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SUMMER
EDITION
2025/2026

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➤ Feature - THE BOTICA GROUP

A Cut above the Rest

➤ ConnectHer Conference 2025

with Keynote Speaker Toni Street

➤ Northwest Country Business

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Cover: Acknowledging the 4 seasons of WEst publication

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CHAIRS REPORT

And just like that we are the end of another year. 2025 has been an interesting year; sadly, not bringing the economic turnaround that analysts had hinted to in 2024, but of course just like weather forecasters, why not just make another prediction that the real change will come in 2026.

Jokes aside, the beginnings of recovery are evident with continued relaxation of housing interest rates and the inflation rate. It would be fair to say most people who have any interest in following the economy, rapidly identified that it was going to take more than 2+ years to unravel the financial disaster the country had found itself in. Speaking to local businesses, whilst there appears to be a level of acceptance that “we are where we are”, business owners and managers are continuing to place stringent controls on spending and cost whilst the overall environment stabilises.

This last week we held the last BA5 for 2025. Special thanks must go to Delwyn Corin, Catriona Stewart and the team at the Te Puna Creative Hub for generously hosting the evening. Te Puna is a fabulous facility available for hire and features the Komanawa 160 seat multi-functional digital theatre, the Takawai Black Box green screen studio, and Board /meeting room space, all of which is neatly integrated with The Grounds café and restaurant. This centre is available for corporate events and meetings. Thanks again Delwyn. Our next BA5 will be in February when Davis Funerals will be hosting the event at their stunning Central Park Chapel and Lounge facility.

We are further excited to see that the Association will be presenting the first “Connect Her Conference” in the last week of November. Building on the already successful and well subscribed events and meets which Anika has organised and underpins the importance that BWBA is placing on the ever-increasing role that women contribute to business. This conference is going to be one of the high points of the year. Toni Street will be key-note speaker, and the agenda promises a productive and fun day for all delegates. Look out for coverage of the conference on pages 10 and 11 in this issue.

In other news I was also thrilled to attend the opening of He Whare Korowai -Home from home at Hospice West Auckland last week. Building on the invaluable work that Hospice does every day in our community and following the closure of the in-patient unit in Beach Road in 2018, the home from home is now open offering 3 beds for end-of-life and respite care. This will help many families in the west, ensuring that they can



MICHAEL POWELL

continue to receive the care from the same teams of trusted doctors and carers from the hospice and for those patients who are unable to see their final days out at home, they can be cared for in this fabulous, homely environment, right here in the west.

Well with the Christmas Tree up this week on the corner of Lincoln Road and Te Pai Place, all that is left to do is wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy holiday season. I hope it will be a time of rest spent with family and friends.

See you all in 2026!

Wishing you the best in business and health.

.....
MICHAEL POWELL, CHAIR BUSINESS WEST

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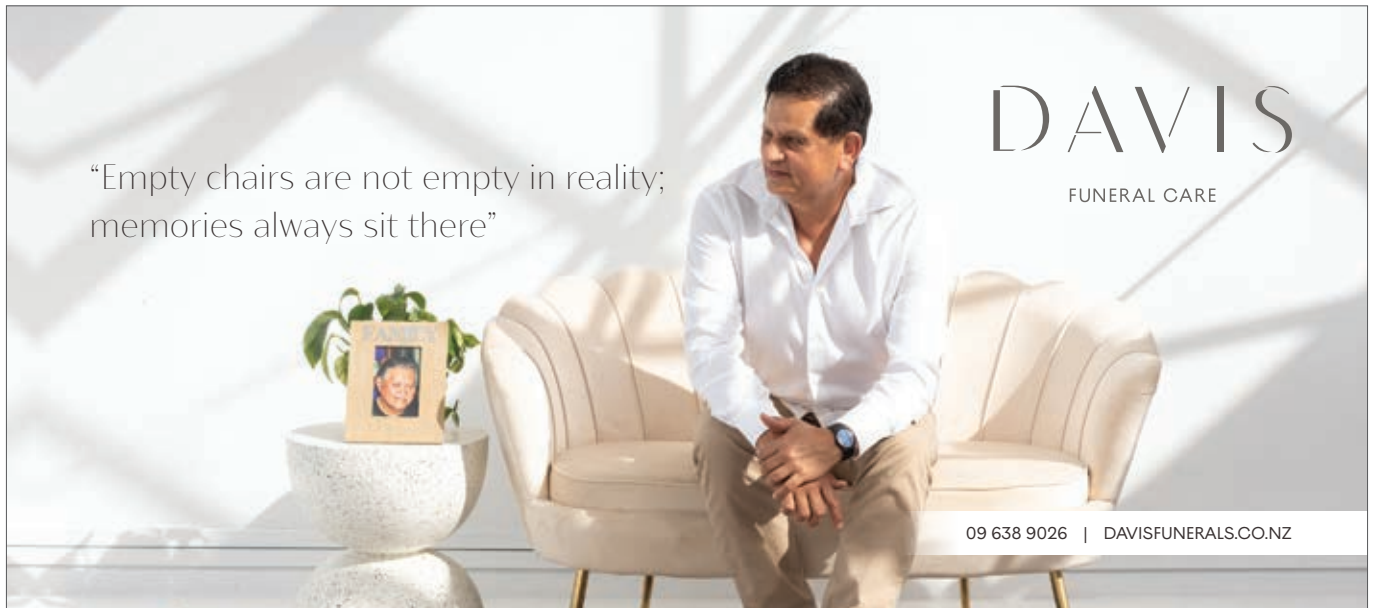
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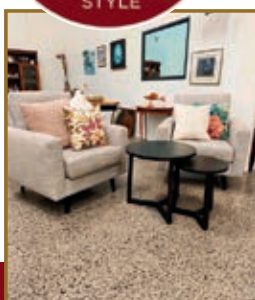
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HOW A COMMERCIAL LEASE

