

Community MOVES

**MOMENT OF
TRUTH**

BREWING BETTER LIVES

TIM'S BIG WIN

**WHAT'S NEXT
FOR JANIECE?**

Personally speaking

This October marked 70 years since 22 people met in Wellington determined to improve conditions for their children with intellectual disabilities.

Today IHC is a significant organisation with three wholly owned subsidiaries. As a group we support more than 4000 people through disability services, have more than 3000 tenants, manage 2700 properties (and own most of those) and have more than 2200 members. Each year we raise around \$12 million through fundraising and legacies and receive around \$350 million in revenue for disability and property services, people volunteer more than 6000 hours, we attract around 140,000 website visitors and we make hundreds of thousands of social-media connections.

We have come a long way from being a small organisation run solely on donations of time and money. Yet those donations are as important today as ever.

What's not being provided for people is significant. The latest disability sector report has revealed an annual \$574 million funding shortfall. That means an estimated 15,000 people are missing out on services – and that's before a shakedown of service provision under the new individualised funding model.

You can't open a newspaper, look at news online or listen to the radio or television without hearing more about the housing shortage. The number of people waiting for state or community houses on the Ministry of Social Development's Housing Register has increased by 41 percent in one year.

We have just completed work to improve people's understanding of the IHC Group, including how the subsidiaries work together and the advantage of having disability services, property and charitable programmes working together. We are far stronger together than the sum of our parts. We are also moving into a new era where promoting our services is becoming crucial as more individuals and families pick and choose who provides their services. You can read more about this on page 5.

It is with great pride that we can all reflect on how far we have come in 70 years and look to the future with optimism.

Finally, I want to wish you all a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and all the best for 2020.

Ralph Jones
IHC Group Chief Executive



Tim's big KiwiSaver win was only fair



Tim and Joan Fairhall got MPs to see sense over KiwiSaver. Tim was one of three nominees for this year's Attitude Leadership Award announced recently in Auckland.

Tim Fairhall won a huge victory this year. He convinced the Government to give early access to KiwiSaver savings for people like him with life-shortening conditions.

Tim has been putting money into his KiwiSaver account and wants to use it to travel but he can't wait until he is 65. He has Down syndrome and will need to retire from work much earlier than that. Life expectancy for people with Down syndrome is closer to 57 years than the average age of 81 for the general population.

So Tim went with his mother Joan Fairhall to Parliament to tell MPs that

KiwiSaver rules were not fair to him and people like him who expect to die early. Tim says he told MPs that his dream was to travel. "I want to follow my dream. My dream is to see my brother Scott and my niece Diana. My other dream is to see Tom in Canada."

His brother Scott Fairhall is Associate Professor of Cognitive Science at the University of Trento in northern Italy and his best friend Tom is a former A Supported Life staff member who now lives in Canada.

Tim is now waiting for the law to change and he's looking forward to his trip of a lifetime. Tim has worked part-time at the Te Atatū Countdown

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WE'LL KEEP YOU POSTED WITH NEWS, VIEWS AND BOOK REVIEWS FROM THE IHC LIBRARY.

WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU.

SO JOIN THE CONVERSATION. [FACEBOOK.COM/IHCNEWZEALAND](https://www.facebook.com/IHCNEWZEALAND)

COVER IMAGE:

Project Search intern Ethan Hamilton-Currey is about to start work at the new Christchurch Novotel. See story page 8.

It is great to hear from you

Thank you to everyone who filled in the survey in the August *Community Moves*. You have given us a lot of important feedback about what you like in the magazine and what you want more of.

The great thing about reading your comments was seeing that so many of you enjoy reading about what IHC is doing (73 percent), reading success stories about people with intellectual disabilities (71 percent) and hearing about what IDEA Services is doing (67 percent).

Almost all of you find the articles very useful and informative or

quite useful and informative (97.5 percent).

Thirty-one percent of you read every article and 41 percent read most articles. You prefer to read it quarterly (67 percent) and 80 percent of you want the magazine in print, rather than online (20 percent). Some of you who want the magazine online or as a newsletter made some persuasive comments about cost. But the good news is that you do have the opportunity now to read it online on our website ihc.org.nz/our-publications.

We are working through your comments. But one thing that has come through very strongly is that you want to read more about what



is happening in your area. So do we. If you hear of a great story please let us know about it.

