THOUSANDS TAKE UP FREE CBD WIFI

Rotorua District Council’s newly implemented free WiFi service in the CBD is proving a big hit, with thousands of people already taking advantage of the service. Free WiFi in the CBD was tested early in the year and has been embraced by users of mobile devices ever since. Monitoring records reveal that last month alone (April) 17,950 visitors and residents logged on to the service. The free WiFi project is part of a package to help revitalise the downtown area and stimulate growth in the local economy. RDC economic projects manager Nick Dallimore said proving free WiFi was a leap into embracing 21st century state-of-the-art technology. “Visitors, whether on holiday, business or in town for a conference, as well as local residents, now have free and instant access to the web from their laptops, tablets and smart phones, in most public places in the central city," he said.

CHINESE VISITORS FROM Rotorua-Nanjing Town WELcomed to RDC

Powhiri for Chinese visitors at RDC.

Forty eight residents of China’s Rotorua-Nanjing township were welcomed to Rotorua this month with an official powhiri at the council Civic Centre. The Chinese visitors are the latest of several hundred residents of Nanjing’s satellite township to visit Rotorua in recent years. The new Chinese township bearing Rotorua’s name has been planned to accommodate a community of around 5000 well-educated and relatively affluent residents in modern western style houses. People purchasing a home in the new development receive a holiday in New Zealand’s original Rotorua as part of their purchase arrangements. RDC Economic & Regulatory Services group manager Mark Rawson said the plan for the Nanjing satellite township development came after a group of Chinese business people visited Rotorua in 2005. “The Chinese developers were impressed with Rotorua’s natural environment and the way our residents access and use forests, lakes and geothermal areas with minimal impact. The design of a number of the Chinese town’s municipal buildings have subsequently been influenced by the look of buildings here in Rotorua, such as our council Civic Centre,” he said.

RESOURCE CENTRE OPENED

Keep Rotorua Beautiful coordinator Christine Findon at ‘Resource’ education centre.

RDC has begun smoke testing Rotorua sewers to reduce stormwater unnecessarily entering the sewer system. Testing began around the Elizabeth Street area this week, and will continue indefinitely across the city’s urban area. RDC Utilities operations manager, Eric Cawte, said smoke testing works by injecting pressurised smoke into localised sewer pipes. “If smoke appears on the surface it indicates cracked sewer pipes, broken private drainage or cross connections from downpipes, and means stormwater may be entering the sewer system. This extra water in the sewer can unnecessarily increase daily flows through the waste water treatment plant by millions of litres a day. “Once any points of stormwater entry have been identified, they need to be repaired by council on public sewers or by the owner if the fault relates to plumbing on private property. By eliminating this extra water from the sewerage network, there will be huge savings in treatment costs, as well as significant improvement in Rotorua’s sewer infrastructure.” Eric said residents will be notified by mail about the date testing would take place in their areas and reminded again 24 hours in advance of the work starting.

ROtorua Museum receives TripAdvisor Honours

Rotorua Museum has received a TripAdvisor award honouring tourism and hospitality excellence. The accolade is only extended to the top performing 10 per cent of TripAdvisor listed businesses worldwide. The museum consistently achieves outstanding traveller reviews on TripAdvisor, and maintains an overall rating of four or higher out of a possible five. Rotorua Museum Director, Stewart Brown, said the museum team constantly strives to offer a great experience for visitors, with innovative displays and a wide range of changing exhibitions and events. They are passionate about what they do and this comes across to visitors. “The value of positive reviews and comments to tourism operators is huge with more and more travellers using the site to help decide where they will visit before they have even left home.”

As the largest travel site in the world, TripAdvisor receives more than 200 million visitors each month.
NEW APPLIANCES FOR RURAL VOLUNTEER FIRE FORCES

After extensive fundraising efforts and generous sponsorship from individuals and organisations, RDC’s three rural volunteer fire forces have each had major new appliances added to their fleets.

RDC deputy principal rural fire officer Richard Horn said the rural volunteer fire force teams were “absolutely rapt” to have the new equipment.

“This three fire fighting assets will not only benefit their individual local communities for years to come but also the wider Rotorua district. Our volunteers already do an awesome job, but they’re really excited about the additional capacity they will have with the new appliances.”

ROTORUA MUSEUM RELAUNCHING ART AWARDS

Rotorua District Council has relaunched the Rotorua Museum Art Awards after almost 10 years. And this year’s awards offer the largest prize pool ever, with $15,000 in prizes up for grabs.

The awards are for artists working in any medium, except moving image, and are open to all residents across the region. Entries close on Monday 1 July.

MAGIC TAKE ON STEEL AT EEC

Rotorua is hosting ANZ Championship netball this Queen’s Birthday weekend.

Bay of Plenty Magic take on Southern Steel at Energy Events Centre on Sunday 2 June. Doors open 6pm, and the match starts 7.20pm.

Did You Know?
- Rotorua Museum’s collection has more than 50,000 items.
- Rotorua Museum's collection has more than 50,000 items.
- Each year there are 20 new exhibitions and 50 events.
- The Bath House building was the government’s first exhibition venue.
- There is a collection of more than 4,000 miniatures.
- 22 fingers are missing from neo-classical fireplace surrounds.
- They were probably taken during Tudor Towers night.

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