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Ruapehu Bulletin

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Call to action to find new doctor

“We’ve got to make sure we have at least two doctors in the Waimarino,” says Jeremy Nash, one of the members of a steering committee that has been charged with looking at the future of primary health care after the retirement of Ohakune’s Doctor Gratien Perera.

Dr Perera has announced his intention to retire in December, after practising in Ohakune for 38 years.

The committee is hosting a public meeting this Wednesday in Raetihi to “bring people up to date” with progress so far and also to “consult on the way forward”, said Mr Nash.

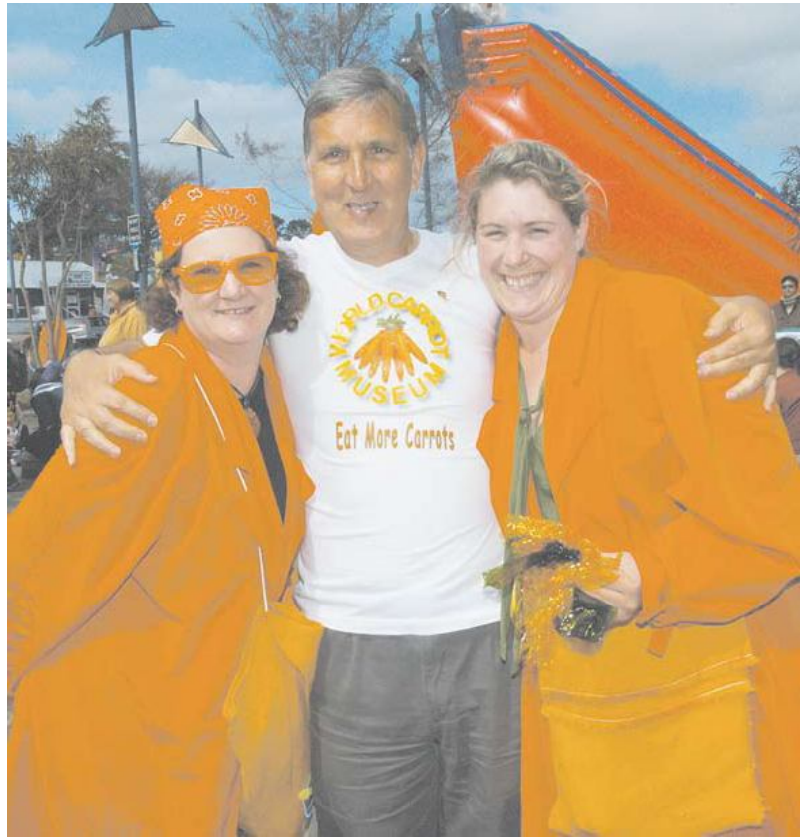
While the core issue is a replacement for Ohakune’s doctor, Mr Nash said the committee had earlier promised to hold the next meeting in Raetihi and also that it was an issue for the wider Waimarino area.

“We need to maintain good medical coverage in the District,” said Mr Nash.

He said he suspected that they would not be able to replace the sort of service that Dr Perera has provided, with few new doctors willing to buy into small rural practices.

“We’ve got to adjust how we provide good medical coverage. The focus is on a doctor but I would assume that some sort of integrated health plan, involving the PHO and/or the DHB will be needed.”

“It’s got to be a collaborative effort.”



World Carrot Man John Stolarczyk meets more carrot people, Gael Cherian (at left) and Lara Dalkie, at the Ohakune Carrot Carnival.

Student zooms in on Raetihi



Ella Trotter is promoting her photography show that has Raetihi faces and places as its focus. See Page 7 for more.

World carrot man takes in the Carnival

Displays devoted to the carrot is the sole purpose of a small museum in the north of England, whose proprietor John Stolarczyk visited Ohakune’s Carrot Carnival this month.

As well as information on carrot history, his museum contains over 1000 articles of carrot memorabilia – or “carrotabilia” as he calls it – collected during his travels around the globe that have taken in most carrot festivals and carnivals. His website already contains information and photos from his visit, including shots of the Big Carrot. He was also interested in the *Bulletin*’s cartoon character, “Krot” (kay-rot) and has asked for copies of carrot cartoons.

John’s unique hobby came about after he was working on an information project for his local council and dabbled with website development. He wanted to take this further and was looking for a subject to work on.

He said there are lots of strange museums in the UK devoted to unique subjects, even toilet seats, so he was considering a museum of some sort.

“How about carrots?” his daughter asked one day, and the idea was born.

“They ask why people climb mountains and they say,

‘because it was there’. Well, we set up the museum (and website) ‘because it wasn’t there,” says the carrot man.

He had no previous particular carrot experience apart from growing the odd row in the back yard.

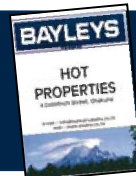
However, coincidentally, when he was tracing his roots to Poland after his mother died in 2004, he made contact with her family and found that his uncle – his mother’s eldest brother – is a carrot grower.

John Stolarczyk’s carrot research has taken him around the world – to the Smithsonian Institute in the USA and the US department of agriculture, to festivals in Canada, Bradford in the UK and the week-long festival in Holtville in California – the “carrot capital of the world”.

His research has found that the familiar orange carrot has been widely known since the 1550’s.

The idea that the Dutch “invented” the orange carrot in deference to their royal family’s colours is not true, he says, although they discovered the mutation in nature and developed it to a commercial crop. Before that time, carrots were better known as being purple or white with an orange centre.

There are six different coloured carrots – red, white, purple, yellow, orange and black, although the black variety is rare.



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