' Trust Power Community Awards. It was crowded and showed how Wanganui has many volunteers in many organisations that are willing to help in areas of interest and service to others.

Your Committee meets monthly and receives reports from Council, Health, Law and Order meetings. These reports are discussed and acted upon should there be any areas of concern for Senior Citizens. If you have a concern, don't hesitate to contact a member of the Committee whose names are listed in this newsletter.



My wife Heather joins me in wishing you all



A very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Don Burney

President

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON MEETING

THURSDAY, 10 DECEMBER COMMENCING AT 11.45 AM

VENUE: LAIRD PARK BOWLING CLUB, PEAT STREET

ENTERTAINMENT FOLLOWED BY LIGHT LUNCHEON

Please telephone: 345 4559 to register your attendance - if the telephone is unattended, please leave your name and membership number

**Registrations limited to 140 members
Membership card to be produced on arrival at the venue**



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November/December 2015

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WANGANUI 4541

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- especially those out of the workforce

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parliamentary policies

© newsletters to keep you
up-to-date on health, local government
& financial matters

© taking care of your concerns and
welfare

Secretary
PO Box 4197
WANGANUI 4541

WEBSITE REFERENCE

Grey Power Wanganui's own:
www.greypowerwanganui.co.nz

Grey Power Federation
www.greypower.co.nz

No liability is accepted for the contents of this
newsletter which is prepared in good faith

RADAR'S RAMBLINGS

When I read the job specification for the District Council's CEO replacement my first reaction was 'the person they are looking for hasn't yet been born'. I was wrong. In Mr Kym Fell, whose appointment was recently announced, it seems that exactly the right person for the demanding role has been located. Mr Fell has considerable experience in strategic and operational leadership, possesses strong management skills and has led transformational change in both the private and public sectors. We will welcome him to Wanganui in January when he takes over from long-serving and popular Kevin Ross who has given 35 years dedicated service to the city.

No apologies for bringing this next matter to your attention. The Chronicle's front page of Saturday, 7 November ought to be of concern to us all. It read '**FIX PORT SAYS Q-WEST BOSS**'. Miles Fothergill outlines the ongoing frustrations his company is faced with and laments the inaction in port development, particularly not having navigable depth at their slipway and at the port itself. It will be a very sad day for Wanganui if this thriving, well regarded business is forced to re-locate through inattention to the problems fully outlined in the Chronicle article.

The partnership that Grey Power Federation has entered into with Pulse Energy to form Grey Power Electricity is proving worthwhile. Hardly a day goes by without an enquiry through our website and paid membership has increased by 50% since the scheme started nearly two years ago. If you haven't yet switched why not ring **0800 473 976**? Have your latest account alongside you and ask the operator to price it using GPE's rates. You may be pleasantly surprised!!

At November's committee meeting the matter of support for the Wanganui Ratepayers' Association was discussed. There are a number of Grey Power associations around the country that have strong relationships with their local Council and others who lend their support to ratepayers' groups. The unanimous decision of your committee is that Wanganui association supports the objectives of the ratepayers' group. Accordingly, the WRPA's objectives are included in this newsletter along with a membership form.

As the rip-off season arrives make sure you are not scammed by any outfit or itinerant door-knockers. Just hit the **DELETE** button!!

RADAR

Why a change to the funding of local Government is needed

WHY A CHANGE TO THE FUNDING OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS NEEDED

The present rating system evolved from the Roads Boards of many years ago, when roads were necessary to open up and develop the country. Back then, it was fair and logical to levy landowners for the provision and maintenance of roading, because they enjoyed the benefits of being serviced by roads, and profited by the increase in the value of their properties that ensued from such improvement.

Today local government provides much more than roads, i.e. a wide range of services, infrastructure and amenities for the benefit of every resident and commercial enterprise, yet only property owners are liable for its funding. Time advances and progress ensues on all fronts except for the method of funding local government, which remains the same as it was many decades ago. It is an obsolete system that is so out of step with modern requirements that it is now unbalanced, unfair, and in urgent need of revision, for the reasons detailed below.

FAULTS OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM

- It charges only property owners (particularly householders) for the provision of infrastructure, services, and amenities that are provided for the benefit of all residents and all commercial enterprises.
- Commercial enterprises can claim back the GST content and also treat rates as tax-deductible items, while the majority of ratepayers cannot.
- It is based on a property's Land or Capital value, arrived at by an arbitrary and questionable procedure that often provides inaccurate results.
- It impinges unevenly on individuals, depending on numbers per household, and is harshest on the elderly on low fixed incomes, facing ever-increasing rate demands.
- It is a relatively open-ended source of funds, with little or no control by way of limits or restrictions on spending by local councils. They are thus free to overspend and over borrow, not always acting responsibly in differentiating between spending on essentials and other "nice to have" things.
- Spending by local government for many years has consistently been in excess of inflation, the cost of living, or wage increases.
- There is now widespread unease, dissatisfaction and dissent with the rating system, considered to be out of control and unsustainable.