Can Make or Break a Business Sale

A commercial lease is often a decisive factor in the success of buying or selling a business. The terms and conditions of the lease can significantly influence the value of the transaction and even determine whether the deal proceeds.

Early legal review of the lease is essential. Buyers who commit to a purchase before seeking legal advice may later discover unfavourable terms, such as a problematic assignment history, requirements for personal guarantees and large bonds, short lease terms without renewal rights, or lack of allocated parking despite associated costs. These issues can lead to financial and operational challenges that may not be immediately apparent.

Transferring a lease is rarely automatic. Most leases require the landlord's written consent for assignment, and this consent can come with additional conditions, such as financial assessments or personal guarantees. Delays or complications in obtaining consent can disrupt or derail the sale, so early engagement with the landlord is crucial.

Buyers should carefully examine rent review mechanisms, which may be fixed, linked to the Consumer Price Index, or based on market rent valuations. Market-based reviews can result in unpredictable increases if property values rise. It is also important to understand all tenancy costs, including insurance, council rates, water charges, and shared maintenance, as these can add substantially to the base rent.

Clauses related to maintenance, alterations, or end-of-lease obligations – such as “make good” requirements – can have significant financial implications. Buyers should request the full lease history, check for arrears or compliance issues, and clarify any restrictions on fit-out, signage, or future changes to the premises.

A thorough lease review before committing to a purchase helps avoid costly surprises and ensures the premises will support the buyer's business objectives. In the first instance speak to **Smith and Partners commercial law specialist, Jude Dragh on**

P: 09 837 6886 or

E: jude.dragh@smithpartners.co.nz



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THANK YOU TO Mitre 10 MEGA Westgate

A big thumbs up to the team at Westgate for another wonderful BA5. Mitre 10 MEGA Westgate boasts a footprint of 15,500m², making it one of the largest home improvement stores in the country. The 4327m² trade drive-thru and timber yard are entirely undercover and a superb venue to host the BA5.



Business after 5 at Mitre 10 MEGA Westgate



THANK YOU TO Exeloo Limited

For another very welcoming Business after 5 - For 30 years, Exeloo has been at the forefront of public toilet design in New Zealand, Australia and has a growing presence in the US and Canada. Exeloo's export successes have been well recognised by their many successes both here and off-shore.

Both Exeloo and Mitre 10 MEGA Henderson and Westgate have been big supporters of the Association since our beginnings and the business community appreciates your backing.



Business after 5 at Exeloo Limited





WOMEN IN BUSINESS

the ConnectHer platform

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CONNECTHER CONFERENCE 2025

with Keynote Speaker Toni Street

InvestHer Women's Wealth -
Level Up in 2026 - Speak Happy



There's a certain magic that happens when women come together with shared intent and there was certainly the sense that a new chapter had been opened with the inaugural ConnectHer Conference 2025!

At Te Puna Creative Hub, attendees were welcomed to a day jam-packed with networking, learning and fun. Our Keynote Speaker was **Toni Street**, one of New Zealand's most loved and experienced broadcasters. Toni had the audience transfixed with her message, delivered so relatably and with the heart she is so known for.

Attendees had the choice of three breakout workshops, which were a 'power hour' of learning. International award-winning speaker **Cath Vincent** delivered 'Speak Happy' – a class to have you feeling great in front of an audience, to be the best ambassador for your business.





She focused on delivery, influence and managing nerves.

Emma Monaghan of Forsyth Barr delivered 'InvestHer Women's Wealth' – investigating the 'Future You' and empowering women to make the move from saving to investing and celebrating women's natural investor instincts.

Charlotte Norris of Invigorate Media hosted 'Level Up in 2026' – a powerful, high energy session designed to see clear potential, map out bold goals and learn practical strategies to bring them to life.

