August 2021

TAWA Wellington COMMUNITY NEWS

Part 2

This newsletter has been sent out monthly since 2005.
See www.tawalink.com/newsletters.html for back issues.

SPRING INTO TAWA IN OCTOBER

Spring into Tawa is Tawa's annual festival, featuring an amazing range of stalls, food, activities and entertainment. This year's event will be held on Saturday 30 October 2021, 10am - 3pm.

Spring into Tawa is organised by a small committee of volunteers, on behalf of the Tawa Residents Association. The event is run as a not-for-profit event – all money raised from grants, donations and stallholder fees covers the costs for that year's event, or is held in reserve for future years, or for investing in ongoing costs and equipment.

For more information visit our website www.springintotawa.nz or follow us on Facebook for regular updates.

TAWA CHRISTMAS PARADE

The Tawa Lions Christmas parade will be held this year on Saturday 4 December, commencing at 2pm. Tawa Lions are again organising the parade with assistance from the Tawa Residents' Association, the Tawa Business Group and the Tawa Community Board. These three organisations, together with Tawa Rotarians, are also organising a community gathering in the Tawa Plaza at the conclusion of the parade.

Invitations to participate in the parade will be sent out in the next few weeks. The photos below are from the 2020 parade.

THANKS FOR HELPING STUFF THE TRAILERS

Thank you to everyone who helped "Stuff the Trailers" on Saturday 31st July. Numerous items of food were contributed by members of the community, and cash donations from shoppers at Tawa New World and Tawa Countdown totalled $1396. This will all go towards boosting the Salvation Army Foodbank in Tawa.

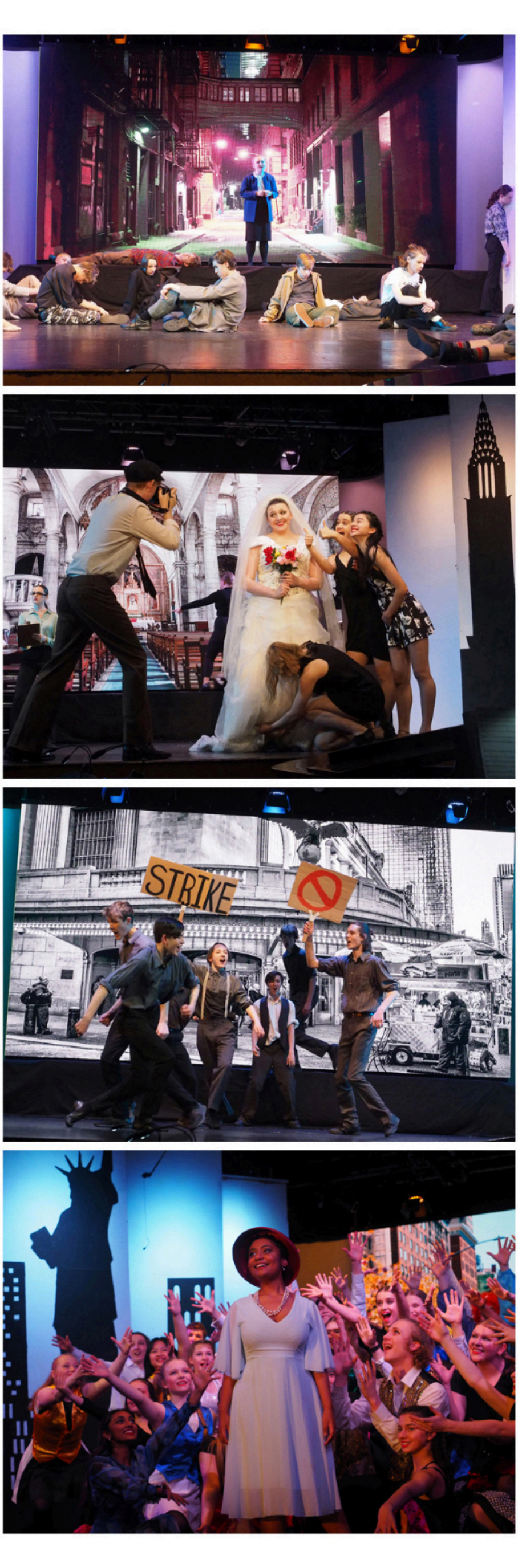
Thanks also to members of Tawa Rotary and Inner Wheel Tawa who helped receive these contributions from generous community members!