THE SUGGESTED BETTER ALTERNATIVE

Because local government provides facilities for the benefit of every resident and every business entity, not limited only to property owners, a more equitable system would require all who benefit to pay their fair share. We have calculated that if every resident person or business enterprise were to pay 2.475% of their taxable income to IRD, and these monies were ring-fenced and used exclusively for funding local councils, this would obviate the need for the current system of rating.

THE ADVANTAGES OF THE PROPOSED SYSTEM

- It would not require property owners exclusively to pay for services etc. that are available to all, and for the benefit of all.
- It would be fairer, spreading the funding burden more widely and thinly.
- It would be affordable by all, as it would cost only a small percentage of taxable income.
- It would obviate the need for government to subsidise rates for low-income people, and would save them the humiliation they feel having to ask for this.
- It would be automatically inflation proofed.
- It would provide security of income for local government, with sufficient predictability to allow for forward planning.
- It would automatically impose a spending ceiling on local bodies, and require from them budgetary responsibility and tight financial management, as is the case in the running of any other business enterprise.
- Central government would collect more in tax and at the same time eliminate the disparity in taxation between individual and business taxpayers, as this levy would not be tax deductible.
- It would put an end to the ridiculous post earthquake situation we have in Christchurch where some property owners are forced to continue paying rates on homes or other buildings that have reduced or no services provided, or worse, on properties that can no longer be occupied or used. This situation could occur as a result of a natural disaster anywhere in New Zealand.

(From the ratesnomore.co.nz website)

Bits and pieces

Additions to Discount Book:

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Elder Abuse

Not a subject anyone wishes to talk about:

Because we are ashamed

Because we are dependent on the abuser for daily help

Because we are scared that worse will happen if we complain.

Elder abuse consists of financial abuse (up to 50% of cases), psychological abuse, physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and institutional abuse. Elder abuse often robs that person of the ability to live independently.

What can you do to stop elder abuse?

- Treat older people with respect
- Challenge ageist attitudes
- Don't ignore elder abuse. Get help. Call any Age Concern branch
- Know how to recognise elder abuse or neglect
- Get involved with being aware of elder abuse.

We know it is hard to ask for help, especially if it is your own children who are abusing you. Be careful what responsibilities you give them. Try to keep independent as long as possible and get help from uninvolved sources, like Age Concern. You can't always ask the family or your children to sort an abuse problem if they are the ones who are doing it.

Abuse of vulnerable people, both older people and children is far too prevalent in this country. Let's work together to help reduce this misery and violence.

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COMMENTS TO PONDER

'One of the main functions of Grey Power is to remind all political parties and candidates that Senior Citizens have rights, experience and definite needs. All candidates for election to District Councils or Government need to be well aware of the mature sections of our society and their position regarding finance, health, ageing and law and order. Grey Power does not have specific political allegiance but does have the power to influence candidates because of the strong voting record of its members who conscientiously apply their democratic rights'.

Don Burney, President, Grey Power Wanganui

OBJECTIVES OF THE WANGANUI RATEPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

- a) To ensure that Wanganui District Council and Horizons Regional Council exercise prudent management of the district's rating revenue and to maintain a watching brief on expenditure
- b) To encourage open and accountable local government which is genuinely committed to consultation, encourages resident involvement, hears and heads public views and is responsive to the needs of the wider community.
- c) To support as candidates for election to both Councils, persons whose objectives are consistent with those of the Association.
- d) To provide a forum for the residents of the district to express their views on, and concern about, issues of importance to the community.
- e) To prepare and circulate explanatory literature to Association members and other members of the community on matters which affect the community and to solicit the views of the community thereon.
- f) To work with any other organisation, and in particular with Wanganui District Council and Horizons Regional Council in the furtherance of the objects of the Association.
- g) To do any other things for the benefit of the district which are generally in accord with objects (a) to (f) herein.

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

The Treasurer
Wanganui Ratepayers' Association
PO Box 4197
WANGANUI 4541

I/We: (full names)

Of: (address)

Telephone:..... Email:

Being ratepayer/s in the Wanganui district I/we hereby apply to become members of the association and enclose herewith my/our subscription of **\$5 (five dollars) per person** through to **31 March, 2017**.

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* Terms and conditions apply.



More Random thoughts as we age

If God wanted me to touch my toes, he would've put them on my knees

The kids text me "plz", which is shorter than please. I text back "no" which is shorter than yes.

Oops! Did I roll my eyes out loud?

At my age "Getting lucky" means walking into a room and remembering what I came in there for.

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