



**Grey Power New Zealand
Federation Inc**

December 2011

Bulletin

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The reports contained in this Bulletin are as presented at the December 2011 Board meeting or an abridged version by the individual named as author at foot of each article.

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Presidents Report

Roy Reid

I am very disappointed that a group of Associations including two Board Members have decided to register as another Incorporated Society. The Western Bay of Plenty Assn. advised that they intended to disaffiliate from the Federation, but there Members at a special meeting of their Association voted to remain in the Federation. I sincerely hope that the Membership of any other Association considering disaffiliating will support remaining within the Federation.

Since the publication of the last Grey Power magazine I asked for Members loyalty I have received many messages of support from the Membership from all parts of New Zealand for the continuance of a strong and viable organization.

The Board has now set up a working group which is chaired by Mr. David Moffet to look at the Board structure and strategy to plan for the next five years. David will be attending Zone meetings in the New Year as part of the consultation with the Membership.

I am looking forward to the new structure taking Grey Power into a new era with an increased Membership and a united Board that will be a very strong advocate for the welfare of the elder residents of New Zealand.

I extend my thanks to the Election Strategy Committee for their big input into issues during the Election campaign. The media showed a lack of interest in issues that they were not prepared to promote and this caused some items to receive poor coverage.

I have attended another meeting of the "Going Digital Consumer Reference Group" which meets to give input into the change over to "Digital Television" which will start in the West Coast and Hawke's Bay regions next year. As yet the Government has made no announcement as to any financial help for those on Superannuation, Benefit or low fixed income to help them to meet the cost of the change. The Australian Government has already released details of their subsidy and their change over is 2 years after New Zealand. Teletext and captions will continue to be used on TVNZ channels but Sky does not use captions which are a major concern to the Deaf Foundation.

I also attended a meeting of the Governance Board of interRai New Zealand. This Board will provide governance for the interRai assessment program me which will be used for assessment for Home based care, Rest Home Care and Mental Health Care.

It is proposed that all Home Care assessments will be done face to face and not by telephone as has been done in some areas recently.

The economic situation world wide is still not showing much sign of recovery and I urge all Members to watch closely any action that the Government may take that will be detrimental to the welfare of our Members during the next few months.

Zone 7 have made good progress with the arrangements for the 2012 AGM and I am pleased that they are keeping the Associations informed, and I look forward to having a good representation from all Associations at Invercargill in May.

I wish all Members a very happy and enjoyable festive season and extend my thanks to all who work to achieve our goals in enhancing the welfare of the Membership.

Editors Note:

All contributors have expressed seasons greetings, I have removed these comments for brevity, please take it that all contributors wish you all the compliments of the season.

Zone 1

Zone Director Jack Kerr

This year has seen a fairly successful year for Zone 1 with all Zone meetings being well attended with a lot of interesting and diverse items being brought forward for discussion.

All Association had new members signing up but unfortunately they only replaced the defecting ones that did not renew their subscriptions

All Associations are scratching their heads for new ideas to enlist new members and thus increase the membership.

Government Departments and local body Government seems to be the most complained about business that arises at each meeting. Most of this is soon rectified though. Some Associations tried to arrange a "Meet the Candidate" meeting for their area prior to the election but it appears that the rugby world cup took precedence over the candidates time

rather than informing the public who vote for him or her.

At the most recent zone meeting all Association delegates with totally disgusted at the antics of a few, and some of the officers of the Federation, in their hell bent although misguided efforts to destroy the Federation.

With the advent of a re-structuring group, as asked for at this year's AGM, coming into being the forthcoming year is shaping up to be very exciting for the Federation and it behoves all members to support any initiatives that come from this and not oppose them.

It is also pleasing that each Association increased their committee at their AGM's this year even though by only one or two and still more persons are required on committees. The questions was asked as to why people are always shying away from committees and it is not only restricted to Grey Power but to all, voluntary organisations in our country.

I am sorry this is brief but the old enemy of time has caught up with me as well as a health problem but all is coming well.

Zone 2

No report Received

Zone 3

Zone Director Bruce Purchase

At the Grey Power Zone 3 Meeting held November 18th 2011 during a debate on eligibility for national super it was decided that Grey Power Federation should take a lead role in the debate. Phil Goff's idea of the retirement age moving from 65 to 67 starting in 2020 and the Act Party stating if they into Government even with only one member they would be pushing for a 2017 start. You can bet your bottom dollar the National Party will be right onto this saying it's not our policy so we can do what we like. It was felt this was the time to put the Coromandel discussion paper back on the table. I did so at the December Board Meeting. This is a chance for Grey Power to lead this debate. We should take up the reins or cudgel and drive whoever is in power to do the right thing and make sure that they cannot pull the wool over our eyes and deal us a dirty hand.