NEW YORK, NEW YORK LAST WEEK

"[It was] a truly amazing evening. We attended last evening and were absolutely amazed at what can only be described as a thoroughly professional production complete with all the bells and whistles. Tawa College and all who were involved in the preparations and many hours of rehearsals are a credit to our community and I only hope the press pick up on this and give some richly deserved credit."

The above wording came through to me [Ed.] following Tawa College's major production – way back in 2009. The same sentiments apply to the major production "New York, New York" which ran for four nights last week. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. In fact, more than that – overwhelmingly glowing!

Well done, once again, to director Isaac Stone, producer Murray Cameron (Tawa College HOD Music), and to the almost 50 students involved. A credit to you all!



CYCLE TRACK PROGRESS

As seen on Facebook last weekend:

Huge progress by a great crew today on the Kiwi Crescent descent in Tawa Forest [Te Ngahere o Tawa]. At the moment it is more of a sneaky sidle along the top of the hill before this grade 3 trail starts to lose some real elevation. Then we will bring in the (little) digger as we want to keep the hand-built feel for the whole 2.3 kms. This is going to be a top trail!

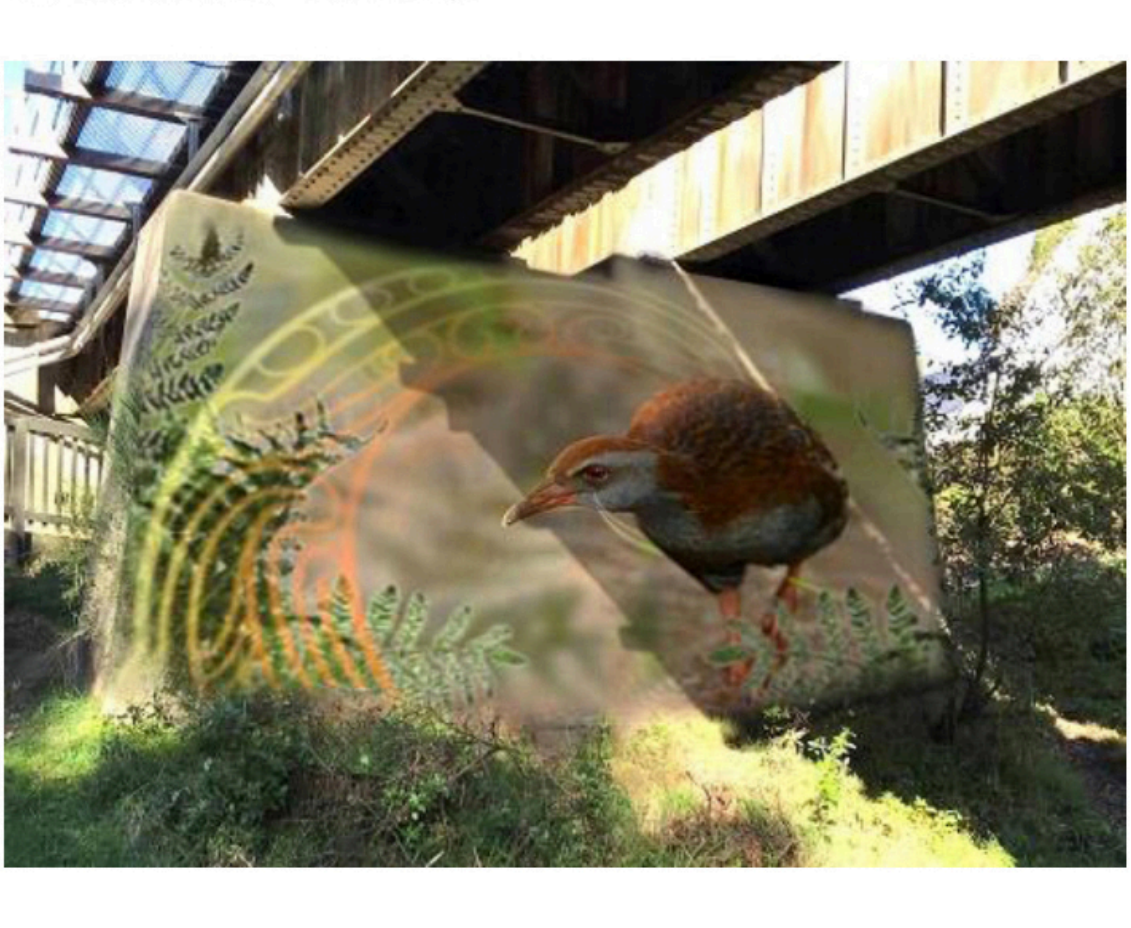
We are still after some funds to digger build the bottom section which will be filled with berms! Donate here: https://givealittle.co.nz/cause/kiwicresdescent

