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A weekly feature on the
communities in
Horowhenua & Kapiti

Caring for Our Community

This week's feature group – Friendship Force

"A world of friends is a world of peace."

This motto of global goodwill is the guiding principle behind the International Friendship Force, a global organisation with branches in Kapiti and Horowhenua. Friendship Force International is a non-profit international cultural exchange organization, founded with a single mission – to create an environment in which personal friendships are established across the barriers that separate people.

A 1992 nominee for The Nobel Peace Prize, Friendship Force International began in 1977 by organizing the travel of goodwill ambassadors who shared the lives of a host family in another country for one or two weeks. Since then, nearly half-million volunteer ambassadors and hosts have participated through 3300 exchanges. Reg Clothier of the Friendship Force, Kapiti, says the overseas exchanges are only part of the focus. "We also have internal exchanges within New Zealand and a monthly social for members. When we're hosting our visitors from abroad it is possible some members will provide homestay nights and others will do day hostings, taking visitors to places of interest and gatherings the club organises. That's great because it means visitors get to meet more people from the host club."

"Faces not places" is what the International Friendship Force is all about, Mr Clothier says. "We're much more than just a travel club."

While the international travel is a great opportunity to see places, it is the forging of friendships around the world that is the ideal behind the clubs. "You get to know your hosts really well before you leave on your trip thanks to the advent of e-mail. By the time you arrive you know all about each other, and because we're not a package tour we visit places our hosts love to show us, often places not on the tourist routes."



It's a small world. Members of touring Friendship Force clubs from Germany and Australia met up in Coastlands last year as the two groups were enjoying their New Zealand visits.

Heather Haines of the Horowhenua Friendship Force says they are still to host their inward exchange for this year. "They are coming on the November 26 from Medicine Hat in Alberta, Canada. This is a very new club and it will be their first exchange abroad. We'll be showing them round the attractions of Horowhenua." The Horowhenua Club's next outward exchange will be to Newcastle and the Sunshine Coast in Australia in early 2005.

The Kapiti Club is to host two exchanges early in 2005. In January members of the Bohemia Friendship Force from the Czech Republic will visit. A contingent from the Florida Suncoast will visit in March. Meanwhile Kapiti members are planning their visit to Oklahoma, Lincoln and Minnesota, in the USA.

Mr Clothier says anyone interested in furthering global goodwill can be a member of Friendship Force

International. Members do not have to host or travel. Also anyone can travel with a Friendship Force International exchange – they do not need to members, although they are most welcome to join.

Contact Jim McIntosh (04) 299-9003 in Kapiti, or Heather Haines (06) 362 6685 in Horowhenua.

Annual General Meeting: Lodge Rooms, Tararua Street, Paraparaumu, November 18. Guest speakers: Jenny Johns on her trip to Twin Cities – Minnesota, and Reg Clothier on his three-month trip to England.

Adventure of the week



Waikawa Beach Cleanup. LABOUR WEEKEND is the date for the Waikawa beach cleanup. The Horowhenua District Council will be supplying rubbish bags and rubber gloves to environmentally-minded volunteers, and giving out chocolate fish as rewards. Contact Horowhenua District Council on (06) 949 4949.

What to do if your power goes off?

What causes the power to go off?

Your power supply can be interrupted for a number of reasons including adverse weather conditions and electrical faults. These electrical faults may be in your own property or on Electra's network.

No Power?

If the power goes off suddenly follow these procedures:

Check your Switch

Check your mains switch is turned on at the switchboard

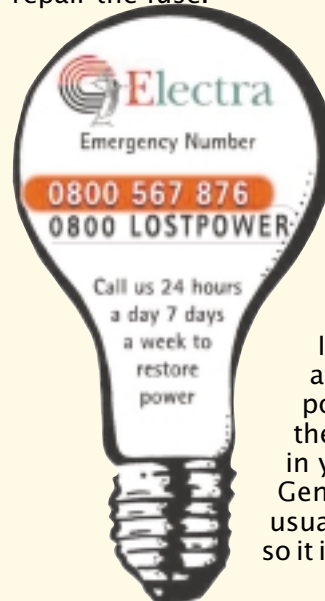
Check all your fuses

If both appear to be working there might be something wrong with your electricity supply, so please phone Electra.

What if a fuse has blown?

Check your fuse box to see which fuse has the lever turned off, which button has popped out, or which one is blown. Turn off all the power points

or lights on that circuit before attempting to repair the fuse.



Repair the fuse with appropriately sized fuse wire, turn the lever back to 'on', or push the button in again.

What if neighbours or the local area obviously have no power?

It is easier to check this at night, but if the no power is wide spread, then there is a power cut in your area.

General power cuts are usually picked up quickly so it is likely a fault crew will

be on the job soon. However, please call Electra if you think the fault is unlikely to be picked up quickly.

If you live in a rural area it is a good idea to always call Electra to make sure the fault has been reported.

It is a good idea to turn off all your appliances. Heaters and stoves can be a fire hazard and some appliances such as TV's and computers may possibly be damaged when the power comes back on.

What to do in an electrical accident?

- * Don't touch the injured person if they're still in contact with a live electrical source.
- * Switch the source of electricity off, or if you can't, move the source away from you and the injured person using a non-conducting object like a wooden broom handle. Then call an ambulance immediately by dialling 111.

Please advise us immediately if you need help with a power outage.
Call on 0800 LOSTPOWER (0800 567 876).

NEXT WEEK: Trees

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Ph. 0800 ELECTRA (0800353 2872)

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