

Monthly Newsletter



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Here's what has happened in the last few months and what's to come!

Kia ora and welcome to our latest newsletter!

It's been another inspiring month here at Volunteer Great Lake Taupō, full of connection, collaboration, and conversations about the future of volunteering.

One of my personal highlights was attending the Changemakers Hui, where we explored some of the real challenges facing our sector. From the difficulty of recruiting and retaining volunteers, to the pressure on funding and the growing shift toward casual, short-term volunteering.

These are important issues for all of us. If you're looking to partner with another organisation, share resources, or even set up some peer-to-peer support chats, please loop us in. Supporting our volunteer-involving groups is at the heart of everything we do.

Looking ahead, nominations for the Volunteer Service Awards will open in January, a wonderful opportunity to recognise the people who quietly keep our community moving forward.

We're also gearing up for International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development (IVY 2026), officially launching at the UN in December 2025. It's a global moment to:

- Promote and celebrate volunteerism
- Encourage greater investment in volunteer programmes
- Inspire more people to give their time and skills
- Increase recognition for the incredible impact volunteers make every day

Together, we can lead the way in shaping the future of volunteering, for our organisations, our people, and our planet.

Enjoy this month's newsletter!

MANAGER - JULIAN BISHOP

In this newsletter you can expect:

Community Updates

Volunteer of the Month

Our Next Event

Waiora House Open Day

Recent Opportunities

Organisation Profile



COMAVOL 2023

Community News

Here's a look at what's happening across our vibrant district. From art and community connection to learning and celebration.

Coming up this weekend, Graffiato returns to transform the streets of Taupō. As New Zealand's first street art festival of its kind, it continues to lead the way, showcasing some of the best artists from around the country.

Since its beginnings, Graffiato has grown into an ever-expanding outdoor gallery of more than 80 murals, bringing colour, creativity, and life to Taupō's laneways. What started as an idea to reduce tagging has evolved into a celebrated cultural event that inspires locals and visitors alike.

Over Labour Weekend you can wander the CBD and watch new works being created, while rediscovering favourites from past years. Be sure to give a wave or a few words of encouragement to the many volunteers who make Graffiato possible. They're the heartbeat behind the festival, keeping things running smoothly and bringing art to life on our streets.

Staying with the arts Taupo Art Connection is holding an Expo with new work from local artists. All work is for sale and there is sure to be something for everyone. Open 10 am-4 pm Saturday, Sunday, and Monday of Labour weekend at Waiora House.

Waiora also have an Open Day Two weeks later on Sunday 9 November. Discover the many services and organisations that call Waiora House home at their upcoming Open Day. From health and wellbeing providers to social services, cultural groups, and community initiatives, Waiora House is a true hub where people connect, find support, and build community. This is a great opportunity to meet the tenants, explore the range of programmes and events offered, and see first-hand how this shared space strengthens our district. Come down, have a look around. Definitely a great day to speak with us!

Volunteer Centres are the heartbeat of local communities, connecting people who want to help with the causes that need them most. At Volunteer Great Lake Taupō, we're taking that mission on the road, bringing the Volunteer Centre out to the Kinloch Markets to meet people where they are. One of the things that makes our center special, is our little Volunteer Caravan. Volunteer Centres like ours play a vital role in building and sustaining community ecosystems. Not just by helping people find where they fit, but by sparking new ways of giving back through micro-volunteering, family volunteering, and community-led initiatives.

As the world of volunteering evolves, so must we. That's why we're reimagining what a Volunteer Centre can be, mobile, visible, and responsive. Popping up in new spaces like Kinloch to connect face-to-face with locals, share opportunities, and grow a stronger culture of giving. A very good example of a community-led initiative is the Taupō Repair café.

It's on 22 November. Supported by Project Tongariro, Timebank Community Garden, Bike Taupō, Council's Waste Management Team, and Volunteer Great Lake Taupō. We'll have repairers for clothing, bicycles, small appliances, and toys. All for free but most pop a little in the koha jar as all the repairers are volunteers. It's going well and growing each event, so recommend registering your repair on the council website.