Gina Rogers
Editor

Continued from page 3

supermarket for 15 years. He turned 40 in June and Joan says it is likely he will retire in his mid-40s. “I certainly want him to do this great trip before he gets to the point where it is too hard.”

Commerce Minister Kris Faafoi said in July the rules would be changed to create a new category for early withdrawal of KiwiSaver funds for anyone with a life-shortening congenital condition.

“I want to see Tim and others like him have the ability to use their KiwiSaver to support their wellbeing in their retirement, which is unlikely to be at age 65,” Kris Faafoi said. The new withdrawal category will have a set list of conditions named in regulations that will automatically qualify people for withdrawal.

There will also be an alternative process for people who have a congenital condition not named in regulations to apply to their KiwiSaver provider to withdraw their savings.

The two advisers appointed to look at potential changes, Donna Mitchell, IHC General Manager of Service Development and Strategy, and Dr Claire Matthews, Director of Academic Quality at the Massey Business School, recommended that five congenital conditions qualify for early withdrawal of funds – Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, Huntington’s chorea, and fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

Claire says they named five conditions that were more common and for which the evidence of a shortened lifespan was available. She didn’t see a risk in naming certain conditions for early access and not others. “If there are conditions where it is quite clear there is a life-shortening element and congenital, then why not make it easier?” she says.

As to whether KiwiSaver is a good option for people with disabilities, Claire says it is a good idea for them to get financial advice – as it

is for everyone. “It is a fundamental problem for fund managers,” she says. “The way KiwiSaver is classified as a financial services product makes it challenging to provide anything but full financial advice. People need advice.”

Donna says it was important to look at the intent of the scheme. KiwiSaver was not just there to provide funds for retirement, but to allow people to experience a productive and enjoyable retirement. This was also true for people with disabilities.

Equally important was for everyone to have access to good financial advice and support in making decisions. “I think planning for your retirement is a good thing for all New Zealanders,” she says.

The changes to KiwiSaver have been incorporated into the Taxation (KiwiSaver, Student Loans, and Remedial Matters) Bill, and are expected to be passed into law before the end of the year.

The IHC Group – 70 years in the making

In its 70-year history IHC has become and remained a well-recognised and respected organisation. People look to IHC for connection, information and community engagement and to donate time or money.

But the IHC of today is a far cry from the one established in 1949. Today it is an organisation as strong as ever in its advocacy and community connection, but with wholly owned service-delivery subsidiaries operating and leading in the disability and community housing sectors.

The latest branding survey shows that more than 80 percent of those surveyed know of IHC – but the awareness of IDEA Services and Accessible Properties is far lower.

“In both cases, we have relied on government knowing that we are a trusted provider of quality services,” says IHC General Manager Communications Gina Rogers. “But we haven’t needed to promote those brands to individuals in the same way as IHC.”

The new funding system for disability services changes that, with more decision-making power sitting with individuals and their families.

“We want people to choose us because we know we can provide the best services in New Zealand,” says Gina. “We want people to know what IDEA Services and Choices NZ do and to ask for us when they are meeting with needs assessors and connectors.

“We also want people to know our service providers are a core part of the IHC Group and have strength, commitment and history behind them. We are also stronger because



we have such a range of linked expertise across the IHC Group.”

You may have noticed we have also refreshed the Accessible Properties branding this year.

“Housing supply in New Zealand falls far short of demand,” says Gina. “If Accessible Properties is well recognised it increases our ability to influence and lead in this sector and provide more homes. The clear links to IHC make that especially possible in disability housing.”

Increasingly, survey respondents say IHC is an organisation they can trust (65 percent compared with 62 percent three years ago) – another reason to emphasise the links across the IHC Group.

“On our websites and in our published content you’ll see more

of such phrases as ‘a charity of the IHC Group’, ‘a disability services provider of the IHC Group’, or even ‘powered by the IHC Group’.”

Naturally, says Gina, it’s far more than language that holds us together.

“Already, people have many different relationships with us and access different parts of the IHC Group at different times in their lives.

“We want people to understand all that we do, and to know that the scope and scale of what we do means we can make a difference in more people’s lives.”



Kāpiti four are brewing better

Four young Kāpiti entrepreneurs have gone into business and plan to brew their way to better lives.

Brother and sister Nathan and Janie Martin, Cameron Stichbury and Neville Pugh are members of the Independence Collective, which is managed by IHC ideas man Gordon Cumming.

