

For immediate release

14 December 2007

Helping Hospital for more than 50 Years

After more than 50 years the Rotorua Hospital Auxiliary group is still providing support to patients and others at the hospital.

President, Jessie Campbell, said the group uses funding from the Rotorua Trust to purchase materials so members can sew and knit a vast variety of clothing, rugs and dolls. "Our members make bed jackets, singlets, matinee jackets, rugs and even calico dolls for the children's ward." Jessie said another task the auxiliary performs is to repack the cartons of dressings for the stores which saves the hospital about \$12,000 annually. There are 29 financial members and Mrs Campbell said they are generally all senior citizens. "We have some members in their 90s," she said. The group are always looking for new members and meet regularly in the boardroom of the hospital on the second Wednesday of each month.

A new rescue boat will be in the water by May next year assisting Rotorua Lakes Volunteer Coastguard with keeping the lakes and rivers around Rotorua safe.

Richard Packham, vessel replacement committee chair, said the 8 metre Orca rigid hull inflatable currently being built will replace the 12 year old rescue vessel used now. The rescue service operates 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year on 14 Rotorua lakes and two river systems including the Waikato and Rangitaiki. "We attend between 30 and 50 callout emergency rescues every year as well as providing event support to activities like triathlons," he said. There are 20 active volunteer rescue crews which are supported by a further 100 financial members. "Aside from rescue and event support we also run educational programmes for the community such as day skipper, radio and boat master courses." Mr Packham said the 30 year old service works closely with the New Zealand Police and other emergency services. "There is no doubt that without the Volunteer Coastguard many lives would have been lost."

Students with eyesight problems are being assisted with purchasing reading glasses by the Rotorua Trust and the Rotorua Eastern Lakes Cluster Schools, as part of its literacy programme.

Fran Blundell is one of the team of three resource teachers of learning and behaviour, along with Anete Heke and Maggie Tapaiata, who work alongside students and teachers of the 10 Eastern schools involved in the cluster. This includes a high school, an intermediate and two Te Kura Kaupapa o Maori, or Maori immersion schools, as well as six primary schools. Mrs Blundell said students identified by the resource teachers are eligible to have their eyesight assessed by an optician and then to receive assistance to purchase spectacles if required. "We want to make it easier for the students to be able

to get glasses so that they can read more easily. There are many students with this need,” she said. If a student is having problems with reading the first thing the resource teachers check is their eyesight. “The assistance with getting glasses is really just a vehicle that will hopefully help the student with their reading and raise their overall literacy level.”

As well as funding standard reading glasses the donation from the Rotorua Trust will assist some students to undertake an Irlen assessment.” “This involves a coloured overlay being placed over the page to make the words clearer and stop them from jumping around. Some students may require special Irlen glasses to read, but many can make use of the overlay which is a lot cheaper and can be stored at school.”

The organisations to receive funding from the Rotorua Trust in its latest donations round were:

Geyserland Lions Club Carols by Candlelight	\$10,000
Mokoia Community Association Supporting Seniors Programme	\$10,000
RAVE (Rotorua Arts Village Experience) Programmes	\$20,000
Rotorua Boys’ High School, Rotorua Girls’ High School and Western Heights High School - Crucial Movement Role Model Scheme	\$4,500
Rotorua Chamber of Commerce Centennial Tabloid	\$5,000
Rotorua District Community Centre New Stove	\$850
Rotorua Eastern Lakes Cluster Spectacle Subsidies	\$5,000
Rotorua Hospital Auxiliary Wool	\$3,000
Rotorua Lakes Volunteer Coastguard New Rescue Vessel	\$50,000
Sexual Abuse Centre Project Resources	\$5,000

Ends

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