Mind Over Manner - Free Community Workshop
Tuesday 18 November 2025 | 5:30 – 8:30 pm | Taupō Events Centre

Join Mind Over Manner for a powerful, interactive theatre-based workshop designed to help parents, teachers, and professionals understand and connect with neurodiverse teenagers, those who think, learn, and respond differently. Through applied theatre, participants are able to explore real-life situations and learn practical ways to reduce anxiety, strengthen communication, and build genuine understanding. This is a chance to gain insight, empathy, and tools to support the young people in your life. Based on what I have seen and heard so far, it's going to be really impactful.

Christmas Community Carnival – Saturday 6 December 2025 Get ready for Taupō's biggest pre-Christmas celebration. The Christmas Community Carnival, in partnership with Christmas in the Park, returns to the Tongariro North Domain following the Tremains Santa Parade.

Community groups are invited to host stalls, whether it's food, games, crafts, or something creative. This is your final call to register and be part of a magical day filled with festive fun, community connection, and celebration. To register or learn more, contact volunteerglt@gmail.com.

You'll also spot members of the Volunteer Great Lake Taupō team out and about at many of these events — often rolling up their sleeves as volunteers themselves. If you see us, come say hi! We'd love to chat about how we can support your organisation or help you find your next opportunity to get involved.



September - Tremains Volunteer of the Month

For this month's issue, we are recognising the immense contribution our local volunteer firefighters make to our community. These remarkable individuals are everyday community members who step forward when others step back. They answer calls at all hours, often in challenging and dangerous conditions, to protect lives, homes, and the land we love.

Firefighters embody courage, teamwork, and service. Whether battling blazes, responding to vehicle accidents, assisting in medical emergencies, or supporting community fire safety education, their commitment goes far beyond the call of duty. Behind every siren is a neighbour, friend, or colleague who has trained tirelessly, sacrificed personal time, and shown unwavering dedication to keeping us safe.

September is National Firefighter Appreciation Month, a time dedicated to honoring the courage, dedication, and sacrifice of firefighters across the country. It's fitting that we are recognising the whole brigade at Lake Taupō Volunteer Fire Brigade as the recipients of the September - Tremains Volunteer of the Month

See the back page for the featured photo and a profile of the Brigade. The trucks pictured here are a placeholder for this wonderful team pic.

On behalf of everyone we represent across the district, community groups, volunteers, families, and local organisations, we extend our heartfelt thanks. Your courage, generosity, and tireless service make Taupō a safer, stronger, and more connected place for us all.



VGLT Christmas Community Carnival

LAST CALL – Don't Miss Out!

Volunteer Great Lake Taupō and Christmas in the Park invite your group to join the Community Carnival on Saturday 6th December 2025, right after the Tremains Taupō Santa Parade!

- Showcase Your Group
- Fundraise
- Connect with the community
- Loads of Fun

FREE stall spaces available, but not for long!
 Register now: volunteerglt@gmail.com
 Let's celebrate, connect, and make this Christmas unforgettable for Taupō!

Waiora Open Day

Sunday, 9 November

Join us to explore the vibrant community of services and organisations based here at Waiora. Take a guided tour through our shared spaces, learn about the wide range of support and wellbeing services available on site, and view our modern meeting and event spaces. This is a great opportunity to connect, collaborate, and see how Waiora brings our community together under one roof.

What's happening:

Sausage Sizzle, Mr Whippy, Lawn Games & Activities, Guided Tours of the Complex

Meet the Teams & Explore the Services On Site
 everyone's welcome!

Recent opportunities and where we need help!



CHRISTMAS IN THE PARK TAUPŌ
CHRISTMAS HELPER ELVES & EVENT SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS!
CAN YOU ELF YOURSELF AND HELP KICK OFF THE FESTIVITIES?
Help us spread cheer as we bring one of Taupō's most loved community events to life from welcoming families and handing out tokens, to helping with games, setup, and general event support. It's all about creating smiles, laughter, and festive memories together.
SATURDAY 6TH DECEMBER
This is a one-off volunteer opportunity! Give back without committing to regular volunteering
CLICK THE LINK FOR MORE

Christmas Helper Elves & Event Support Volunteers

Help us spread cheer as we bring one of Taupō's most loved community events to life, from welcoming families and handing out tokens, to helping with games, setup, and general event support. It starts with the Tremains Santa Parade and other activities till around 2 PM. It's all about creating smiles, laughter, and festive memories together.



