



CHRIS PHILPOTT talks to Martin Kaipo, creator of a community organisation that is helping Otangarei.

Martin Kaipo's infectious laugh reverberates around the room as he reminisces about his experiences with the Otangarei Youth Sports and another. We meet each other at the shops, we Recreation Trust – in particular about the time Prime Minister Helen Clark visited.

Bill Clinton, all these black cars driving round, and family, then there's something wrong with society safety, instigating wellbeing – and we've done ignore that things are happening around them." I was thinking 'what the hell's happening there!'"

Martin Kaipo is obviously one of the good guys, and I can tell there is just something along with wife Janine, founding the Otangarei special about him as his charismatic personality overcomes the dreary scene outside the window of his living room.

Based on that charisma alone, it's plain to see that he could be responsible for what could be described as a dramatic turn for the better in the often overlooked community of Otangarei.

sombre as he discusses Otangarei itself.

"These type of communities are not or can't contribute," he murmurs quietly, before expanding on the family viewpoint which is central to what he believes, as well as why he does what he does.

"I've got children. I've got grandchildren. I've got family in this community. Not only that, but all the community are family in one way or play sports together, we go to school functions.

"If you look at the community as a whole "It was hard case," Kaipo chuckles. "It was like and you don't look at it as some kind of in general."

> It is that same family focus which saw Martin, Youth Sports and Recreation Trust in 1991.

"It's about looking at the whole family," Kaipo continues, explaining the core beliefs of the trust. "How do we nurture, how do we educate, how school, after school." do we provide resources so they can cope?"

Starting in their garage, where the couple put together a gym for young people in their But Martin's tone becomes noticeably more immediate vicinity to use, the Kaipos started to reach out to a community in need.

considered valuable, or that they can contribute, The story behind the Slow Da Flow campaign, one of the most successful road safety campaigns in recent times, is a tribute to the amazing work that the trust is doing.

> Fifteen years later, the trust has become much more than Martin Kaipo, now the managing community is they're really visual, so we try and director, could ever have dreamed. In the last three years alone the trust has grown from three and they can see," he explains. staff to twenty, and is now becoming increasingly involved in much more than just youth work.

that by some things that we've delivered, like fire

the trust also tries to help clean up the community instilling a sense of pride for current residents.

"It's about looking at the whole family," Kaipo continues, explaining the core beliefs of the Trust. "How do we nurture, how do we educate, how do we provide resources so that they can cope?"

"One of the things about this type of deliver to them something they can understand

"Once the message is out there and they can see it, then they will make choices whether they "I suppose we're instigators – instigating want to be part of it, to contribute to it, or just

The hands-on and inclusive approach alarms." He beams proudly when mentioning the taken by the trust saw them announced as initiative he helped introduce that put mandatory the Supreme Winner of the 2001 Trustpower fire alarms in much of the state housing in National Community Awards, an honour not lost Otangarei. "We've got our own medical centre on the man himself. "We were nominated and now. We run education programmes during we were honoured, eh, because there were a lot of great organisations there," says Kaipo humbly. In addition to helping provide infrastructure, "We don't think of what we do as life changing."

"We were down the back, talking to Pamela - literally - which helps to make Otangarei a Peters at the time," Kaipo continues, before more attractive place for home buyers, as well as stopping and laughing loudly. "Then they called out our name and we were like, 'eh?!'"

Despite achieving what might be considered a pinnacle for any voluntary organisation, the Otangarei Youth Sports and Recreation Trust further expanded its operations in 2004, establishing TearRawRize Studios.



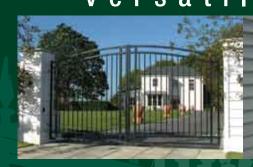


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"SLOW DA FLOW "... glangarei ... Punlles Eist Ren

as "Slow Da Flow". Kaipo picks up the story.

"The road staff that were co-ordinating the next campaign were trying to gauge ideas from the community about what was the best way to astronomical," he says. "The only thing I could doors since that time. think of at that time was music."

TearRawRize put together a little music Took that demo back to the next meeting and jingle that you may be familiar with, known they bought it, straight off the cuff." Kaipo smiles widely. "They loved it."

The story behind the Slow Da Flow campaign, in recent times, is a tribute to the amazing send messages out to young people, 'cause at work that the trust is doing. Perhaps the biggest that time our road statistics for youth deaths were benefit, however, has been an increase in open

"It's something that when we go somewhere "So I brought it back to the staff, to my son and we meet people that don't know us, we talk and his team. They took it back to the recording about the Slow Da Flow campaign, and straight studio and within two weeks we had our demo. away they click - 'woah, you did that!'"

Nearly two years later, the campaign's theme song has been updated twice, to better relate to its target audience, and the slogan now appears on billboards, in movie theatres, and is even one of the most successful road safety campaigns painted on the side of local buses. "I was amazed when I saw the school bus," Kaipo grins.

> That success has also meant demand for the creative team behind the campaign to become involved in other campaigns in other areas.

> "We've got a couple of big campaigns on the road now, just in general," Kaipo adds. "We've been approached by the health sectors, and by other organisations."

This year the trust has approached the World Champion New Zealand "Bombing" team (a particularly artistic and world-renowned form of graffiti) to come to their community.

"The crew that won it are gonna come up and do some stuff up in Otangarei," he says, visibly excited at the prospect. "One of them lives in Otangarei and another one lives up here too, and I thought, "What! Two of them are from Whangarei?!"

Kaipo chuckles once more and it becomes obvious that his willingness to embrace popular and street culture may have inadvertently kept him thinking younger. "We're providing the canvas for them to do their stuff."

Despite such success, Martin Kaipo knows that he belongs in Otangarei, to rise to the challenge of helping an entire community find its feet.

"Every day's a challenge - not only by those who are unable to access the resources, but those who flaunt the resources, to those who are just totally against what we're there for."

One gets the sense that Martin Kaipo and the Otangarei Youth Sports and Recreation Trust will somehow find a way to overcome those obstacles. After all, the good guys win in the end.

"We were nominated, and we were honoured, eh, because there were a lot of great organisations there," says Kaipo humbly. "We don't think of what we do as life changing."