In collaboration with local award-winning brewer George Duncan, the four have crafted a unique pale ale, Neville, a blend of New Zealand and American hops with a hint of citrus.

The four have been selling the beer since October 2018 and it has been a hit with local bars and cafés. “We are pretty much in every bar and café in Kāpiti,” says Janie. Neville Pugh has the sales pitch down pat: “When you purchase a bottle of our beer, you are not only getting a great-tasting pale ale, you are also helping us, and many others, gain their financial independence.”

Gordon says brewing and selling beer is not all they plan to do. The Collective has plans to develop the business model to include other products and services all under the one brand. Their goal is to expand throughout New Zealand to ‘brew better lives’ for as many people as possible.

“We see this as a game changer for individuals with disabilities and are really excited about the potential and positive impact it will have for many individuals throughout New Zealand.”

It’s been 12 months of hard work for the Collective members – learning the brewing process and



Cameron Stichbury (left), Neville Pugh and Janie Martin are positive about their future as the Independence Collective.

gaining the confidence to get out there and sell. It has also been a year of amazing experiences, including media interviews, photo opportunities with politicians and reaching their goal of presenting their pale ale at Beervana 2019.

Going into business has been a huge boost for Janie and the team and she is keen to work on marketing. Janie had spent two years taking her CV around employers. “I was struggling to get work. It was affecting me,”

Janie says. But that’s changed. “Now I have something I enjoy.”

Their biggest marketing advantage is their back story. A story of trying hard to find work, then realising they could back themselves to be winners.

IHC is also backing them to be winners and supporting their choice to go into business. Gordon, who first came up with the idea to brew craft beer, has been seconded from his usual role as Service Manager for



ce Collective. Photograph: Stuff / Dominion Post

IDEA Services to manage the Independence Collective.

At Beervana 2019 they unveiled their new brand, Change Maker, which says everything about their mission. The response from the beer-drinking public was “really positive” says Janie. “Everybody we spoke to loved it.” They are now in negotiations with three more breweries and are working on a distribution deal that will see their beer on supermarket shelves nationwide in early 2020.

People in our services deserve more choice

IDEA Services is looking at improving vocational services, with the aim of giving people more choice and control about what they do during the day.

Over the next six months, we will assess what activities are available locally to find out what’s working and how we can do better.

IHC Group Chief Executive Ralph Jones says the expectations of the people we support, their families and funders, are rapidly changing.

“IHC and IDEA Services have a long and proud history of responding to the changes in service expectations for people with intellectual disabilities and their families. Despite the best efforts of our valuable staff operating with insufficient funding, the support we provide in vocational services doesn’t always deliver on our vision.”

The New Zealand Disability Support Network estimates the gap between annual funding and the real costs faced by providers like IDEA Services will widen to \$200 million.

“The sector is changing,” says Ralph. “But we cannot wait for the Government to lead the way.”

IDEA Services Chief Operating Officer Joan Cowan says this process will be based on the principle of leaving home for a purpose – one that better matches preferences, goals and aspirations.

“We all leave home for a purpose, and although we do valuable and amazing things in vocational services, they are

often constructed around shifting people from home to another location, primarily based on a ‘care’ or service paradigm,” says Joan.

“We know that we can make improvements in terms of their desires to be in that location, be with those people, or do things at those times.

“Currently, people with intellectual disabilities do not get the right support to enter the workforce or access education, and we think that needs to change.”

Vicki Owen, who has a daughter with an intellectual disability, says vocational services are a core part of IDEA Services’ programme and, for most families, they provide lifelines, ensuring their family members have fulfilling and happy days.

Vicki says IDEA Services should provide a range of services wherever possible so that people of all ages have a choice. She suggests, for example, moving from the traditional day-base services, hosting a full-time programme of activities, to more of a ‘drop-in’ base. This may just be a meeting area and a kitchen, and would cater for those seeking employment, voluntary work or training who don’t necessarily want full-time programmes.

IDEA Services will consult a wide range of people, including our staff and their representatives, but the people we support will remain central to decision-making.



IDEA Services Chief Operating Officer
Joan Cowan.

If you have any questions about this, please contact your local
IDEA Services Area Manager or email vocational@idea.org.nz.

Moment of truth arrives for Project

The moment of truth has arrived for eight young Canterbury people with learning disabilities, who have spent the year at Burwood Hospital in Christchurch learning skills they hope will land them jobs.

