

## Writing ambition for prize winner

Hawera High School student Martin Blayney will head for a Writing Studies course at university in Auckland next year with his first literary success under his belt.

On Thursday November 1 Martin will be presented with the winner's prize in the annual Ronald Hugh Morrieson Memorial Literary Contest organised by South Taranaki's Libraries. According to contest judge Des Hunt, the winning short story, titled *Syntax Hell*, showed Martin had used his "outstanding language skills to paint a colourful and entertaining picture of a scene that is not uncommon in our 21st century, assessment-driven curriculum".

Martin also made the shortlist of 10 with a second story, *Candidate*

*This* - a wry, timely look at a mayoral election candidates meeting.

Martin is aiming for a career as an author and is part-way through writing his first novel though preparation for exams has meant he has had to set it aside for the time being. He's also fluent in Japanese and is preparing to sit an international Japanese Language Proficiency Test in Auckland and will continue his Japanese studies at university.

Second prize in the Ronald Hugh Morrieson contest goes to Jozien Hannah of Opunake High School and third prize winner is Jaymee Morrison of Wanganui City College. The winning entries will be read at the presentation evening at Hawera LibraryPlus, at 7pm on November 1.



Literary contest winner Martin Blayney, pictured at Hawera LibraryPlus, is aiming for a career as an author. He says he's always been a keen reader and writer.

## Roundup

### New arrival at the Council

Neil McCann (pictured) is looking forward to the challenges of his new role as Group Manager Engineering Services at South Taranaki District Council, and hopes he'll find time to face some challenges on the tennis court as he nears the end of four years of intensive part-time study.



Mr McCann hails from Durban, South Africa, and with his wife Tamlyn and six-year-old daughter Tessa has arrived in South Taranaki after working for both North Shore and Thames-Coromandel councils.

He is in the "last lap" of four years' study towards an MBA from Henley Management College in London which he says has absorbed a big chunk of his non-work time. However, with the MBA just about complete, the formerly keen player says he's keen to get back onto the courts in South Taranaki.

### Fireworks fun for the family

South Taranaki is in for a great night of Family Fireworks Fun and other entertainment this weekend. Be at the Hawera A&P Showgrounds on Saturday October 27 from 7pm for music from The Chosen Few and the Hawera Highland Pipe Band plus bouncy castles and other fun for the kids. Take a picnic or buy dinner there. The fireworks spectacular to follow



is guaranteed to go with a bang. Parking is available at Hick's Park and family-friendly admission costs only \$5 per adult, \$2 per child or just \$10 for the whole family. Proceeds will go to the Hub. If it's wet

on the night, the show will be postponed for 24 hours and will go ahead on Sunday October 28. Call i-Site Visitor Centre on 06 278 859 for more information.

### Find out about Family Law

A series of four free Family Law workshops starts in Hawera on October 30. Topics include Care of Children (Oct 30), Domestic Violence (Nov 6), Family Court Matters (Nov 13) and the Relationship Property Act (Nov 20). Running from 5.30-7pm, the sessions are being organised by the Taranaki Community Law Trust. To register phone 0800 529 878.

### Council gets down to business

South Taranaki's new Council and Community Boards will be getting down to business over the next couple of months with scheduled meetings, induction training, bus trips to various parts of the district and cultural awareness training. An inaugural meeting was scheduled for last night, at which all elected representatives were required to make declarations related to the performance of their duties and CEO Craig Stevenson outlined their responsibilities under the Local Government Act 2002 and other legislation affecting local authorities.

The next full Council meeting is a special meeting on Monday November 5 at 1.30pm, following a workshop, where decisions will be made on what committees will be set up and who will be appointed to them. Eltham, Hawera and Egmont Plains Community Boards will meet on Monday 12th and Wednesday 14th of November and the first meeting of the Iwi Liaison Committee is scheduled for November 21. They will finish the year with an ordinary Council meeting on Monday December 17.



Ross Dunlop  
Mayor, South Taranaki

## Nappy scheme reaches milestone



Mayor Ross Dunlop presents Normanby mother-to-be Mary Mau with gifts to celebrate the 100th voucher issued under the Council's washable nappy scheme.

Just three months after launching its washable nappy scheme, South Taranaki District Council has issued 100 vouchers to help district newborns get a good start in life with environmentally-friendly, cost-effective washable nappies.

The 100th baby to join the scheme is due to arrive in early December, to Normanby couple Mary Mau and Shaun Brown. Mayor Ross Dunlop presented Ms Mau with gifts from the Council and nappy scheme supporter Nursery Rhyme baby store to mark the occasion.

Ms Mau says that while she used disposable nappies for first-born Corban, now aged five, she was attracted by the potential cost savings offered by cloth nappies and the user-friendly design of the new-look overnaps and liners.

"They're a lot easier to use than the old-fashioned style, and it'll save heaps of money."

Mr Dunlop says that using

disposable nappies is estimated to create the equivalent of about 60 bags of refuse per year for each newborn, and that the cost to parents is around \$1000 in the first year. The Council set aside \$25,000 in its budget to provide washable nappy packs to the families of about 200 South Taranaki newborns this year.

"It's good to see so many South Taranaki families taking up the opportunity," says Mr Dunlop. "As a district we need to do everything we can to reduce the pressure on our environment and keeping disposable nappies out of the waste chain is an important step. It saves money for ratepayers and parents, and the washables are better for the babies' health - so we all win."

\* Families of newborns or mothers-to-be should ask at the Council office in Hawera or any South Taranaki LibraryPlus for more information about the washable nappy scheme or for an application form.

## Humbling show of support, says Mayor

Having just had my first few days as the new Mayor of South Taranaki, I have been gratified and pleased by the support and congratulations I have received from so many people. It really is very humbling.

Election campaigns are funny things and when you have eight people all wanting only one position the potential for conflict is immense. It was interesting how, rather than tearing each other's eyes out, a sort of bond was created between us. Because it is such an "out there" experience and we were "all in this together" - rather like going on a difficult Outward Bound course - we actually grew to like and respect each other. We all recognised that it takes guts and determination to do this "out of the comfort zone" thing and our admiration for each other grew immensely.

From a personal point of view, the most fascinating thing about campaigning was learning about all the amazing things that are happening in our district. We really are a very

fortunate part of the country. I was amazed at the strength and resilience of those communities that on the outside may look pretty battered ... but when you delve into what is going on behind the scenes, there is a strength and determination that is very impressive.

I was reflecting that though I'd met many hundreds of people during the election campaign, I hadn't actually found myself doing that "politician thing" of kissing babies. So it was fun to discover that with only a few days of mayoral duties under my belt, my first official duty was a presentation to lucky mother-to-be Mary Mau, who has received the Council's 100th washable nappy pack voucher. I was delighted to offer my congratulations to Mary and her partner Shaun Brown for making such an environmentally-conscious, cost-effective choice. And amid the concerns about population decline in the district, it's great that we seem to be in the midst of a boom in births!

I thought I'd share an interesting and

humorous incident that happened post-election on the farm, where we had an English lady called Tara helping us docking lambs. Tara took sympathy on a little orphaned lamb that had lost its mum. She took it home to look after. A few days later she was working on fellow mayoral candidate Steve Pivac's farm so she took the lamb with her. A few days later we had a ring from a very upset Tara to report that Steve's very loyal farm dog had eaten the Dunlop lamb ... talk about the sacrificial lamb!

I'm delighted with the make-up of the new council, with a third of the places taken by newcomers - a good ratio of new enthusiasm and experience. Congratulations to all those elected and good on everyone who gave it a go. Don't give up - come back next time for another shot.

## South Taranaki District Council

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