

# THE CONNECTOR!

VOLUME 58 SPRING 2023



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Kapiti Art Studio recently launched *A Bird Tale*, illustrated by Gabrielle Ashdown, see pages 10–11.

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## Community Connections

Main office: 5 Sheffield Street, PARAPARAUMU 5032

Phone 04 298 7703, [www.ccslt.org.nz](http://www.ccslt.org.nz)

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The deadline for the next issue: Friday 10 November 2023  
Please send stories and pictures to Sara, [sara.hamer@ccslt.org.nz](mailto:sara.hamer@ccslt.org.nz)

## Our new CEO – Catherine Bennett

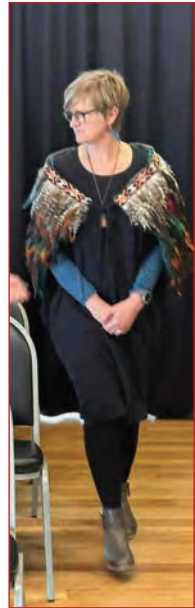
Kia ora koutou, I am really excited to have joined Community Connections as the new chief executive officer. I thought I would tell you a little bit about myself.

I was born and raised in Ōtaki, a small town around one hour's drive from Wellington. I have four brothers, a sister, and a step sister. I grew up with all sorts of pets including a dog, a horse, a cat, rabbits and guinea pigs. In case you can't guess, I love animals.

I live in Wellington now with my partner and our three children. I have spent the last two years traveling back to Ōtaki most days, where I have been learning Te Reo Māori at Te Wānanga o Raukawa. My dream is to one day be fluent in Māori, but it works out I'm a slow learner so it's going to take me a few more years!

One of my goals for my first few months at Community Connections is to meet as many of you as I can. I will be traveling all around the country in September, so there should be lots of opportunities for this. I can't wait to meet many of you face to face and say hello.

Ngā mihi nui



*Catherine at her pōwhiri in August*

## Red Cross book sale

*By the Starlight Group*

At the end of May the new Palmerston North network group called Community Connections Starlight did our first event together.

Kelvin volunteers for the Red Cross every week and has done for many years. At the first Starlight meeting he suggested we help with the book sale and four of us did. We emptied boxes of books onto the tables. We organised them from smallest to biggest in a row, for easy viewing. The book sale was held in early June.



A big **THANK YOU**  
from Red Cross

Palmerston North Branch Booksale 2023

*From left: Kelvin, support worker Te Amo, Jordan, Courtney, Melissa and staff member John*

Jordan said, 'We went to help unpack books out of boxes onto the tables for the book sale. This was happening Friday, Saturday and Sunday at the Palmerston North Bell/Babar Hall. We were given lunch in the back for helping out. We finished at 1pm.'

Courtney said, 'It was fun, spending time with my friends to help with the book sale'. Melissa said, 'I enjoyed meeting new people there while we were helping out.'

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## A day out

*By Paul and Pip Benson*

We went to Wanganui to visit Paul's family and we enjoyed a trip to the park.



# Saying goodbye to my close dear friend Clare

*By Shane Matthews*

*Clare is now a star in the sky and I can look up at the night sky and pick a star and remember my beautiful friend who has gone bye bye forever.*

It's a very special story to share with you all. It was a beautiful experience for me to be a part of even though I have lost a special friend. Clare and I had been great friends for many years. At one point we were flatmates. Everybody who saw us together would say we were two peas in a pod. We both liked to spend time together and enjoyed sitting down with a cup of tea for Clare and coffee for me.



*From left: Kay Pointon (support worker), Marcia Mathews (Shane's mum) Shane Matthews and Vanessa Sheppard (support worker)*

On Friday 25 August 2023 I went to Clare's funeral service. We were dressed in pink (Clare's favourite colour). This was the first time I had lost someone close to me, and it was a very emotional experience. There were photos shown on a screen and smiles, dancing and clapping to Clare's favourite song, *Ten Guitars*. My support workers and mum were with me too.