PROPOSED MURAL FOR WILLOWBANK RESERVE

As per the Friends of Tawa Bush Reserves August 2021 newsletter:

Following negotiations with KiwiRail and artist, Leon Hohepa, in August this year, a mural will feature near the Bucket Tree Lodge entrance to the reserve below the Metlink railway. The proposal is to have a native bush theme and feature a weka. This bird was historically present in the Tawa Basin prior to the area being developed. Leon's draft image is depicted below.

Appreciation for this creative project is given to: Leon Hohepa, KiwiRail, Paula Warren from DOC, Resene Paints, Keep Hutt Valley Beautiful, and the Willowbank Reserve Care Group.



MESSAGE FROM THE LOCAL M.P.

As if we need reminding, what a great job our fire volunteers do. Watching them spring into action during last month's deluge which saw their ops screen light up with calls for assistance for businesses and private homes all over Tawa and Linden was a reminder just how lucky Tawa is to have this team. The unflappable Dean Tutton [chief fire officer] organised the crews like the pro he is, and the exhausted but satisfied looks on their faces as they traipsed back in after numerous calls that Saturday afternoon was a privilege to see.

I was worried my wee red Austin might become a casualty but it handled the flooded roads well. That would have been embarrassing! Obviously that flood exposed some drainage issues which need addressing.

The COVID vaccinations are now ramping up and if you are in an eligible group and haven't been notified, you should contact your medical centre or call 0800 28 29 26.

I have spoken to Tawa residents affected by both the suspension of the Trans-Tasman travel bubble and the MIQ restrictions; it's frustrating that individuals and even companies are finding ways to game the booking system. We will continue to tweak it to make it fairer but there are some very determined and well-resourced IT experts prepared to apply their skills for nefarious reasons. Anyone frustrated about New Zealanders' situation just needs to look at New South Wales to see what happens when you don't go hard and early. Much better when everyone knows the rules and we slowly ease up, than to try to ramp up slowly.

I get to attend most Tawa College productions, but their latest "New York New York" musical offering was next level. I'd pay good money to see that on Broadway itself! A great effort and I suggest you keep an eye out for the next one; a great night out.

And then of course the Tawa Rugby Club won the Jubilee and Ed Chaney Cups over the weekend, meaning their first and second teams are the best in Wellington. Not bad for a club which was permanently in the second division until recent years. The clubrooms hummed on Saturday night as these stalwarts enjoyed the cup.

Finally, I hope you're enjoying the Olympics. Sure there were reasons to cancel them, but aren't the citizens of Japan and Fiji glad they didn't. If there are reasons to do something and reasons not to, I reckon you err on the side of doing it.

Ngā mihi
Greg O'Connor, M.P. for Ōhāriu

2 MINUTES WITH .....
ANDY FENTON

I [Ed.] normally write a small introductory piece for each of these "2 Minutes with ....." segments. That's based on what I know of the person concerned. In this instance my knowledge of Andy Fenton is mostly confined to his heading up Micrographics in conjunction with his wife Audrey and, in that role, he has been very supportive of and generous towards the Tawa Historical Society.

Andy has also been instrumental in organising a street BBQ in his neck of the woods in conjunction with Neighbours' Day each year, one to which I have been invited on more than one occasion.

That's enough from me. Andy provides plenty of information about himself in the following interview!

Where were you born?
Manly Beach, Sydney, Australia

Where did you grow up?
Before you call me an Aussie, I moved around a lot before the age of 12. Not many realise (because I omit to tell them) that I was born in Sydney but ran away from there as a 7-month old ... I spent time in Glasgow, Gosport (England), Ipswich (where my family hailed from), and Portsmouth before emigrating to Auckland – the best thing my parents ever did for me and my older sister.