Following the publishing of the November Grey Power Magazine, Roy Reid, Jo Miller and myself went (as instructed by the Federation Board) to Tauranga to attend a WBOP Special General Meeting called by WBOP President Carol Gordon on Friday the 9th of December. Ms Gordon put a motion to their membership that they could either stay with Grey Power Federation or go to Supa NZ. The local Tauranga newspaper reported that there were over 300 Members present. When Carol Gordon put the said Motion to the vote it was lost with the votes for being only twelve (12) for the motion, and with over two hundred (200) against. Now that's a major majority vote. With that done a W BOP member moved a vote of no confidence in Carol Gordon and her Committee, it was seconded and won by the same majority.

At this point I took over the microphone and called for order and pointed out the Members needed appoint an interim committee to take over until the next AGM. this being done the first Committee Meeting was set down for the following Friday the 16th of December which I attended to assist in any way needed.

The new committee is: - President Warren Townsend, Vice President Bill Humphreys, Secretary/Treasurer Jenniffer Custins, Committee Garry Oster, Carilyn Townsend, Bob Darvill and John Sinteur. I wish them well for the next 6 Months

Zone 4

No Report Received

Zone 5

Zone Director Pam Schouten

Power Companies: If you wish to discount of up to 22% you have to register on line. Many Elderly do not have computers so miss out.

Golden Bay - Care givers – too many have access to clients bank accounts. How can this be overcome?

Council Trade Unions and Student Union wish to work with Grey Power. They have the same issues in common. Nurses Organisation has also approached us re Care Givers and Rest Home Workers.

Greymouth has a new President. This was great news.

Gold Card is not really applicable in Motueka and most country towns.

Marlborough is using its surplus funds to help in the community. \$1,000 has been donated to Age Concern for Senior Cooking and \$500 toward a seniors' concert.

The new way of presenting Nelson's News Letter was very successful

They had WINZ in their office to speak to people with concerns. Members feel more comfortable with this.

After hours Doctors Services - the cuts to this service of great concern, especially in country areas.

General Business – Motueka commented on the article on the front page of Nelson News Letter. They also commented on the Zone 4 report in the Bulletin and felt this should not have been printed.

Paper on Means Testing of Superannuation written by Mr. M Welch was discussed. Associations to make their own decision and reply to the Federation Board.

Need for the Govt. to recommence payments in to the Super Fund as soon as possible.

Government sale of State Assets. Agreed they should stay wholly in Govt. ownership.

AIL Insurance – Concern expressed that certificates had not been delivered. Advised that AIL will pay Association Members to deliver certificates.

Valerie Rae of Motueka Association was elected Deputy Zone Director.

Zone 6

Zone Director Miles Jackson

Our last Zone meeting was held in the much more peaceful town of Waimate as opposed to the June meeting that was held in Christchurch and was abruptly halted due to the 5.5 and 6.3 earthquake.

Matters covered were the loss of after hours Drs Services in rural towns, particularly Temuka and Rangiora in our Zone. Grey Power in both these regions has been active in bringing this to the notice of politicians, and in the case of North Canterbury, while the after hours service has not been returned, a better service has been put in place for North Canterbury, such as :

- A new pilot scheme set up by the CDHB will began on September 12th.

- This was a particular solution for now for North Canterbury-it was a pilot and may not be a forever solution.

- There is a nurse triage system – this is diagnostic, advisory –

- if unwell:

- but ok until tomorrow see general practice tomorrow,

- and unsure if you will be ok = triage advice and check back in two hours,

- and require review = a face-to-face paramedic assessment, - and need health care immediately = paid transport to after- hours general practice,

- and require hospital treatment = transport to hospital emergency department (ED).

Temuka's situation is a little different from North Canterbury, in that this is a Drs dispute with the District health board over contracts, this situation is on going and no resolution has been reached.

Waimate has had trouble with the Winz Senior services being withdrawn from the town, making it difficult for elderly people to have face to face contact with the Senior services of the MSD. Efforts are being made to get some limited service restored on an appointment basis.

Discussion took place on the means testing of superannuation-discussion paper from Coromandel, and it was felt that Grey Power should stick with the present Grey Power policy, i.e. No means testing of Superannuation.