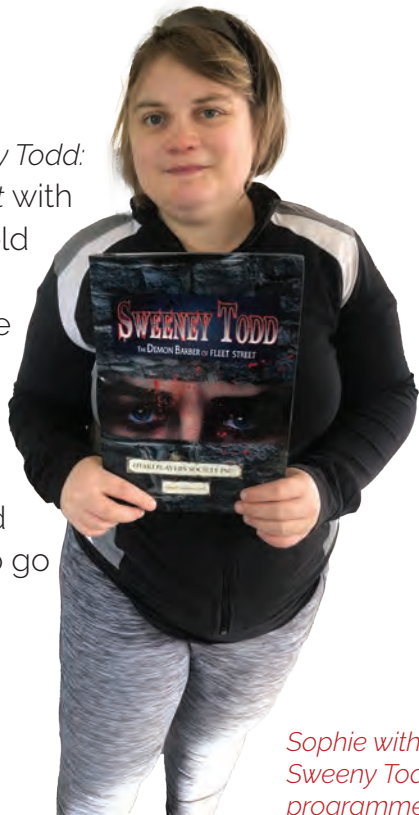
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## Going to a musical

*By Sophie Davey*

I went to the musical *Sweeney Todd: the demon barber of Fleet Street* with my support worker. It was held at the Civic Theatre in Ōtaki. The barber murdered people and Mrs Lovett put them in pies in the bakery.

I thought the show was brilliant! I thoroughly enjoyed it and recommend people to go and see it.



*Sophie with the  
Sweeney Todd  
programme*

# Completing the Ngā Kaihautū course

By Jeffrey Wetini

I went to a 12-week course called Ngā Kaihautū and graduated with a certificate for the key areas: Vision – Matakite, Values – Matapono, and Voice – Whakapuaki. The course was designed by Te Arawa Whānau Ora to support tāne in Te Arawa with mental health and addictions, and to address inequities for Māori.

Ngā Kaihautū gave us a holistic experience of positive behaviour strategies. These focus on strengthening relationships, improving health and wellbeing, setting healthy goals and learning traditional leadership models and values. We were also supported on our journey towards hauora (our own health aspirations). It was awesome!



*Jeffery's certificate*



# My art was auctioned

By Nik Androutsos

Recently my art was entered into the IHC Art Awards. Although my art didn't win an award, it was displayed with 500 other pieces and was one of only three to be hand-picked by Dame Denise L'Estrange-Corbet for the IHC Art Awards Charity Auction. My piece went sold for \$1,100!

I will put my money towards my next holiday and will enjoy spending my well-deserved earnings!



*Nik dropping off his submission*

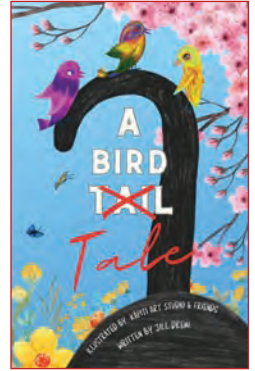


*Nik's art on display*

*Nik's art being auctioned*

## Gabrielle Ashdown flies high with *A Bird Tale*

Kāpiti Art Studio has produced a fun children's book to enable their artists, in particular canary lover Gabrielle Ashdown, to illustrate a book written by member Jill Drew. The studio is going to publish 500 books for sale and distribution to libraries, schools and international networks.



Although light-hearted and fun, *A Bird Tale* takes on a deeper meaning about how belonging and being supported are hugely positive. This parallels what Kāpiti Art Studio does by supporting artists to reach their full creative potential in a safe, accessible, inclusive, creative space that fosters connection and friendships.



*At the launch with Mayor Janet Holborrow (left) and Rebecca Bond who runs the Kāpiti Art Studio*

Kāpiti Mayor Janet Holborrow launched the book at Paraparaumu Library. Gabrielle is supported by Community Connections and was a former member of Kāpiti Kiwis network group.