The interns are part of Project SEARCH, hosted by Canterbury District Health Board. They have been learning about the work environment in a classroom setting, while doing real work at the same time throughout the hospital. The programme, run for the first time in 2019, has been rated a success and next year will be expanded to include nine interns.

Project SEARCH is open to students between the ages of 18 and 21, who are in their last year of school and qualify for Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) funding.

The interns work in various areas in the hospital and each rotation gives them an opportunity to try something new. It can include setting up clinics at the start of the day, delivering linen, assisting orderlies, working in food services and helping the maintenance and gardening teams. At the end of the programme, approaches are made to employers to give these young people jobs.

Project SEARCH takes a partnership approach. The IHC Foundation is contributing \$128,250 towards funding the roles of tutor and a skills trainer. CCS Disability Action has a critical role in supporting the interns to be work-ready, while Riccarton High School is the managing school.

Project SEARCH aims to find each intern at least 16 hours'



Project Search intern Ricky Reeves has discovered that he wants to work with his hands and with technology.

employment a week on completing the programme, to encourage other employers to run their own Project SEARCH programmes and to break down barriers for young people with disabilities who want to enter the workforce. The Canterbury DHB programme was the first in Australasia, although there are more than 600 programmes operating mainly in the United States and Europe.

"We have used this as an opportunity to evaluate our diversity strategy as an employer," says Michael Frampton, Chief People Officer for the DHB. "It's really wonderful to see the way in which having these young people

in Burwood has contributed to morale."

Michael says that as the DHB is the South Island's biggest employer – with 10,500 staff – a programme like Project SEARCH can really "move the dial" in helping young people with disabilities to find work. "It is something that we can do and something that we should do.

"When we hold a mirror up to ourselves as an organisation, what we see needs to reflect the communities that we are here to care for. We're learning as much from them and having them in our organisation as they are learning from us."

Search interns



Michael says the DHB used to ask people applying for jobs to provide passports or driver licences. It has ditched that requirement after realising, in the course of employing these interns, that it was a barrier to employment.

“There is an enormous amount to gain and learn about having young talented people like these as part of a programme.” And Michael is confident that jobs are waiting. “There is strong interest from other employers, and we are very optimistic that a good number of our interns from the 2019 programme will secure employment.”

A wider world out there

Interns Ricky Reeves and Ethan Hamilton-Currey have both been challenged by their year at Project SEARCH to push themselves to achieve more.

Ricky had imagined himself in an administration role until he worked in Burwood’s Occupational Therapy department helping with wheelchair maintenance. While there he started modifying a spin cycle he had built at school. “You couldn’t ride it in a straight line,” he says.

“It made me realise I need more things to do with my hands and with technology.” Ricky now has his sights set on a retail job at somewhere like Bunnings Warehouse or a technology shop.

Ricky felt sidelined at school in Christchurch. “I was left to my own devices because staff were always busy with people with more advanced needs,” he says. “At Project SEARCH I am always busy doing something.”

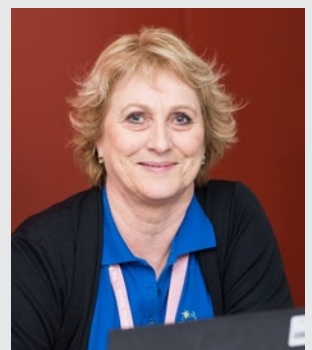
Ethan has landed a job at the new Christchurch Novotel. He wanted to work as a hotel porter but, because he doesn’t have a driver licence, he has been offered work as a room attendant.

Keen on the outdoors, Ethan participated in a YMCA adventure programme while at school and he now has a goal of working with YMCA and helping other people to learn.

‘My most fantastic year’

Project SEARCH has been a career highlight for Coordinator Linda Leishman. “This year has been the most fantastic year in all my years of teaching,” she says.

“They are all so passionate – the amount of times I have heard, ‘This is so much better than school,’” she says. “They say how much they enjoy it because they are respected and they feel as though they are being treated like the young adults they are. That doesn’t always happen at school.”



Project SEARCH Coordinator
Linda Leishman

She says the focus of the programme is not on learning a job at Burwood Hospital, but to learn job skills that are transferable to other workplaces. Much of the classroom teaching done by Linda is around knowing how the workplace functions, right down to timekeeping, alphabetical filing and setting a phone alarm to let you know when lunch is over.