An insightful panel discussion followed, with Charlotte Norris, Natasha McDowall of Tael Solutions, Tracy Ellingham of Asend and Nicki Osbaldiston of Client Focused Approach sharing years of entrepreneurial wisdom. This discussion centred around what it means to be a woman in business in 2025, how purpose and

core values play into business today and navigating the ever-ending concept of 'work/life integration'.

The day ended with sharing a surprise reel of the day (made from our roving vox-pop!).

We look forward to ConnectHer Conference 2026!





Merry
CHRISTMAS

THANK YOU FOR ALL
YOUR SUPPORT
THROUGHOUT THE
YEAR.

From
The Team at
The Mortgage Hero
Bindu's Brow + Beauty
Shahnaz Husain





THE MORTGAGE HERO

Festive Financial Planning

The festive holiday season isn't just about relaxing and having fun with the family. It's also the perfect opportunity to review and plan your financial goals. Whatever is on your financial wish list this Christmas, here's how to make the most of your time away from the daily grind of work.

Upgrading Your Lifestyle

You may be eyeing a home renovation, a move to a bigger house, or perhaps you're planning a family car upgrade. The holidays are a great time to involve everyone in the conversation and agree on a roadmap to achieve those goals.

Buying Investment Property

Are you thinking about buying an investment property? Use your holiday to discuss it with your loved ones and turn it into a shared vision for your family's financial future. Talk about the type of property that would make a good investment, the locations you're interested in, and the financial steps needed to make it happen.



Paying Off Your Mortgage Faster

Use your holiday downtime to review your budget and identify potential savings so you can save on interest payments and pay off your mortgage faster. Getting the family involved means everyone is on board with the plan and understands the benefits of achieving mortgage-free status sooner.

Starting a Business

If anyone in the family is considering starting a business, holidays are a great time to flesh out the idea and discuss the need for a business loan. You have the headspace to think through all the issues, like the business model, financial requirements, and potential risks. The support and input of family members can be invaluable in kickstarting your thinking.

Refinancing for Better Rates

Interest rates are decreasing, and lenders are offering better rates all the time. Your holiday is an excellent opportunity to look into refinancing options. And if you have teenage children, why not teach them valuable life lessons by getting them involved in researching rates and understanding the terms?

Vins from The Mortgage Hero is here to help turn your holiday dreams into reality. Whether upgrading your lifestyle, investing in property, or saving on your mortgage, Vins has the expertise to guide you every step of the way – even during the holiday season!

Contact **Vins-Wins For You** today and start building your future.

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Nouveau

Market Umbrella 2.7m Olive



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A Quintessential Kiwi Christmas in Your Outdoor Living Space

There's something truly special about a Kiwi Christmas — long sunny days, the smell of the barbecue, and family and friends gathered outdoors sharing in good food and laughter. As the year winds down, it's time to make the most of your outdoor living area and turn it into the heart of your festive celebrations.

Start by setting the scene. Comfortable outdoor furniture, a shady umbrella or pergola, and a welcoming table are the foundations of relaxed summer entertaining. Add a few touches of Christmas cheer — twinkling lights, vibrant cushions, and lush greenery — to create that perfect festive atmosphere. Keep things simple and stylish with natural tones and pops of red or gold that nod to the season without overpowering the laid-back Kiwi vibe.

No Christmas feast is complete without great food hot off the grill. Fire up a quality barbecue, stock the chilly bin, and let the aromas of sizzling seafood, steak, and seasonal veggies set the mood. If you're feeling creative, try a pizza oven or smoker for something a little different this year.



And when the sun sets, keep the celebration going with outdoor heaters or a fire pit — the perfect way to stay cosy while sharing dessert and stories under the stars.

Everything you need to create your dream outdoor Christmas — from furniture and décor to barbecues, lighting, and plants — can be found at **Mitre 10 MEGA Westgate and Henderson**. Their friendly team can help you bring your vision to life, whether you're refreshing your deck, upgrading your grill, or simply adding some festive sparkle.

Make this Christmas one to remember — relaxed, joyful, and beautifully Kiwi, right in your own backyard.





CHRISTMAS PHOTOS WITH SANTA

**15TH NOVEMBER
– 24TH DECEMBER**

**JOIN US AT WESTCITY TO
GET YOUR SANTA PHOTOS**

Walk through our giant Christmas tree, then take a short indoor bush walk to meet Santa for your family photos. See you there!

CENTRE COURT, LEVEL 1

WHAT'S ON At Westcity Waitakere

2025 is in full swing at WestCity as the team prepares for Summer and Christmas celebrations. The September/October School Holidays campaign was a great success, featuring a Kid's Kitchen activation on Level One.

During this event, participants created savoury treats such as funny-faced sandwiches and sweet treats like cute little cupcakes, which proved to be very popular. Over the two-week period, more than 1,700 children took part—an average of 109 kids per day. To ensure the campaign's success, WestCity partnered with Woolworths, who generously provided all the ingredients for the event.