A discussion also took place regarding the negative comments being published in Newsletters out of Zone 4 and the sending of information supposedly private board information from an anonymous e-mail address to association personal regarding a revised re structure of the Federation board provided by the facilitator Mr T Kilmister.

The normal candidates meetings have all been well attended, and in the case of Christchurch where over 300 attended a meeting featuring Winston Peters, also had the effect of a number of members renewing their subs, as well as a number of new members.

Membership across all associations is steady; Christchurch is rebuilding their membership, after the earthquakes that had devastated the city, with many former and

present members coming to grips with the damage to their homes. Timaru have had several membership drives with advertising, displays in supermarkets, Ashburton has had an evening introduction for 50s plus new members, not totally successful, but they are to be complemented for their effort. I think this is an area that the 50s plus portfolio will be interested to look at in the future.

Two associations namely North Canterbury and Temuka that have been active in the community re the After hours Drs dispute seems to have been a driver of new members, with Temuka membership now stands at 253 up considerably up on a year ago.

Zone 7

Zone Director Les Glassey

The next Zone 7 meeting is to be in Dunedin on Jan. 17th The last Board meeting early Dec was interesting and the guest speaker David Moffet who addressed the meeting on possible changes to Grey Power had a lot of possibilities. The other main issue was the Western Bay of Plenty special meeting on Dec 9th where the committee was removed by a vote of No Confidence.

The 2012 AGM registration forms were sent to all Associations at the end of November 2011 & we already have registration forms back. Wishing everyone a happy Xmas and New Year. If travelling take care as a few minutes longer travelling is better than not getting to your destination.

Portfolio Reports

The 50 Plus Portfolio Report

Jan Pentecost- Chair

1 50+ policy has been agreed to by the portfolio team-

To work closely with others within the Grey Power Federation and kindred bodies to improve the present and future needs (income, health, housing and employment) of vulnerable older people as provided for in the goals of the Government's Positive Ageing Strategy.

2 To request that the Government and other appropriate personnel/ entities promote

the elimination of ageism in society

3 To help create, promote and support opportunities for older people to engage in voluntary work and other fulfilling activities

4 To be accountable to Grey Power members.

To:

- 1 Undertake, where appropriate, both quantitative (e.g. statistics etc) and qualitative (eg. personal stories etc) research to back up action and statements.
- 2 Utilise every possible means to lobby, e.g. submissions, personal contact, correspondence, etc to insist that Government and others treat vulnerable 50-65 year old equitably.

1. Encourage all Associations to keep the portfolio informed of local 50+ issues.

2. Account to Grey Power members via portfolio reports, memos and the Annual General Meeting report on the:

- (i) Issues the portfolio is working on,
- (ii) Action is/is/has taken,
- (iii) The results of the action.

2. Redundancy Issues:

1 The treatment of mature redundant workers by Work and Income- research continues and we are considering how to proceed with this including how to deal with the differing advice and information between WINZ Offices and one staff member and another (in the same office). It is a very stressful time when you have just been made redundant or are, in fact, applying for any benefit at all and our aim is to reduce the stress as much as possible.

2 Education for mature workers- where there is a requirement to learn new skills the lack of learning grants for adult education and the removal of student loans and allowances for those 55 years old and over (? age discrimination) can also mean additional hardship and stress for redundant workers. We

intend talk to the NZ Student Union re this to ascertain if they can work with us. The Council of Trade Unions have also agreed to assist us with mature worker issues.

3. Feedback please- We require your input on these and any other problems affecting those aged 50-65 yrs- please contact jan.pentecost@gmail.com or dsgilmer@xtra.co.nz

Remit & Rule Portfolio

Jack Kerr - Chair

It has been a fairly busy year for this portfolio following the last AGM we were instructed to present a more easier way of submitting remits for discussion. This was discussed and finalised and presented at the last Board and was approved unanimously.

By now each Association will have received a 6b form which is the new form that all remits must be submitted. This will eliminate a lot time wasting for the committee in trying to determine what a submitted remit is about as it will bring uniformity to submissions.

Also there is a letter which will inform Associations on the closing dates for remits although they may be submitted anytime from now until closing date.

Schedule 6 or as it will soon be known as by-law 6 must be followed when submitting a remit.

Only one remit per form is to be submitted and separate forms must be used for each remit.

ACC Portfolio.