*A Bird Tale* is available online [abirdtale.com](http://abirdtale.com) for \$25 plus postage or directly from the studios at 6 Tongariro St Paraparaumu, Thurs 9am-5pm or 40 Miro St Ōtaki 1-4pm.



*Helen Wildin (left) and Gabrielle with the book*



*Gabrielle at the launch with Hayley from the library*

## My trip to see the Disney show

By Bridget Martin

For my birthday this year my sister surprised me with tickets to *100 Years of Disney on Ice* in Christchurch. We had to fly to Christchurch and book a motel to stay in. During our flight there, we had beautiful views of the mountains with snow on them and the flight attendant spoilt us with extra lollies.

We went to the show on Saturday afternoon and had seats near the stage. It was three hours long and I loved it all. It was very colourful with amazing costumes and wonderful music. My favourite characters were Mickey, Minnie, Goofy and Donald Duck.

I loved spending this time away with my sister and we treated ourselves to matching Mickey Mouse sweatshirts. It made me feel happy!



*Bridget and her Disney merch*

# Using MyWay transport in Hastings

*By Scott Wilson*

I use MyWay vans when it's raining to go the supermarket, the bank or any other activities I go to. My mum put their phone number in my cell phone. I ring the 0800 number when I need a ride.

I like one of phone operators, Natasha, she's got a good sense of humour. We have a lot of fun over the phone, where we get cheeky to one another.

They pick me up and drop me off at my driveway. The fee is \$2 each way, and \$1 for any extra passengers.



*Scott and the MyWay van*

## Our latest Network Kitchen Crew dinner

*By the Taranaki Network*

The Taranaki Network group planned another Network Kitchen Crew dinner. It was hosted by Chris in his home.

Our members shopped for ingredients, decorated the room with New Zealand and All Blacks flags, and we played some iconic Kiwi music – as well as making an amazing meal of burgers and chips, and delicious ice cream sundaes.

It was a really enjoyable evening – everyone worked together to create a wonderful meal and we are looking forward to the next one already.



*Left to right: Sam, Jack, Tim, Samuel, Louis, Nicola, Terrwynn and Chris*



*The crew in the kitchen, left to right: Chris, Terrwynn, Nicola, Louis and Tim*



*Samuel*

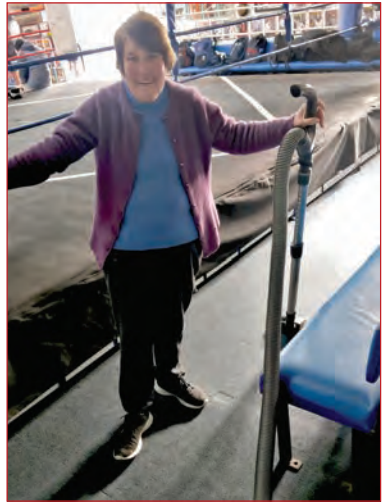


*The ice cream sundae*

## Finding a job

*By Carolyn Mackie*

Sarah from the Employment Connections and my support workers helped me find a job. It has been one of my goals for a long time. I am working at the boxing gym in Naenae two days a week. My support workers have been supporting me and the staff there are really nice.



*Carolyn at work*

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## Going to the gym together

*By the Taranaki Network*

Louis and Terrwynn both go twice a week to a group gym session. It is hard work and fun. There are rowing machine challenges with other people in the group, like rowing for 1 km, as well as individual programmes using kettle bells, heavy metal plates and medicine balls.



*Above: Terrwynn holding a 5 kg plate*



*Below: Louis*



## The bag I made

*By Shania Sayles*

I'm Shania. I made this bag. I love my bag.

I made it with Amanda (my support worker). We used the sewing machine.

We had fun. We laughed, it was funny.