Diwali Celebrations

WestCity celebrated Diwali from Thursday, 16 October to Sunday, 19 October. A beautifully decorated Raj tent was set up on Level One, and Henna artists were present each day from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Between 60 and 80 people per day enjoyed the beauty of complimentary Henna art created by talented artists.

Messy Mission

Messy Mission has become a regular event at WestCity,

taking place every third Saturday of the month on Level One (between Farmers and Pinky Brows). Two one-hour sessions are held at 10:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m., both of which are consistently popular and fully booked.

To secure a spot; bookings can be made online at www.west-city.co.nz

Messy play is suitable for children of all ages, with the afternoon session offering a high-sensory experience designed for more sensitive explorers. Each session follows a unique theme, and the upcoming December event will feature a Kiwi Christmas theme. It's not to be missed—the messiest adventure in town!

Christmas at WestCity

WestCity has an exciting lineup of activities planned for the Christmas season, officially kicking off with Santa's arrival on Saturday, 15 November. SantaMagic will be located on Level One alongside Santa, providing the perfect opportunity for families to capture memorable Santa photos together. Visitors are encouraged to check the WestCity website for more details about upcoming events and holiday trading hours.





HON SHANE JONES

Business West Breakfast

Hard hitting, humorous and candidly discussing the issues facing New Zealand and what we need to do about it. It was our pleasure to have the honourable Shane Jones as a guest speaker to address BWBA's last business breakfast event of 2025.

As is customary, we never let our guests walk away empty-handed and this occasion was to be no exception with the minister being presented with a bottle of the "Patriarch" from our good friends at Babich Wines.

And on this occasion; The First of its kind "Shane Jones Drill Baby Drill Exploration Pack".



BABICH WINES

Celebrating Summer with Noble Riesling

Some wines are made every year. And then there are the rare ones, wines that only happen when nature feels generous, the season cooperates, and our winemakers start grinning like they're in on a secret. Our Noble Riesling is one of those special creations.

This wine begins with noble botrytis, a natural process that gently shrivels the bunches and concentrates the juice into something rich, golden, and full of promise. It's not predictable, and it certainly doesn't happen every vintage. Which is why, when conditions align, we treat it with the care and focus our family has carried for more than a century.

As our Viticulturalist David Bullivant often says:
"Noble Riesling isn't something you chase, you create the conditions, cross your fingers, and let nature decide whether you deserve it."

In 2019, nature answered with a resounding yes.

The result is a limited-release wine with lush sweetness



balanced by a bright, lively finish; the kind of contrast that keeps you coming back for one more sip. It's the perfect end to a special dinner, or the kind of wine that quietly turns an ordinary one into something memorable. No fuss. No grand performance. Just a beautifully crafted drop that invites you to slow down and enjoy the moment.

This Noble Riesling reflects everything Babich stands for: family, commitment, integrity, and just enough unorthodoxy to make life interesting. It's a reminder that some of the best things can't be rushed; they're earned through patience, instinct, and a willingness to do things a little differently.

This season, give more than wine. Give lasting character.

Shop online at babichwines.com

A sweet offer

This limited release is an exciting addition to our range of wines. Produced only in favourable years when noble botrytis shrivels the bunches and concentrates the grape juice, this 2019 vintage will provide the perfect end to a special dinner.

For a limited time we are offering this special, 375ml, dessert wine at the special price of \$210.93 per 6 pack. GST inclusive.

To place your order please email Carolin at carolin@babichwines.co.nz

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*Terms and conditions apply: This offer has a minimum purchase of six bottles. You must be 18 years or over to purchase wine. I.D. may be required for proof of age. This offer is valid until the 19th December 2025.

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AUTOMATION

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Douglas Pharmaceuticals with New Zealand's first AutoStore™

New Zealand's warehouse and fulfilment operators are under mounting pressure. Space is tight, industrial rents continue to rise, and labour availability remains unpredictable. At the same time, customers expect faster, more accurate delivery. According to JLL, more than 90 percent of APAC warehouses are still heavily manual, yet most businesses plan to automate by 2030, a clear signal that the modern warehouse needs to evolve quickly.

AutoStore™, integrated and enhanced by Kardex, is leading that evolution. Its high-density Grid delivers up to 400 percent more storage capacity, enabling New Zealand businesses to scale without expanding their footprint. Accuracy consistently exceeds 99 percent, with full traceability - a critical advantage for pharmaceuticals, manufacturing and high-value goods where errors carry serious cost.

But the real shift is happening in how Kardex is advancing AutoStore to meet the demands of today's warehouse. Over the past four years, Kardex has released a series of innovations tailored to the pressures warehouse managers face; speed, labour efficiency, maintenance reduction and safer work environments.