Where were you educated?
About seven schools in Scotland & England as a nipper.
After a few awkward transitional months at **Papatoetoe Intermediate** I was embraced by some brilliant teachers and quality friends at **Papatoetoe High School** ... five of us keep in touch to this day and get together a few times per year (including just this week in Auckland 😊).
I attended **Auckland University** as a Naval Officer (yes, in uniform!), and majored in Computer Science.

How long have you lived in Tawa?
We established our business here in early 1990 in Oxford St opposite Mexted's and the Salvation Army Shop … given the hours we put in you might say we lived here from then.
We officially moved here to our St Annes Square house on 8 Feb 1996 – never looked back – except over the fence to our BEAUTIFUL BUSH backdrop 😊.

What do you like about Tawa?
He tangata! Its village-like atmosphere and strong sense of community. There's a sense of whānaungatanga [close connection between people; kinship] I really enjoy; it's evident people go out of their way to care for others – especially the kids and older generations (who lead by example), the schools are a big part of our community. As a parent that is a pleasure to behold, and an honour you innately want to reciprocate.
The environs. Ara Tawa pathway is a gift I love to run or cycle on, even moreso are the bush walks and native tree plantings – I often take to social media to thank #FoTBR (Friends of Tawa Bush Reserves) for whom I deeply respect and appreciate their mahi. The fact they "join up" to Porirua's fabulous MTB tracks and trails plus the Titahi Bay Peninsula and Pauatahanui Inlet is just a treat and makes me feel good about my ratepayer $s.
Our Community Groups. I love the work the other Community Groups do for 'us', with personal faves being the Tawa Historical Society, U3A, Tawa Community Patrol, Rotary and Lions … but I feel bad singling out just a few, check out this list: TawaLink - Clubs & Groups – 140+ is excellent for a suburb of our size 😊 [Please note this list has now been 'archived'. Parts of it are not up-to-date – Ed].
I LOVE what our Community Library brings to Tawa.

What would you like to see improved in Tawa?
1. A multi-code all-weather turf like we see at Ascot Park, Porirua and Johnsonville for sports for all ages
2. One or two trading banks to return
3. A quality / interesting wine bar to complement a nice selection of hostelries on the Main Road

What about family?
I married Audrey in 1988 in Auckland and we both work together in Grenada North, she is active in our community too.
We are blessed with two amazing kids Michael (23) and Kate (19) who each went to Tawa Montessori, Redwood School, Tawa Intermediate, Tawa College … I'm stoked for them both: Michael completed Uni last year and has a great job in a Govt Dept (LINZ). Kate has commenced a hairdressing apprenticeship at a fantastic salon in the city (Black Pearl & Co – above Leuwen Bar on Featherston St) where the staff treat her like part of the whānau and ensure she gets the best on-job training possible.
My mother-in-law Nan also lives in Tawa, and my sister-in-law Jill and her whānau live in Whitby.
Sadly my mum died in Longview Home earlier this year after two years there. If you want a personal referee for what Longview can offer you or your loved one, please reach out – I cannot speak highly enough of the staff and standard of care there.
My sister Sharon and her whānau live in Auckland.

Work experience over the years?
I've only had two jobs 😊.
I joined the Royal New Zealand Navy as a 17-year-old and did a full year's initiation training (including a six-week Boot Camp). I was paid to attend University and did courses and sea-time in the breaks. I went to sea for five years as a Navigating / Watchkeeping Officer serving on Frigates, Patrol Craft, a Survey Vessel, a Fleet Tanker and travelling far and wide through the Pacific, Australia and SE Asia as far north as Korea, Hong Kong & Japan. It gave me remarkable insights into how people can hold different perspectives. I realised later what brilliant coordination, stress-management and multitasking skills it helped me hone.
Being self-employed: after I left the Navy, we joined Audrey's parents who came from Perth, in moving to Wellington in 1990 to establish NZMS (NZMS turned 31 in June 😊). NZMS – New Zealand Micrographic Services Ltd digitises historical and cultural heritage collections for institutions large and small as well as individuals – photos and negatives, books, journals, maps and audiovisual material. Employs 30 to 40 people in three locations.
We formed a second company, Desktop Imaging in 1997. Desktop Imaging – Business Process Automation digitises commercial records and documents as well as offers Business Process Automation software and consultancy. Employs 40 to 50 people in two locations.
Last year in the midst of the lockdown we completed the spin-out of Recollect from NZMS. Collection Management and Community Engagement Software – Recollect (recollectcms.com) I'm very proud of what we've developed here in our valley and it allows users to interact with collections online the way you might with Facebook and Wikipedia … It offers Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums, clubs and societies the ability to engage with their stakeholders beyond their four walls and for users to tag, save, share and upload their own content as well. It is currently being used in New Zealand, Australia, USA, Singapore, UK and we have significant growth plans. Recollect Ltd employs about 15 people.
I've been told our group is one of the larger employers in our valley (we currently have 90 staff).