Riding for Development is calling on kind-hearted locals to join our riding sessions as Side Walkers during school terms.
Taupō District Riding for Development

Side Walkers

Calling all cat lovers - Tūrangi needs you! Animal Care Turangi is on the lookout for caring volunteers to help keep our feline friends happy, healthy, and comfy while they wait for their forever homes.

Visit our website to find out more and browse all our available opportunities
www.volunteerglt.org.nz



Drop-in Centre Support Volunteer
Help create a welcoming, supportive space for local whānau
Join our Taupō Drop-in Centre team and assist with sorting donations, making baby packs, and supporting parents in need.
Grow your governance skills

Drop-in Centre Support

Lend a Hand - Support Local Whānau at our [Pregnancy Help Taupō Drop-in Centre!](#)

They are looking for friendly, compassionate volunteers to join our team at the busy Drop-in Centre

What you'll do:

- Welcome and interact with parents and tamariki
- Help whānau find items they need
- Sort through donations and keep things organised
- Make up baby essentials packs



Greening Taupō Wicked Weeders
The Wicked Weeders are a group of all round good sort locals who share a passion for Greening Taupō and love to get out and about and muck in!
Meet at different sites each Tuesday
Summer hours 9:30am - 11:30am (Oct thru May)
Winter hours 12.30pm - 2.30pm (April thru Sept)
Good Sorts Needed

Join the Wicked Weeders Crew!

Love the outdoors? Want to give nature a helping hand? Come and be part of [Greening Taupō's](#) Wicked Weeders crew.

Each week, this fun and social crew rolls up their sleeves to clear invasive weeds, protect young native plants, and create thriving habitats for our local wildlife. It's simple mahi with a big impact, and all in some of Taupō's most beautiful green spaces.



Taupō Volunteer Fire Brigade

When the siren sounds in Taupō, a remarkable group of people are ready to drop everything and respond. Our dedicated Lake Taupō Volunteer Fire Brigade.

While the main fire station on Lake Terrace is staffed by full-time professionals, Taupō is also proudly served by a second station at 3/17 Matai Street, run entirely by volunteers. These men and women form the heart of the **Lake Taupō Volunteer Fire Brigade**, a fully equipped Fire and Emergency New Zealand station operating three fire appliances and two support 4x4 vehicles.

This remarkable team includes three specialist units:

- **Rural Firefighting Team** – easily recognised by their yellow trucks, this crew tackles vegetation and rural fires and has even supported international deployments, with members recently returning from Manitoba, Canada.
- **Operational Support Team** – using a smaller red truck, they keep emergency scenes running smoothly through traffic management, lighting, catering, and logistical support.
- **Urban Volunteer Firefighting Team** responding to structure fires, medical emergencies, road accidents, and hazardous materials incidents, these volunteers often work side-by-side with their full-time counterparts.

Behind the scenes, a dedicated team of volunteers keeps the brigade running smoothly managing administration, coordinating training, and planning events that strengthen both the team and the community.

Every volunteer receives comprehensive training through Fire and Emergency New Zealand and may be called upon at any time, day or night, rain or shine. Their courage, teamwork, and selfless service form a vital part of Taupō's safety network. They do it all without pay, driven purely by commitment to their community.

As we approach the busy summer season, the brigade is calling for **new volunteers**, especially for the **Urban Firefighting Team**, which currently operates with less than half its ideal crew. Training ranges from **three to twelve months** depending on the role, but the rewards are immense, lifelong skills, lasting friendships, and the deep satisfaction of helping to protect our community.

If you've ever thought about stepping forward to serve, now is the time.

🔥 **Join the Lake Taupō Volunteer Fire Brigade** and be part of a proud tradition of courage, connection, and community care.

Thank you for reading!

Volunteer Great Lake Taupō is able to do its mahi thanks to the generosity of our supporters and funders



**Te Tari Taiwhenua
Internal Affairs**



GREAT LAKE TAUPŌ
Taupō District Council