The Intuitive Picking Assistant (IPA) uses intelligent visual cues at the pick location to guide operators and dramatically reduce human error. The Sensor Cleaning Station prolongs robot lifespan and



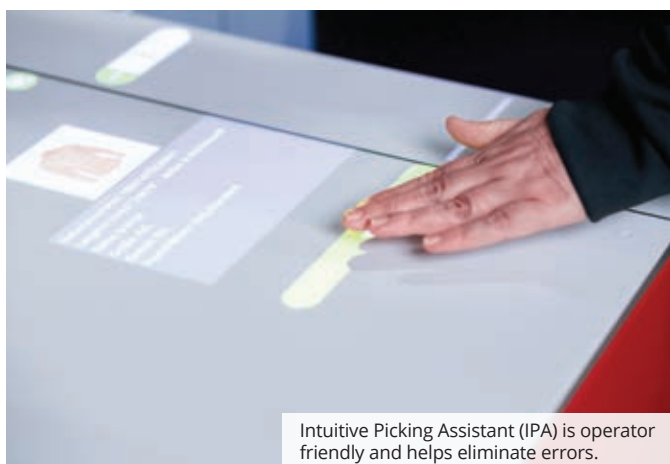
Intuitive Picking Assistant (IPA) – Projects all relevant picking information to guide the operator through the picking process.

maintains consistent system performance with less hands-on maintenance. Automated Bin Induction streamlines one of the most labour-intensive tasks, making induction safer, faster and significantly more efficient. These enhancements are not incremental add-ons, they directly improve day-to-day throughput, reliability and staff experience.

Douglas Pharmaceuticals' installation of New Zealand's first AutoStore system shows the impact in real terms. The company increased storage by 30 percent, compressed its footprint to 10 percent of traditional racking, and achieved a fourfold increase in picking speed. All implemented alongside live operations, without power upgrades or major disruption.

Scalability further strengthens the value proposition. New Robots or Ports can be added without shutting down operations. As Jason Wu, Business Development Manager for AutoStore ANZ, puts it: "We scale while the customer keeps running. That's the benefit of true modular automation."

For New Zealand warehouses navigating rising costs, labour constraints and the need for greater accuracy, automation has become more than an efficiency tool. With Kardex driving continuous innovation, it is now one of the most powerful strategic investments for building resilience and turning the warehouse into a genuine competitive asset.



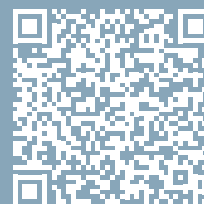
Intuitive Picking Assistant (IPA) is operator friendly and helps eliminate errors.

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for your business?

kardex

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FOR SALE FEATURE - corner industrial site - develop or land bank

102 Hobsonville Road presents a premium corner site positioned in one of Auckland's most sought-after Light Industry precincts.

Comprising 2,717sqm (more or less) of flat, freehold land, this high-exposure property enjoys dual road frontages and sits among established national tenants. Zoned Business - Light Industry, it offers flexibility for a wide range of industrial and trade-related uses. With immediate proximity to State Highway 16 and State Highway 18, Hobsonville Road and Westgate, this is a rare opportunity to secure a strategic landholding in a proven, high-growth location.

Whether developed now or held for the future, opportunities of this calibre in Hobsonville are increasingly hard to find.

Key features:

- **Prominent 2,717sqm** (more or less) corner site
- **Dual road** frontages and excellent profile
- **Light Industry** zoning for flexible development
- **High-growth** Hobsonville location near SH16, SH18 and Westgate

Deadline Private Treaty, closing Thursday 11th December 2025 (unless sold prior).

Beterly's strong track record in high-value investment and development site sales makes her a standout in West Auckland's commercial real estate and an expert in the industry. Her proficiency in English, Cantonese, and Mandarin, combined with her Commerce degree from University of Auckland and published works, enhances her excellent ability to connect with a diverse clientele.





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BASIL VINAIGRETTE

with House Side Garden Salad

The
Alderman
- HENDERSON -



Vinaigrette Ingredients:

- Handful of fresh basil or Thai basil
- 50ml orange juice
- 50ml lemon juice
- Table spoon mild honey or maple syrup to keep it vegan
- 2 tablespoon white wine or cider vinegar
- 1 1/2 tablespoons of whole grain or Dijon mustard
- 2 gloves garlic
- 500ml of canola or any oil of your choice olive oil is too strong.

VINAIGRETTE PREPERATION:

Combine all ingredients apart from oil in blender, start blending and drizzle oil in or add in small batches. Season to taste

Salad Ingredients:

- Mesclun greens
- Mint, Italian parsley, Basil, and Dill
- with Feta Cheese and Heirloom tomatoes
- Pickled fennel and red onion
- Garnish with Pomegranate seeds

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A CUT ABOVE THE REST

The story of Botica Group (Part 1)

You don't stay in business for over 30 years unless you're doing something right. Family-owned Botica Group, West Auckland's leading suppliers of plywood and timber solutions, undoubtedly has the right formula.

