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EDITORIAL

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District welcomes new Kiwi citizens

THE Waitomo district welcomed 41 new 'Kiwis' in 2015.

In four ceremonies held throughout the year, Waitomo mayor Brian Hanna welcomed immigrants from Samoa, Romania, Australia, Britain, Fiji, South

Africa, Zimbabwe and Kiribati as New Zealand citizens. Waitomo's newest residents were ceremoniously sworn in at the WDC chambers and awarded a citizenship certificate. A morning tea was held following the ceremonies to mark the occasion.

Mr Hanna says he enjoys being able to welcome new people.

"It is great to help make this 'the place you call home'. The formal ceremony is a very important step in the process of becoming a New Zealand citizen."



WARM WELCOME: A group of 13 people from four countries were welcomed as new citizens of New Zealand and Waitomo District, just one of four ceremonies held last year. Mr Petaia Soi (left), Mrs Vichheka Luy, Ms Leasiosio Matini, Mr Kyungyeon Park, Mr Fili, Mrs Naomi Fili, Brian Hanna, Mr Uili Fili, Mr Humphrey Du Plessis, Mr Misiluni Malolua, Mrs Madeleine Du Plessis, and Mr Tiuli Matini.

Great news all around

WELCOME to this month's column.

I hope you all survived the heatwave last week, which certainly increased attendances at all the swimming pools and rivers in the district!

Hopefully this tropical weather pattern will change soon.

SH3 BYPASSES

It was great to receive the news last week of substantial investment from central government in the important SH3 link with Taranaki.

This very important highway has been neglected for many years due to the high cost of improvements due to the rugged terrain, but had been subjected to ever increasing volumes of heavy traffic, which have exacerbated the safety issues.

It is pleasing that after decades of lobbying NZTA and central government that finally we have some action about to happen.

For the last decade we have been supportive of major expenditure on projects such as the Waikato Expressway, but I have constantly reminded my regional counterparts that we want to see similar support for SH3 projects when the time is right, so it is personally pleasing to see this project finalised.

I spoke with Barbara Kuriger who is obviously thrilled with this decision, and we look forward to seeing more details on the proposal.

In My View



By Waitomo Mayor
Brian Hanna

KNIGHTS' HONOURS

It was also great to attend the Waikato Regional Sports awards at the Claudelands Events Centre on Thursday night to see two of our greatest sportsmen (and Knights!) receive recognition of their achievements.

Sir David Fagan was given a special award to mark his remarkable 30-year career, and his role as a sporting ambassador of shearing, his district and country.

It was very appropriate that this award was presented to Sir David by none other than Sir Colin Meads, who spoke of his dedication and commitment to shearing and the Waitomo community.

Sir Colin thought this was his only task for the evening, as Sport Waikato CEO had asked him to

attend to make this presentation to Sir David, when actually he was later presented with the Hare Puke Leadership in Sport Award. This very prestigious award is not awarded every year – such is its significance.

It is a great honour, and recognises Sir Colin's huge input into sporting administration and leadership locally, as well as his significant involvement in our wider community for the benefit of so many.

It was great to be there to see two of our greatest legends recognised by the wider Waikato region.