



4 May 2017  
Newsletter No 96

Hello friends and supporters

This newsletter is so long overdue that I have had enquiries from some of you, asking if you've been taken off the list! My apologies for this. We are a small team and have been busier than ever for a variety of reasons. There is much to catch up on and I may have to carry over some items to the next newsletter. The summer proved very testing with drought conditions and the danger of fire keeping us on our toes. And then came the rain, bringing another set of problems in the form of too much rich grass and minor flooding. In mid March yours truly and friend Judith Burkin embarked on a very rare and long-awaited holiday – to the Coromandel Peninsula, which duly suffered a one in a hundred years weather event! We were temporarily trapped before being advised to make a dash for freedom on a fairly challenging route and cutting our holiday short by several days. We can laugh now but it took a while for our sense of humour to return.

As always, we want to thank the following for their generosity which keeps us going. Income from client fees takes care of only 20% of our running costs, so without you we'd be in deep trouble:

- Our monthly donors who collectively guarantee us \$660 every month: **Bill Irwin, Prue Farnworth, Andrews Shalom Trust, Sunshine Dean, James and Julia Luty**. This is pure gold.
- **Joan Fernie Charitable Trust** which enabled us to buy hay for the winter. A full barn gives us peace of mind
- **Purple Patch; Two Fold Op Shop; St Andrews Anglican Community Church, Westshore; Carey Family Trust** (who added to the proceeds from the 60s School Dance); **Inner Wheel, Napier; Horse Watch NZ** (which has sadly closed down and we were given the residue of their monies); **Heretaunga Seniors**
- **B and A Rodway; C Rynhart; V and M Lenting; Dalzell**

**family; Carolyn Thompson; Eileen Banks; Jan Fryer-Knowles; Jessie Robb.** Nearly all of these individuals show up in our acknowledgements time and time again.

- **Josh Cook** from **McMillan Feeds, NRM and Farmlands** for his ongoing generosity. He is always looking out for ways to help us with feed and other items
- **Cambridge Grains** for their wonderful sponsorship that will help our horses to have excellent supplements we couldn't normally afford
- **PGG Wrightson, Waipukurau** for the donation of horse-friendly grass seed
- **Pukepine Sawmills, Te Puke**, for the fantastic donation of wood shavings. They have a thousand uses around the farm – bedding for the stables and mulch for our weed-prone road frontage, for example, and we won't mention the fun the kids can have with it...
- The gift of hay from a paddock belonging to **Joe and Janet Wurts**
- **Scott Lawson** from **True Earth Organics** for the loan of his front end loader. He and his staff are unfailingly courteous when we spring on them an urgent request
- **Xtreme Contractors** who likewise turn out at short notice when we need a deep hole to be dug for sad reasons
- Several people who have donated horse gear
- **Steve Higginson** for his patience as a business mentor
- **Chris York** of **York Osteopathic Clinic** for keeping our horses happy and pain free
- Neighbours **Max and Sue Dixon** and **Maurice and Diane Belz** for generosity in making their land available for grazing free of charge
- **Steve Rangihuna** for reasons explained later in this newsletter
- We take none of these businesses, organisations and individuals for granted, ever, and we cannot thank you enough. Many of you work very hard to make items to sell, you hold coffee mornings, you dig deep into your own pockets. As an example, Heretaunga Seniors, a group that is by no means well off, decided to donate the results of their Christmas fundraising to Leg-Up instead of putting it in their own coffers. When you think that our seniors are often the victims of the behaviour of unruly young people, this was a noble gesture indeed.

## **Real Exchange's The Great Give**

**Sarah Irvin**, the inspiration behind a new initiative called **Real Exchange**, chose five charities to benefit from its launch, and Leg-Up was one of them. Dubbed The Great Give, the event chosen for Leg-Up was a working bee. It was held a couple of weekends ago and was a stupendous success. More than 50 volunteers turned up to weed, clear up after the big storm (more on that later), build a fence and do general tidying up. Several benefactors weighed in on this project: **Tumu Timbers** supplied enough timber to build a much-needed post and rail fence to replace a dangerous wire fence and the fence was put up by **D'Ath Construction Ltd.** **Brimar Hedgetrimmers** lent a powerful tree removal tractor which got through a massive amount of work. Huge thanks to Simon Wrenn for organising this and driving the tractor. Huge thanks, in fact, to each and every volunteer who turned up on a sunny Saturday to work so hard. We are more grateful than we can say. Kind people who contributed to the lunch helped to round off a successful morning – the Wrenns for two cakes, Warwick Howie for sandwiches and pizza, the Dalzells for barbecue sausages and Keith Cammock for a shoulder of pulled lamb.