We caught up with Managing Director Matthew Botica to find out more about this uniquely West Auckland success story.

Botica Group was founded in 1994 by Matthew's father, Croatian immigrant, Ivan Botica. A fresh-faced 20-year-old Ivan left his homeland in 1966 and headed to New Zealand in search of a better life. A qualified cabinetmaker, Ivan first found work at Fletcher Building.



Matthew Botica

Matthew says his father developed his leadership skills and knowledge over several decades. His career spanned roles in many high-profile companies, including JSC and Carter Holt Harvey.

However, a restructure at Carter Holt Harvey in 1993 saw Ivan being made redundant. This gave him the push he needed to move in a different direction and start his own business. Botica Timber Services Ltd was born, with just Ivan, his wife Marsha and a planer machine.

Sadly, Ivan died in 2011 and his wife, Marsha, in 2021. However, their legacy lives on as son Matthew explains: 'Dad's motto was always, 'It's the quality that matters and the service which counts.'" This principle continues to guide the group's operations to this day.

From its modest start, the company has continued to grow from strength to strength. The Botica Group has called The Concourse in Henderson home since 2002.





It now employs 24 staff members across three sites, including the recently opened new premises at 65 The Concourse.

Over the years, the company has acquired several others that come under the Botica umbrella, including Plyman, Timberman, Botica & Co Pressing Services, Ultima, Deck King, and The Great Kiwi Firewood Company.

Botica Group Today

Matthew says that one of the great strengths of the Botica brand is the specialist knowledge of the dedicated staff. There's not much these guys don't know about timber! And they enjoy sharing their expertise with customers, ranging from crafters to DIY enthusiasts and professional builders.

Like most other businesses, the current economic climate has been challenging for Botica. 'We've had to pull back in this market, take stock and be more

mindful of our spending,' Matthew advises.

He adds that Botica has invested a lot of energy in diversifying the group's offerings. 'For example, in the digital space, we're trying out AI and different ways of marketing that we haven't done traditionally to keep up with changing times,' Matthew reports.

The group has even launched its own YouTube channel. Matthew says that much of the timber information available online is aimed at the US market, with very little specific to Kiwis. Botica Group is filling a gap with helpful and informative videos relevant to New Zealanders.

Botica Group's customers have been coming back for decades now, so there's no doubt that Matthew knows what he's talking about.

More on the story in Part 2 next issue

Botica Group, 67 The Concourse, Henderson.

W: boticagroup.co.nz



LORENE'S SMILE TRANSFORMATION

with Dr. Khosa at McIntosh Dental

For years, Lorene did everything she could to hide her smile. She avoided photos, covered her mouth when laughing and felt anxious in social situations.

Constantly worried people would focus on her teeth instead of her words or her vibrant personality.

After several negative experiences with other dentists who didn't listen to her concerns, it's no wonder she lost trust in dentists altogether. But with her daughter's wedding approaching, she wanted one thing more than anything. To smile proudly on the day she watched her daughter walk down the aisle.

That's when Lorene visited McIntosh Dental and met Dr Khosa.

After that meeting, everything changed. From the first appointment, Lorene felt heard, understood and supported. Something she'd never experienced before.

"Dr Khosa listened calmly while I explained my fears from past experiences. He promised we'd work together, not be told what I 'must' do. For the first time, I felt like I could trust a dentist." — Lorene

Rather than presenting one costly solution, Dr Khosa created multiple treatment options, explained each step clearly and ensured she felt comfortable throughout the process.

The Moment Everything Changed

During treatment, Lorene described the moment she saw her new teeth:



"He handed me a mirror after finishing the first four teeth... I sent a photo to my daughter immediately. We were both so excited!"

That excitement carried her right into her daughter's special day:

"Every photo from the wedding shows me smiling proudly. I felt confident, happy and like the mum my daughter deserved by her side."

Since completing her treatment, everything has changed:

- She speaks confidently in public
- Smiles freely in photos
- No longer hides behind her hands
- Friends constantly tell her how amazing her teeth look

"I have regained my pride and confidence. I laugh freely and smile proudly. I never thought this would happen."

Like Lorene, many of our patients come to us anxious or feeling like they've run out of options. McIntosh Dental is here to change that.

Contact the team who goes above and beyond with quality of care at every step.

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SKIN CANCER

with Waitakere i-Medical Centre

Skin cancer is an abnormal growth of skin cells mainly caused by sun's harmful rays. It's the most common cancer diagnosis in New Zealand making up about 80% of all cancer diagnosis. If detected early, skin cancer is highly treatable.