What are your interests and hobbies?
Personal hobbies include running, cycling, crosswords, coffee, not always at the same time but sometimes – I am an avid multi-tasker 😊. Also wine and reading (early Aotearoa settler history in particular).
Getting out in native bush.
I'm active and enjoy Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.
I get a real buzz from helping others in little ways and am particularly interested in sharing about digitisation and the web, the Cultural Heritage sector, Community Engagement, social media, leadership, governance.

Favourite sports team and/or sports person?
All Blacks, Hurricanes, Phoenix, Ipswich Town Football Club (who? you say… ask Ed Sheeran, I say 😊) [also ask Murray Lucas, Tawa College principal – Ed.], and each and every one of the teams my kids are in.
I'm a classic kiwi bloke and love highlights and the newsclips of most sports.

Favourite musical group and/or individual singer(s)?
I like a variety of music although notably not jazz or country and western. Probably easier to note the radio stations I covet which will give a sense of the genres I do enjoy; there's only three that I cycle through to avoid adverts or boring content: National Radio, The Rock, Hauraki.

What is your favourite holiday destination in New Zealand?
Anywhere with beach and bushwalks and access to a (super)market – I am more glamper than camper … I'm easily pleased, simply requiring access to exercise, crosswords, coffee and once the sun is descending towards the lower yardarm: beer, barbecue and wine with associated nibbles and treats 😊.
I would gravitate to places like Coromandel or the Far North – there's something quintessentially kiwi-divine about a Pōhutukawa over golden sand and waves good enough to body-surf in.

What accomplishments/achievements in your life give you much satisfaction/pride?
The first one is easy; with phenomenal support from Audrey, whānau, and many Tawa locals and schools: my magnificent children Michael and Kate.
The second is my/our three businesses: most particularly because of the many families and individuals who work with us or have worked with us and keep in touch … Also, the fact they do really helpful things for a wealth of amazing organisations and institutions – for example we were trusted to digitise Te Tiriti, The Treaty of Waitangi for the He Tohu (natlib.govt.nz) exhibition.
And it's the little things that often make me feel proud or satisfied – I love helping others who give to society more than their fair share, I also love doing my best to maintain friendships and I like giving back, whether it's coaching my kids' football teams when they were young, or offering leadership, governance and mentoring in my working life.

What are some interesting things about you that local people may not know?
I once had to call the fire brigade to free a possum who was trapped by the tail in one of our skylights in the lounge (it's a rather funny read).
Not long after my 50th birthday I took the wrong kid's scooter home on a balmy, barmy summer's night, learned how to become a human torpedo, degloved my chin (be careful googling that), and very nearly broke my neck on my neighbour's front yard.
I formed FFotM (First Friday of the Month) a few years back; a very modest "Dads-of-Tawa-kids-who-have-growed-up" who meet at a Tawa local between 5 & 6pm (with licence to extend) on the 1st Friday of each month: no agenda, no notes, lots of stories.

What are three things you would like to do before you die?
I'd like to be the best possible grandparent I can be (no pressure (and no rush) kids).
I'd like to own a campervan and take it around Aotearoa so I can walk or cycle all of New Zealand's Great Walks.
Grow our Recollect Community Engagement Platform to a globally recognised brand (it's currently in five countries and we are looking for investment to expand further).