There are more events to come as part of the Real Exchange launch. Check them out on <http://www.realexchange.co.nz/> and make the effort to take part for other good causes.

## **The Big Storm**

Those of you who have visited Willow Farm will have seen, and possibly sat under the enormous willow tree near the yards. Sadly, this treasured tree was uprooted and toppled during the damaging storm on the eve of Good Friday. By a miracle it fell where it would do the least damage, and not so much as a fence rail was broken. It missed a house, power lines, fences and the quad bike shelter; only the walnut tree suffered some damage remained standing. The reducing of the massive tree to firewood is ongoing, with a large chainsaw needed to cut through the very thick trunk, but Allan, Dave and Warwick are to be thanked for their efforts so far. Thanks also to Floyd who did the dangerous aerial bits.

We were without water for three days and the horse troughs dried up, requiring much effort to replenish, so it was an anxious time. Heartfelt thanks to Sue and Max Dixon for letting me shower at their place, and to all the other neighbours who

offered assistance.

### **Arrivals and Departures**

Three weeks into the New Year, and hard on the heels of our beloved Dewey, our ancient boy Rocky reached the end of his life and was sadly farewelled. We learned from the people who bred him that he was around 40 years old. How we loved and admired this old chap after five years of loneliness and neglect after being retired from a station. He was a true gentleman and he is missed.

On learning that we had lost two horses in fairly quick succession, our neighbour, Steve Rangihuna generously gifted us his own personal horse Trigger to become part of the therapy team. We cannot thank you enough for this very beautiful horse, Steve.

We are about to welcome another therapy horse, or rather, pony, in the form of Carlos, a much loved boy in his twenties who is used to therapy work. Special thanks to Cherie Naera for entrusting us with her beloved pony.

There is also another horse on the horizon – more on him next newsletter.

On the staff front we have also had some changes. Rochelle Brown's trekking business, **Ocean Breeze Trekking** based at Waimarama, has become so successful that it is demanding her full attention but she will remain on call. Replacing her is Lizzie Rangihuna, our young neighbour who is loving being part of the team. She is picking up the work quickly and the kids love her. We have also reached the point where it has become necessary to advertise for a part time manager. It is way past time for me to take on less of the behind-the-scenes work and to concentrate on running some of the programmes, which is, after all, why I founded Leg-Up. I am looking forward to slowing down a bit and regaining some lost ground healthwise. This will place immense strain on our finances but is necessary to ensure the continuation of Leg-Up.

### **Ronnie**

One of our founding therapy horses, Ronnie, has been unwell for some time and we've pulled out all stops to find out what is ailing him. In March we took him to Massey University Veterinary Teaching Hospital where he had a liver biopsy. While being examined thoroughly he was found to be almost blind in his left eye from a cataract, so it was good to be made aware of

this for safety reasons. His biopsy showed that he has fibrosis of the liver, which is incurable, but we are ensuring that he is kept comfortable and contented. Special thanks to Sarah Mack and her team at Massey for the royal treatment they gave our Ronnie, also to our own vet Nicky Chadwick who always goes the extra mile for her patients.

### **Programmes and students**

Demand for our services has increased to almost unmanageable levels but we are doing our best to accommodate those in need. The horses are working at capacity and because of this, along with our losses, we have taken on the aforementioned extra horses to lighten the load of the existing therapy team. Most of these are getting on in years and deserve to have as much time out as we can give them. The younger horses are coming on stream and students who have been coming for a year or more have taken on the role of junior trainers. It is great to see our boys from St Matthew's School dealing with these rookie horses.

It's not only the horses that are stretched! We humans are run off our feet and would welcome some volunteers to help with programmes and some of the maintenance work around the farm. If you can spare a morning or an afternoon a week we'd be very grateful and we can guarantee that you won't be bored. Please phone or email us if you are interested.

I will do my best to get another newsletter out in the next month or so. Please advise if you no longer wish to receive them.

Ros Rowe