Types of Skin Cancer

Person's skin cancer is determined by where the cancer begins. Most common types of skin cancer are below:

BASAL CELL CARCINOMA (BCC)

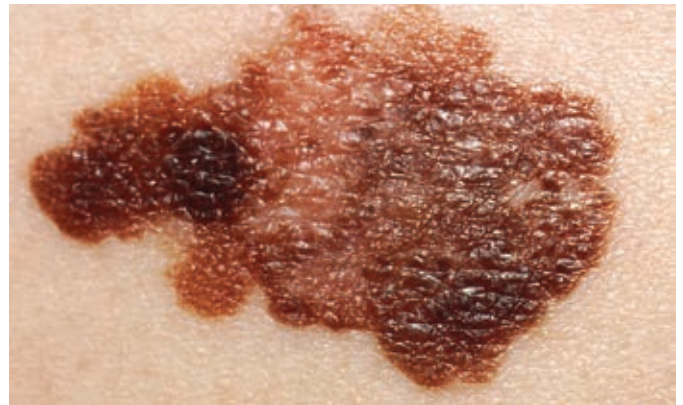
Most frequently occurring skin cancer that starts in basal cells- the bottom layer cells of epidermis (outer skin layer). Seen as transparent, flesh coloured, pearl-like bump, pinkish patch of skin, slightly raised growth or a sore that won't heal. Seen mostly in body parts exposed to sun like head, neck, and arms but also anywhere like chest, abdomen or legs. BCC can grow deep if left untreated, penetrating nerves and bones causing damage and disfigurement.

SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMA (SCC)

Second most common type of skin cancer developed in the squamous cells which are flat protective cells found in outer and middle layers of skin. Looks like a red firm bump, scaly patch or a sore that heals and re-opens. If undetected and untreated, it can grow deep and large, spreading to other parts of the body.

MELANOMA

The most serious and deadliest type of skin cancer because of its tendency to spread to blood-stream. This develops from skin's pigment producing cells called melanocytes, caused by sun's UV radiation. Symptoms includes new spots or mole with asymmetrical shape,



change or unusual color and size, irregular border that bleeds or itchy.

Risks Factors

- * Chronic Sun Exposure
- * Skin Cancer Family History
- * Medicines Controlling Immune System
- * Exposure to Arsenic (Toxic Metal)
- * Exposure to UV Light Therapy

Prevention

- Stay out of sun during mid-day (10am to 4pm)
- Wear protective clothing
- Wear BroadSpectrum Sunscreen year-round
- Never use Tanning Beds
- Check Skin often, report to doctor ASAP any changes

Treatment

- * Cryotherapy
- * Topical Therapy
- * Excision Therapy
- * Chemotherapy
- * Immunotherapy
- * Radiation Therapy



Basal Cell Carcinoma



Squamous Cell Carcinoma



Melanoma

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THE HYDRANGEA

A Kiwi Summer Favourite with a Surprising Past from Davis Funerals

If there is one plant that truly belongs in a New Zealand summer garden, it is the hydrangea. You see them everywhere from villas shaded by old pōhutukawa to bright coastal gardens where the sea breeze rolls straight across the lawn. They thrive here because our climate spoils them and because they love water. The clue is in the name. Hydro means water, and hydrangea roughly translates to water vessel.

Hydrangeas also carry a wonderfully rich history. They originated in Japan, where they were treasured for



centuries and often planted near temples. In Japanese folklore, a hydrangea was once offered as a heartfelt apology from an emperor to the woman he loved, which is probably why the flower became linked with gratitude and understanding. They appear often in old summer poems, described as soft clusters shifting colour in the rain.

From Japan, hydrangeas travelled to China, Korea, and eventually Europe in the 1700s, where plant collectors went wild for them. Victorians adored them for their showiness. Some even believed they symbolised heartfelt emotion, which feels fair since they wilt

“In joy or sadness, flowers are our constant friends”
– Okakura Kakuzo

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dramatically the moment they're thirsty.

Caring for them is simple because they are forgiving plants. Keep them well watered through the hotter months and they will reward you with generous blooms. Morning watering is best. They prefer a good soak at the roots rather than a quick sprinkle. They really do live up to the hydro in their name.

And now for the magic trick. If your hydrangeas in a vase start to look wrinkled or droopy, most people assume it is over. Not so. Fill your bathtub with cold water and lay the flowers in completely submerged. Leave them for a few hours. They behave almost like sea creatures returning to life, lifting their heads again as if nothing ever happened. They are one of the few cut flowers that can make such a dramatic comeback if given fresh cold water.

In the garden, they respond just as well to a long drink. A deep soak usually revives them after a hot afternoon. They may be dramatic, but they are loyal.

Hydrangeas suit Auckland beautifully. They love our climate, they bring generous colour, and they carry a history that stretches well beyond our fences and footpaths. Whether you grow them for nostalgia, shade, or sheer beauty, they bring a sense of abundance that feels perfectly at home here.

If you feel inspired to bring some into your own home, hydrangea season begins in the next few weeks.

We'll have beautiful bunches available through December and they make a thoughtful Christmas gift.

W: marketflowers.co.nz

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Haval Jolion

WEST CITY GWM HVAL

Raising the Standard in West Auckland

West City GWM Haval has become a force in the West Auckland automotive market by focusing on what buyers actually care about: capability, features and clear pricing.