Jack Kerr - Chair

The past year has been rather busy for this committee and although we have had several successes in assisting members in their claims we have also had a few negative results.

One case that has been successful is from the South Island that has been ongoing for 2 or 3 years and has finally been successful and the member claimant got exactly what was asked for in the first instance. Tenacity goes a long way when dealing with organisations such as ACC

I must point out though, that when information about a case is requested by

myself from the claimant it must be precise, factual and honest as if it is not then it is wasting my time and the time of the person who is being assisted.

There has been 2 or 3 cases when, despite repeated requests for information, it has not been forthcoming from the member, therefore it is not possible for the case to be further investigated.

It has been very pleasing this year that Grey Power has given it full and total support to the NFD [National Foundation for the Deaf] in its endeavour to have the 6% threshold of hearing loss overturned in work related hearing loss cases.

On September 5 last I wrote to the then Minister of ACC, Hon Nick Smith, a letter on this matter with about 6 questions in it but to date I have not received a reply except to inform me that an election is to be held [as if I didn't know] and the Government will sort out their portfolio holders after that and whoever is the Minister will then reply. Well since the election Nick Smith has been replaced by Judy Collins as ACC Minister so I waiting for her reply. No I am not holding my breath waiting.

Following several investigations I would like to advise members that if they unfortunately have an accident no matter how slight then it is imperative that they register it with ACC through their local GP as the ACC have a habit of dismissing claims because they were not registered in the first instance.

I would ask all members to be especially careful on Christmas Day as I have just heard on the radio that this is one of the days that they receive a huge number of accidents from.

Also I hope all members will be careful in the coming year and I will not complain about not having anything to do as ACC Chairman if there are no accidents.

Energy Committee

Terry King, Acting Chairman

Committee Chair, Allen Davies attended an Electricity Authority forum in Auckland 22 September. The main purpose of the meeting was to get feedback from the many industry participants on the EA's focus on Competition, Reliability and Efficiency (CRE) as a statutory objective.

Allen said it was very enlightening to hear different views from the diverse group, and he was able to put forward Grey Power's view of the need for Transparency of Charge Components on electricity invoices, the need for residential consumers to have full access to their metering information, and for the cost of electricity for the domestic consumer be no higher than for any other sector of the industry.

Of the three components of (CRE), under discussion Competition took up most time, followed by Reliability, with unfortunately little time available to discuss Efficiency.

The day prior to the December Federation Board meeting Allen Davies, President Roy Reid and myself attended a Breakfast Meeting hosted by the Electricity Authority where they launched a brochure titled "Electricity market performance 2010—2011 in review". The full EA Board was in attendance and a lively question time took place. Later in the day we also had meetings with Alan Jenkins CEO Electricity Networks Association and Conor English CEO Federated Farmers of NZ.

Besides electricity matters in common, our discussions also covered local body rating issues.

Law and Order

Terry King - Chair

It's very pleasing to welcome Bruce Purchase as the new Chairman of this Committee, allowing me to step aside from that role but remain a member. The President made the appointment to relieve my workload as Vice-President.

With the Election over we look forward to having contact with the new Government Minister's and Opposition Spokespeople representing Justice, Police and Licensing matters.

In addition we have contact with Age Concern, The Sensible Sentencing Trust and had been considering an approach to Greg O'Connor of the Police Union.

During the election campaign it was good to observe various political parties fine tuning policies for Victim Support, Community Policing programmes, Restorative justice in the criminal system and access to

programmes in prisons focused on education, drug and alcohol rehabilitation and mental health.

Magazine

Terry King, Chairman

As members will recall the traditional December issue was changed to early November so that advertisers were able to reach the pre Christmas market.

Feedback from around the country has been good in relation to content and readability.

The profit split arrangement with our Publisher is helping toward distribution costs and the Federation Board is very pleased with the September payment.

Energy Portfolio

Allen Davies - Chair

Prior to the recent Board meeting in Wellington we took the opportunity to meet with several organisations. These meetings were attended by the President Roy Reid, Terry King, Peter Rutledge and myself.

Our first meeting was with CEO of the Electricity Authority (EA) Carl Hansen. We raised the issue of transparency in the electricity billing system. We were asking for the EA to support Grey Power's contention that each consumers electricity bill should be clearly broken down to show how much each of the many participants in getting the electricity into the home were each receiving and for what.

When you receive your phone bill every little transaction and cost is clearly laid out for you to see, this is what we believe your electricity bill should also be doing.