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## The scarf I made

*By Megan Chui*

I made this beautiful hand-woven scarf that I am modelling in this photo.

It is made with donated wool and a cotton warp, it's super comfortable and warm to wear.

It is available to buy at the Hōhepa Creative Works store at 138 Tennyson Street, Napier.

It's open weekdays 10am-2pm!



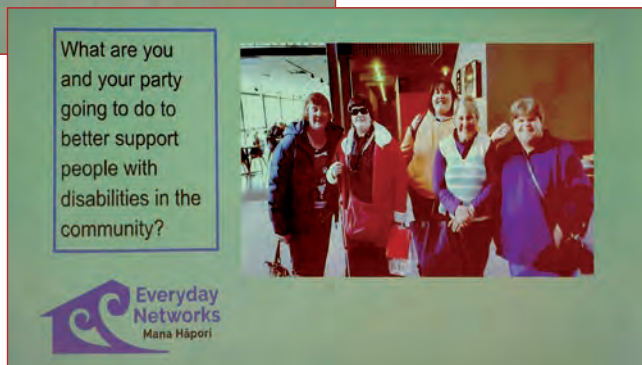
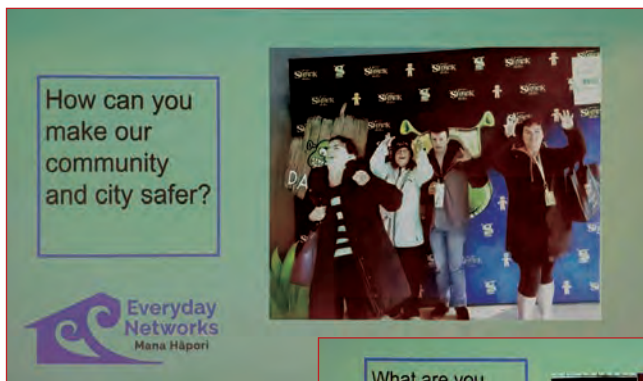
## Meeting the candidates

The Everyday Networks groups in the Hutt showed their leadership on 25 August, hosting and running a Meet the Candidates event.

This was the very first meet the candidates event in Hutt South during this election campaign – and for some of the candidates it was the first one they have ever been part of.

Members of The Fantails – Upper Hutt, Dream Catchers, Bumblebees, and Tui Network came up with and asked great questions about inclusion, accessibility, and being a citizen.

Candidates from 6 of the 7 parties that are running in Hutt South attended. They were Neelu Jennings – Green Party,



Ginny Andersen – Labour, Ben Wylie-van Eerd – TOP, Lee Donoghue – NZ First, Max Rangitutua – Vision, and Emma Chatterton from Remutaka who came in place of Chris Bishop – National. We would like to thank them all for taking the time to meet us and answer our questions.

We also would like to thank Erin from the Electoral Commission who came and talked to us about the voting process.

After the event we have heard about three people enrolling to vote for the first time and also about people updating their enrolment details. Some people also mentioned that they had a better idea of who they would vote for and a couple of people had changed their minds on who they thought they would vote for.

So thank you to our panel of network members who asked the questions, our time keeper (who kept everyone on track), network members and whānau, members of the public, and Community Connections staff for making this day a success.



## Showing animals I love them

By Sandra Hibbs

I love all kinds of animals and I've enjoyed a couple of outings recently to spread my love.

Julie, my support worker, supported me to visit the National Aquarium in Napier where I enjoyed seeing the various sea creatures. I did sign language to the fish and turtles to let them know that I am deaf and that I love them!

I also had a visit to the Haumoana Zoo where I got to meet lots of wonderful farm animals. I enjoyed feeding some of the animals and once again doing some sign language to let them know that I am deaf. I would like to visit the local SPCA on my next animal outing.



*Sandra*



*Julie and Sandra at the National Aquarium*



*At the Haumoana Zoo*