But Linda worries about the long-term viability and expansion of Project SEARCH. The 2019 internships included three students who had already left school, but the 2020 intake is restricted to students who are in their last year of school and qualify for ORS funding. “Having a sustainable funding model is the crucial next step for Project SEARCH.”

Bounce boosts service for disabled kids



Day one at the Bounce school holiday programme and the boys are locked in an intense Tenzi competition.

At 9am on a Monday things are strangely quiet at the Levin Showgrounds for the first day of the Bounce school holiday programme.

In the big room for Years 4 to 8 the big kids are playing cards, or pool, with blocks or drawing. In two nearby houses the younger children are also playing quietly – cards again and Tenzi.

Nicola Manville, who runs Bounce Out of School Care with husband Nigel, says a gentle start eases the transition into the day for children who may be anxious or struggling for one reason or another. But she warns it's not going to stay quiet for long.

This year Bounce received a grant of \$38,000 from the Zena Elsie Orr Memorial Trust, for extra staff to support more children with intellectual disabilities. The trust provides funding for respite care in Manawatū and Horowhenua.

Nicola says the funding allowed Bounce to employ another five staff – “for children who need a

little bit more time for transitions. In the holidays, it has enabled us to take kids on trips”. She says in the past some children have had to be left behind because there wasn't sufficient support.

At Bounce there's less emphasis on technology and more on interactive play and building friendships. There's a huge emphasis on participation and making sure everyone is included. A sizeable proportion of the children attending Bounce have special needs of one kind or another. “One of our biggest things is learning how to make friends, how to play, how to win and lose.”

Suzanne Downes, IHC Family-Whānau Liaison for Manawatū and Horowhenua, says the district lacks programmes for school-aged children, particularly those with intellectual disabilities. Providing holiday programmes and before-school and after-school care for these children is an ideal form of respite, allowing parents to work or to have a break.

Bounce is a Ministry of Social Development-funded OSCAR (out-of-school care and recreation) programme, which started in 2008 and promptly won a best new programme award. In 2012 it was named the outstanding OSCAR programme for the lower North Island.

There's a waiting list for Bounce's before-school, after-school and holiday programmes, which cater for children aged five to 13. It is open at 7am for breakfast followed by school drop-offs and then after-school pick-ups and care until 6.30pm. A fleet of nine vans does the school run, which includes three country schools outside Levin.

More than 120 children attend each day and its roll is closed for the moment. Bounce employs 16 staff and prioritises employment opportunities for young adults transitioning from school to work. Four college students work in paid positions and a number of students volunteer to gain work experience.

What's next for Janiece after Abu Dhabi gold medals?

Champion 100-metre sprinter Janiece Pollock was already up on the winner's podium when she realised she had won a gold medal.

"I was shocked that they put the gold medal on me. I thought I had come second or third. It was very close," she says.

Janiece, a 25-year-old athlete from Taitā in Lower Hutt, has just had her most successful sporting year ever. "I just think about running and just do it," she says. After winning gold in the 100m at the Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi in March, she won another gold medal for the long jump two days later and then came home to be celebrated as Wellington Disabled Sportsperson of the Year. Now she wonders what will come next.

Her World Games coach Shona McGahan says she kept telling Janiece that she could do better and she just kept rising to the challenge." Janiece recorded two personal bests, running 100m in 16.24sec and jumping 2.99m. "It was beyond her wildest dreams. We hoped for it obviously. She was very disciplined, and she worked for it," Shona says.

"In the first medal ceremony my coaches ended up crying. I was crying with them," Janiece says.

It was highly emotional for everyone. "There were lots of tears. It was amazing," Shona says.

Her Wellington athletics coach Chris Di Leva sees a change in Janiece. "The self-motivation is there now. She knows how good she can be," he says. Chris says



Janiece Pollock celebrates her gold medal win in the 100m with the Wellington support crew, including athlete Dom Faherty.

Janiece was disappointed that she didn't reach 3m in the long jump but then came home and recorded a jump of 3.21m in a Special Olympics regional tournament. That was another personal best.

"I would love to see her jumping near 4m and I think she can do that. I just want to see her keep going. A lot of athletes give it away for one reason or another."