We also met with Connor English the CEO of Federated farmers to see where there were common areas of interest and issues of concern and as to how we might be able to support one another in making progress for our members. Particularly in regard to electricity pricing, electricity distribution and concerns over property easements for electrical lines, local government rating and water quality issues.

Another meeting was arranged with Alan Jenkins CEO of the Electricity Networks Association where we again discussed transparency in electricity billing, electricity

metering ownership and other electricity distribution concerns.

The following morning along with other invited groups, Roy Reid, Terry King and myself attended a meeting where the EA Board Chairman Dr Brent Layton and the CEO Carl Hansen gave everyone an update on the EA performance over the 12 months that they have been in existence and their future direction and priorities.

During questions I was able to ask what the EA was doing to stop the continued increase in the Domestic price of electricity and the ever widening gap with the Commercial and Industrial sector prices, which over the years have moved only slowly in an upward direction in comparison.

Dr Layton's answer was that the Domestic price was levelling out and in fact the latest figures indicated that it was starting to dip. Unfortunately this is not the answer I was seeking, but we will continue ask these questions and seek some resolution to them.

The Domestic Energy Users Network (DUEN) on which Grey Power is represented by both Peter Rutledge and Molly Melhuish has gained some funding towards a project on regulation. We look forward to seeing the results of this project.

Health Portfolio

Although received it could not be reproduced in a readable format.

Retirement Villages (RV)s

Bill Atkinson Chair, R V Portfolio

A paper was written by the Retirement Villages (RV) Portfolio on the rates rebate scheme and the fact that residents of RV's were unable to partake in the scheme. This paper was presented to MP's during the Grey Power Advocacy visit to Parliament in September 2011.

The RV Chair was invited to and so in November attended a presentation by Phil Twyford MP, who is the Labour Spokesperson on Local Government, Auckland Issues and Building & Construction. The latter is the Ministry that is responsible for the implementation of the RV Act 2003.

There Phil announced that it is now Labour election policy, should they return to power, to pass legislation enabling RV residents to be able to participate in the rates rebate scheme, provided that the resident qualifies. Phil gave full recognition to the fact that this decision was made because it very much depended upon the report given to him on that Advocacy visit. May I express my gratitude to Roy and his team for their efforts on our behalf.

The portfolio Chair has also met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Murray McCully, who is the Member of Parliament for East Coast Bays where the Chair resides. Murray has strongly indicated that he is in favour of RV residents being able to partake in the rates rebate scheme. Murray wishes to further meet with the Chair to discuss various RV issues following the election, if he is re-elected? With a majority of over 12,000 at the 2008 election, was there any doubt?

Also since reporting to the September Bulletin the portfolio has, on behalf of Grey Power and Age Concern, jointly composed submissions to the Retirement Commissioner and to the Department of Building & Housing on the "Proposed Variations to The RV Code of Practice 2008." These submissions are to endeavour to favourably alter the Code to temporarily give some protection to RV residents in the event of any further natural disasters causing destruction to units.

Meanwhile, the submission strongly recommends the formation of an "RV industry" working group to seriously investigate the situation of greater protection available through whatever is available in insurance and the costs associated with each level of insurance available.

Once this information is available in detail the working group should then be able to advise the Retirement Commissioner on the available levels and cost of insurance so that the Commissioner can seek opinions from all parties on the minimum and maximum levels of protection following any future disasters.

This will unfortunately not be of any benefit whatsoever for the residents of those Villages in the Christchurch earthquakes that have had to permanently vacate their units in any of the three Villages affected.

It is the view of the RV portfolio, that those RV residents should be offered by

Government the same as those in the 'red zone' who are private house-owners: namely the 2007 valuation of the unit that the resident occupied should the resident wished to take it.

Not only was that also put to PM John Key, but this is a battle that the portfolio has been fighting by means of attending election meetings and putting forward the idea to various party candidates, on the basis that the more favourable the number of voices in debate, the greater the possibility of further gains.

The disappointment of the portfolio members that, despite all Associations being asked for feed-back on various subjects, the latest being the submission above, so very few replies were received and not one made any worthwhile comments!!

Unless there are worthwhile comments coming from members, those of your Board Members who put in so much work on behalf of members become very despondent and are beginning to ask the questions "Is it worth the effort? Does anyone care? Is it worth going on?"