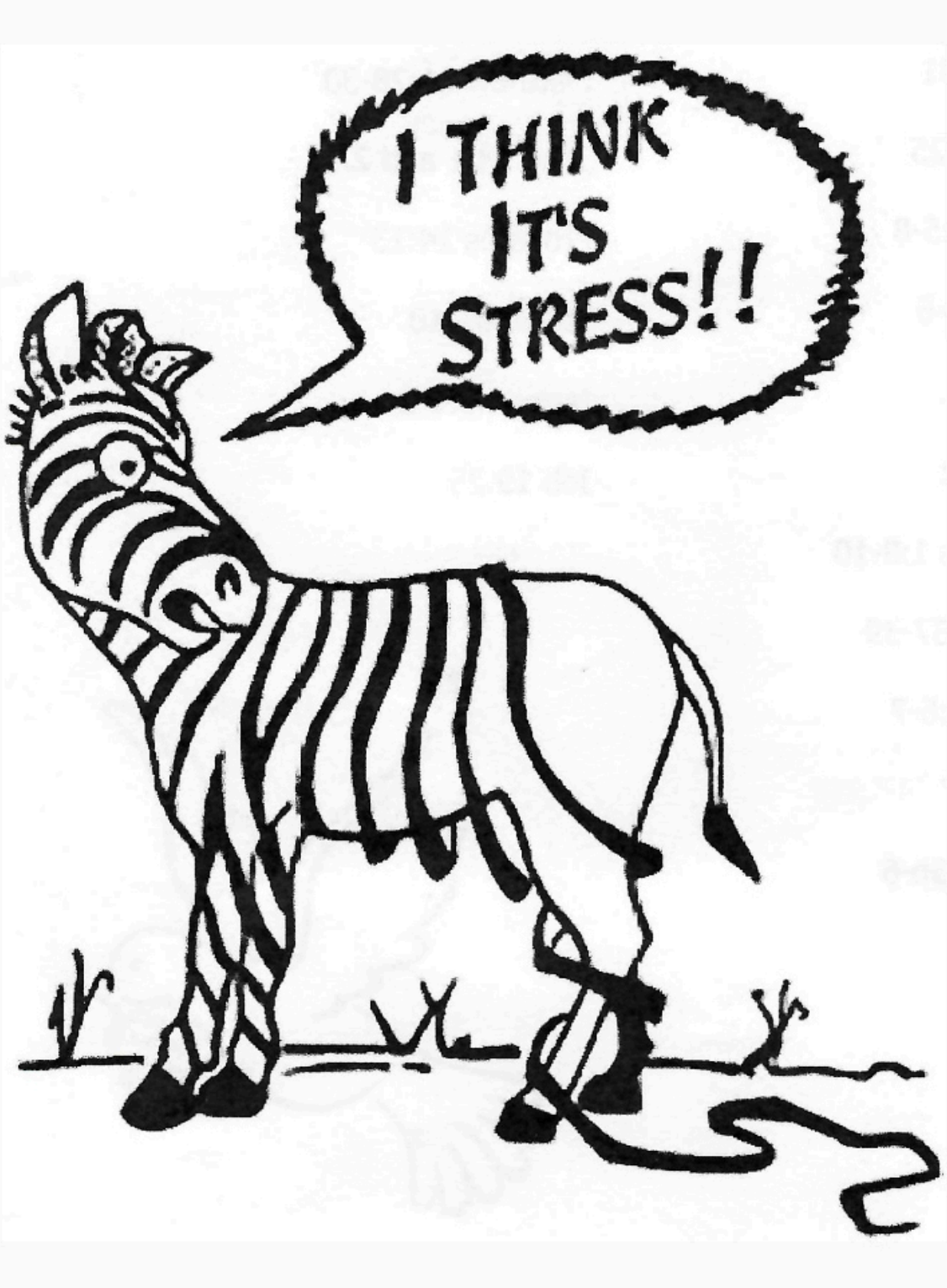
THE END

Coffee: still the most popular handheld device for catching up with people.

"There is always hope when people are forced to listen to both sides." – John Stuart Mill

"I've learned so much from my mistakes I'm thinking of making a few more."

"Democracy is two wolves and a lamb voting on what to have for lunch." – Benjamin Franklin


I THINK IT'S STRESS!!

Ngā mihi

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