Janiece is a member of the Special Olympics Wellington Club and competes in athletics in summer and basketball in winter. Chris has been working with her since 2012. He has coached her to two National Summer Games and

the Trans-Tasman Tournament in Hamilton in 2016. He says her next challenge is to reach 3.5m in the long jump and to compete in the National Summer Games in 2021.

Her Mum, Katrina Moore, says Janiece has come home 'sassy'. "It's confidence – I have noticed it in all kinds of ways. I know she is super proud of what she has achieved." Katrina hopes to see that confidence carry over into Janiece's everyday life.

"My ambitions for Janiece aren't directly related to sport. I want her to be independent and happy and be safe. I would like her to get more employment hours and try something other than hospitality."

Accessible Properties opens community-focused apartments



A community in the making – finishing touches are being made to new Halver Road apartments in Manurewa.

A new Accessible Properties housing complex is nearly complete – with a range of features that will enhance the lives of its tenants.

The development at 37 Halver Road in Manurewa, Auckland, has 23 two-bedroom units and one single-bedroom unit.

It's been two and a half years in the making – now we hope to have the first tenants there in time to tuck in to their Christmas dinner.

Accessible Properties Project Coordinator Isabelle Janus says the four-storey apartment building is ideally suited for elderly tenants and those with mobility issues, and that's been reflected in several features.

“We take the safety and security of our tenants very seriously,” Isabelle says. “Entry to the units is controlled by residents. Any

visitors have to call up to the units over a security system. Residents can not only hear and speak to the visitor, they'll be able to see them on a screen as well.”

The units are double-glazed for warmth and quiet, with level-access bathrooms for safe and easy use. A large lift and wide hallways are designed for tenants using walking frames and wheelchairs.

“Good ventilation will help keep tenants warm and dry,” Isabelle says.

Isabelle says developer Bloom Living has done a fantastic job in creating a welcoming environment.

“There is a communal vegetable garden, and we will look at introducing a communal barbeque,” she says. “We really wanted to establish that good neighbourly, community feel.”

There's a car park for each apartment as well as storage for bikes and mobility scooters. The site is close to public transport and, perhaps most importantly for many of the tenants, a bowling green.

The Manurewa town centre is 500 metres away and the Auckland Botanic Gardens only just over a kilometre away.

Accessible Properties is a wholly owned subsidiary and charity of the IHC Group. It is New Zealand's largest non-government registered and accredited community housing provider and manages more than 2700 properties around the country.



Luxury weekend breaks a rare treat



Visiting the nearby Clifden Caves are (from left) Shirley Shaw, Natasha Sullivan (front), Crystal Timlin, Putauu Rouvi and Nathan Scorringle.

The Cliffs Seaside Lodge Motels at Papatotara in western Southland sit on a cliff with a view of the sea and the mountains. Guests are mostly overseas tourists enjoying the isolation and trampers setting out on New Zealand's next Great Walk – the Hump Ridge Track.

The Cliffs' owners Ton and Larissa Crooymans opened the luxury units for their first summer season in December last year. When the season was over they decided to share their views.

Over two weekends in April, 20 people supported by IHC were hosted by Ton and Larissa to a weekend break by the sea with lavish breakfasts. Lunches and dinners were funded by the IHC Southland Association.

Ton mentioned their idea to Cedric Wedderburn, General Manager of Hump Ridge Track, and he arranged transport for the 200km round trips in the Hump Ridge vehicles from Invercargill to Papatotara on both weekends. Cedric says he was happy to help. "It was a joint initiative."

Ton says he and Larissa plan to

offer hospitality on a regular basis – and Cedric says he's up for that too. Ton regards it as an important part of his Christian faith. "It's not a matter of taking. It's a matter of giving," he says. "It was so good to have them around."

Pat Tauranga, Service Manager for IDEA Services in Invercargill, says staff put out the invitation to people who use our supported living service and everyone who wanted to go was able to go. Support Worker Melissa Beukes says the cost of staying somewhere like this would normally have been well out of reach.

Trolley veteran honoured for his long service

Alan Parsons knows more about how to wrangle supermarket trollies than most people. He has been collecting trollies from the car park of the Kelston Countdown for 20 years.

Alan, 55, knows the regular shoppers and they know him. Sometimes he exchanges a word or two. He says he thinks he would like to try something else but is happy to be working.

He works three days a week for five hours and takes the train from his home in Henderson. His job involves only the car park and he

does not chase the trollies that end up down the road or in the creek.