The writer of this report would very much like to report to his colleague portfolio holders "Yes" to all questions. **What say you?**

Office Administration

Violet McCowatt

AIL special benefit –Associations have been furnished with the AIL yellow cards to handout to new members. This eliminates the need for them to be inserted in every issue of our magazine which is causing some confusion with some of our more senior members think that they have to return the card each time. We have had good feedback from members' dealings with AIL.

Purging of un-financial and deleted members' details will take place at the end of the financial year – as you are all aware, only financial members receive Magazines after the June issue.

Christmas closing – 24th December to 24th January I will attend the office during this period to check mail and do banking that should come in.

Aucklander Article – we have had some members resign due to this article.

Social Services

Violet McCowatt

Wellington Social Housing Service Policy – I spoke on TV One Morning Show and numerous radio stations following the tragic death of one of the Wellington City Council tenants whose body lay undiscovered for a year. This sad event highlighted problems for elderly tenants which have been responsibly and urgently addressed by the Wellington City Council. I have been in correspondence with Wellington City Council and they advise me that they have revised their policy of annual visiting to now visiting tenants twice a year. They have also developed a Tenant Support Service and recruiting a Tenant Support Co-ordinator to ensure tenants access support. Their City Communities team is working with community groups to build neighbourly support and have tagged \$100,000 in community grants to assist such projects. I have conveyed Grey Power's thanks for this and am endeavouring to have other councils consider similar action.

Western Bay of Plenty Association

Roy Reid Federation President

Dated: 16 December 2011. Last week the Western Bay of Plenty Association held a Special General Meeting, the purpose was to vote on the following Resolution:

"That Western Bay of Plenty withdraw from the Grey Power Federation."

Because I had received far too many complaints about this proposal, as National President of Grey Power and in the interests of the wider Western Bay of Plenty membership it was necessary for me to act fairly but firmly in deciding the issue. To that end I was guided by the WBoP current and operative Constitution which states:

2 Objects:

2.3(f) To retain Membership of and to support the Federation

2.3(g) To promote the widest possible identification of the Federation as the most appropriate and effective

representation of the Superannuitants and their rights and special concerns

9. Application of Income

The Income and Property of the Association shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objectives.

In accordance with Federation Constitution Rule 3(e) (iv) I attended the Special General Meeting with Zone Three Director Mr Bruce Purchase and fellow Board Member Mrs Jo Millar.

There was a very large attendance present, estimated by the local media at over 300 members, which resulted in standing room only, and in fact a number of members were unable to get into the packed Hall. In addition Federation Office in Auckland were inundated with telephone calls supporting the retention of the WBoP Grey Power Association.

At the Special General Meeting the Chairperson Mrs Gordon introduced the members of her Executive Committee and gave a short resume of each person's qualifications. She apologized that the member from the Regional Council and the member from the DHB were unable to be present due to their attendance being required at urgent Meetings. Mrs Gordon then gave a resume of her involvement and work for the elderly.

The Chairperson then took the above mentioned motion which had been seconded by an Executive Member and it was defeated by an overwhelming majority voting against, with 12 voting for the motion.

The Chairperson said she was disappointed and did not think the current Executive Committee would continue in the WBoP Grey Power Association. Shortly after, a "vote of no confidence" in the present committee was put and carried by an overwhelming majority, with 12 voting against the motion and as a result a new Committee will be formed in the near future to run the Western Bay of Plenty Grey Power Association.

This has been democracy in action involving the wider membership in the area, and I consider this a great result for both the Western Bay of Plenty Association and the Grey Power movement.

Since the publishing of the November Grey Power Magazine, where in my President's Report, I commented on the need for loyalty and team work I have had

tremendous feedback from both Members and Associations commending me on that report, and disturbed that a group of people would behave recklessly and break away to form another organization which would dilute the work that Grey Power is doing for the elderly.

Having just been to this Special General Meeting of the Western Bay of Plenty Grey Power Association with the opportunity to speak to many members individually I am more than ever convinced of the need for strong and positive leadership.

On another matter I am pleased to report the Structure Working Party studying the future of Grey Power Federation, has had two Meetings, the last one under our new independent Chairman Mr David Moffat, and while there are many Meetings and months to go, I am quite excited about the progress we are already making and the forward timetable being put in place. In addition Mr Moffat attended the December Federation Board Meeting in Wellington and did an excellent presentation to Board Members and a very large number of Observers from Zone four.

While I feel heavy-hearted and sorry over the Western Bay of Plenty situation, I am equally committed to ensuring Grey Power grows from strength to strength in the years ahead and in the interests of team work and loyalty will not back down from taking the hard decisions required of me.