

The Police – Looking After Our Community

by Community Constable Noel Surrey

'Christmas spirit' is another of those phrases with double meaning. On one hand it evokes visions of relaxing before and during the holidays at parties celebrating the end of another year and letting our hair down by enjoying a few drinks. That can be a good thing... or not. It depends on how we go about it.

As time runs out to organise ourselves before Christmas is upon us we sometimes get somewhat frazzled. The boss and the customers want everything done yesterday. We keep being reminded that time is running out to do this or that and we start to lose focus on work and think more about the fast approaching holidays. There is a strong temptation to let our hair (and our guard) down because we have had enough! Christmas for some will be a time of things going wrong; driving too fast and crashing, drinking too much and arguing or fighting, just losing our cool and not enjoying the Season as we should.

It is a good time to think about the other meaning of Christmas spirit and make sure that whatever we do it is in line with that. It is a good time to make sure we have our priorities sorted. When time is short, trying to make sure our tempers are not, by taking stock of where and how we are going; gritting our teeth, if necessary, to maintain patience under pressure and trying to smile and make others feel better even if we don't for the moment.

The one great finding of modern psychology is that whilst we as individuals can't change much in our environment (like other people), we can control our attitude towards it. So we can decide to be happy and positive and not let the adversities of life grind us down. We can decide to enjoy Christmas and not let it pass with regrets about how we handled a time of the year we have very good reasons to look forward to.

Another fact it is important to keep in mind is the paradox that the less we try to change other people's behaviour, the more willing they are to improve their performance; especially if we instead concentrate on fine tuning our own efforts to be easy to live and work with.

To get back to the issue of alcohol remember that drinking and driving is only one aspect that needs our careful attention to avoid. Excessive drinking in any environment is dangerous to health, safety and relationships. Intoxicated people are poor judges and controllers of their own actions. They cannot protect themselves well or even see danger approaching. And if you can't remember the party you attended the night before then you were living in the moment at the time and the moments you experience afterwards will be at best uncomfortable.

To make sure that enjoyment is possible, be careful out there. Have a merry Christmas and the best possible New Year. ■



THE hawkins REPORT

Your Quarterly Entertainment Guide

The Hawkins Report, the third edition from November to December 2009, is packed with information on what's on at the Hawkins Theatre in Papakura. Pick up your copy from one of the many local cafes, clubs and businesses that are supporting the Arts in South Auckland.

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The Sound Of Builders

As 2009 draws to a close Hawkins Theatre reflects on a fabulous year of performance and looks with anticipation toward 2010.

Hawkins will continue buzzing over the Christmas and summer period; though not with the sounds of performing artists to which we have become so accustomed... Instead, Hawkins will be alive with the sound of builders!

Beginning January, Hawkins Theatre will be undergoing renovations which will see the theatre gaining a Green Room, Box Office and new management offices to accommodate additions to staff. These renovations will enhance the theatre's capabilities as a venue and also increase the already high standard of entertainment experienced by all who frequent Hawkins Theatre. Renovations will continue through until March and we cannot wait to see the changes put in place and present the new and improved Hawkins Theatre to the community.

Highlights to look out for at Hawkins Theatre in 2010 include the Auckland Premiere of Monty Python's *SPAMALOT* – A new musical lovingly ripped off from the motion picture Monty Python and the Holy Grail.

Presented by Papakura Theatre Company Inc. *SPAMALOT* will feature at Hawkins Theatre, April through May 2010. Late July will bring the inaugural *Maori Playwrights Festival* to Hawkins Theatre. The Festival, which runs alongside Matariki celebrations, includes both established and emerging artists and will feature works from three incredible and inspirational playwrights.

SPAMALOT and the *Maori Playwrights Festival* are only two examples of the fantastically diverse programme of works Hawkins has lined up for 2010. Stay in touch so you don't miss out!

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year from Hawkins Theatre. Full details to all our current and upcoming shows can be found on our website www.hawkinstheatre.co.nz and tickets to all our events are now on sale at Papakura Paper Power and iTICKET www.iticket.co.nz (09)361 1000. Or contact Hawkins Theatre directly office@hawkinstheatre.co.nz (09)297 7712. ■

Papakura Theatre Company Inc.

presents the

Auckland Premiere of

MONTY PYTHON'S SPAMALOT

A new musical ripped off from the motion picture MONTY PYTHON and the Holy Grail

Artistic Director: ADEY RAMSEL
Musical Direction: SCOTT McDOWALL
Choreography: VANESSA HALES

APRIL/MAY 2010

HAWKINS THEATRE
PAPAKURA