Countdown staff recently celebrated Alan's 20 years with a morning tea and he invited IDEA Services Supported Employment Coordinator Karishma Beach to come along. He received a 20-year pin, a \$200 Countdown voucher and a long-service payment.

Customer Service Manager Pam Vitasovich says she told Alan how much the company appreciates what he is doing. "Keep doing what you are doing."



Alan lends a hand with some lambs

Some of Alan Cudmore's hardy Wiltshire lambs are being recruited into the IHC Calf & Rural Scheme to help out the fundraising programme that has been hit hard by the *Mycoplasma bovis* bacterium.

Alan is one of a number of sheep farmers who have responded to the call by IHC National Fundraising Manager Greg Millar for sheep farmers to stand alongside dairy farmers in supporting people with intellectual disabilities.

Last season IHC's Calf & Rural Scheme raised \$760,000, only half its usual income in what was a very difficult year for many dairy farmers.

Alan, his wife Sheila and their business partner Sue Brooks lamb early in the season on their remote sheep and beef farm in north Taranaki. They donated a lamb last season and have pledged another one or two for this year.

Alan has a special concern for people with disabilities. After a 23-year career in engineering and logistics in the British military, serving in the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Air Force and the Territorial Army, Alan trained as a teacher and worked with special needs students. In 2000 he moved to New Zealand and started teaching at Stratford High School, where he worked in the Hub that catered for students with special needs.

But he had long wanted to follow his grandfather into farming and after a two-year search for a



North Taranaki beef and sheep farmer Alan Cudmore is keen to help support people with disabilities.

property he and his wife found Ōkoki farm, where they farm 150-200 easy-going Red Devon cattle and 400 Wiltshire ewes. The Wiltshires are a no-fuss breed too – shedding their wool so shearing is unnecessary. The farm is 15 kilometres north of Urenui and 30 kilometres from Waitara. It's a steep 700-hectare property and they work only about 250-300 hectares with the rest in native forest and bush, including stands of rimu and tōtara. Around 100 hectares are preserved under a QEII Covenant.

"We have let the mānuka come

back – we have our own bees in here as well," Alan says.

Alan says prices for sheep look like being higher than last season. "I am hoping for over \$150 a lamb. We have said if we have a really good lambing then I think you will probably get two."

The best way for sheep farmers to support the new Lamb Programme is to go to ihc.org.nz/lamb and donate a virtual lamb for \$150. Farmers can also pledge a real lamb or sheep at this same website, or simply say "One's for IHC" at sale.



Sarah Jones (left) and Stevie Higham recently won first place in the IHC Volunteer Creative Selfie Competition 2019. The selfie was taken on a trip to the local park to feed the ducks. They were presented with their trophy, certificate and prize at a morning tea, held at Sarah's house.

Winning team of volunteers makes an impact

In 10 years, IHC Volunteering has won 19 national, regional and local awards recognising the difference our volunteers make to the lives of people with intellectual disabilities in New Zealand.

The awards have been made for team effort and individual commitment and the accolades have come from local councils, businesses and Volunteering New Zealand groups throughout the country.

The highlight came last year when the IHC Volunteer Programme won an Outstanding Achievement Award in the Ministry of Health Volunteer Awards. It was also the year that Volunteer Coordinator Berenice Langson was presented with the first Leaders of Volunteer Engagement (LoVE) Award by Auckland Mayor Phil Goff.

This year there were three awards. Our team of volunteers in Waikato was runner-up for Team Excellence in the Waikato Volunteer Excellence Awards, and Timaru volunteer Ken Andrews and Ashburton volunteer Jess Bowan were

both named Volunteer of the Month by Volunteering Mid & South Canterbury.

IHC National Volunteering Manager Sue Kobar says she and her team of Volunteer Coordinators have focused on developing a strong base to support IHC volunteers and their friends. "It is imperative to stay current and relevant and to make it easy for people to be involved in their communities.

"The awards we have received are a testament to the Volunteer Coordinators' hard work and the value we place on making sure the volunteer experience is the best it can be," she says.

"Berenice winning the inaugural Volunteer Engagement Award from Volunteering Auckland is an incredible achievement and very well deserved. It is fantastic to see volunteer centres acknowledging their regional leaders."

To mark International Volunteer Day on 5 December we want to thank the 825 volunteers in our friendship and skills programmes, who have volunteered a total of 66,330 hours in the past year.

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