This approach reflects the wider philosophy of the West City Auto Group, which has always positioned itself as part of the community rather than a detached retailer. That perspective shapes how customers are treated and the vehicles the group chooses to represent.

Feature Focused Design Across the Lineup

The rapid growth of GWM and Haval in New Zealand is driven by product substance. The **Haval Jolion Hybrid** and **Haval H6 Hybrid** are leading examples. Both deliver strong fuel efficiency with responsive hybrid performance, supported by advanced driver assistance systems that come standard. These include adaptive cruise control, intelligent braking support, lane keeping technology and smart collision avoidance that raise safety and confidence on every drive.

Interior quality is a standout for both hybrid models. Large touchscreens, high grade cabin materials, modern acoustics and clean dashboard architecture create a premium experience without the premium

sticker price. Practicality has also been executed well, with generous boot space, smart storage design and intuitive infotainment systems tailored to everyday use.

Capability for Real New Zealand Conditions

For buyers who need true strength, the **GWM Ute Cannon** and **Tank 300** remain key choices. They offer robust towing capability, selectable four wheel drive systems and off road engineering built specifically for New Zealand's terrain. They combine toughness with modern technology in a way many traditional competitors still fail to match.

Finance from **4.95%** across the range for a limited time is another quiet advantage. It is not pushed loudly because it does not need to be. The value built into the vehicles already speaks for itself.

A Commitment to Real Value

West City GWM Haval succeeds because it delivers what modern buyers expect: advanced features, strong performance and straightforward pricing. Supported by the West City Auto Group and its long standing commitment to the community, the dealership is not just selling vehicles. It is raising expectations for the automotive experience in West Auckland.



GWM Tank 300



GWM Cannon

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Northwest Country Business Association

In early February, I sat on the side of SH16 and watched a cafe owner with a shovel clearing silt from her own doorway. No high vis, no film crew, just a tired operator making sure she could open again tomorrow. That image is why I put my hand up to chair the North West Country Business Association.

Our vision is straightforward. A thriving, confident North West that people choose to visit, shop in, work in, and invest in. That means two priorities. First, emergency support. When floods, closures, or power issues hit, we will check on businesses, coordinate what is needed, and push for access and repairs fast. No one should feel like they are standing in the mud alone. Second, growth. We are a destination with wineries, makers, motorsport, coast, events, and independent retailers. We will market that story together so a free Saturday is reason enough to head North West.

This year we are also introducing an Ambassador Programme, informed by what has worked well for Business North Harbour. To be clear, this is a paid field role, not a volunteer scheme. Ambassadors will carry our story into the market, visit businesses that are not yet members, explain benefits, gather issues, and help with public relations by sharing good news and events. It is a structured membership growth and reputation programme. We are not calling for applicants yet, and we will share details directly with businesses when the rollout begins.

If you are not yet a member, you will hear more about the Ambassador rollout in due course. If you are



ANDREW HOWARD - NWCBA CHAIR

already a member, thank you for backing the wider region. Your participation helps lift the tide for all of us.

Tourism matters here as well. Visitor dollars flow through food, fuel, retail, accommodation, and experiences. When we lift our destination story, we are not just promoting a weekend trip, we are safeguarding weekday jobs. The more joined-up our events calendar, signage, and online presence, the more dwell time we create, and dwell time is spend.

Where does advocacy fit? Quietly and early. We will keep lines open with council, roading, agencies and Ministries so the right people hear from us before issues become front page. When something affects trading, access, or safety, we will present a practical brief, backed by data from members. Advocacy works best when it is specific and constructive.

Finally, a soft but firm promise. We are here to give a hand up, not a lecture. If you need help, ask. If you have capacity, offer. And where it matters, the Association will advocate for business needs with council and agencies. I am proud to serve and I am available.

CHRISTMAS SHOP DECORATING COMPETITION

Get those Christmas decorations out and get creative!

Let's show visitors that the North West Business Association is the best place for Christmas cheer.

Register and see more at
www.northwestcountry.co.nz



Competition opens
17 November 2025

Judging closes
19 December 2025

Results announced
22 December 2025

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DRAIN NINJAS:

Giving to community is just as important as great service

When it comes to drainage, Auckland locals know who to call — Drain Ninjas, the team that's not afraid to get their hands dirty. For nearly a decade, this homegrown business has been solving everything from blocked drains to major infrastructure projects, earning a reputation for reliability, professionalism, and heart.

Founded by Geoff Langham, Troy Gorst, and Sasha Langham, Drain Ninjas started as a modest "man and a van" operation. With Troy's practical expertise, Sasha's marketing savvy, and Geoff's business acumen, they spotted a gap in the market — and filled it with a team that now numbers 16 skilled "Ninjas."

From residential call-outs to large-scale commercial contracts, Drain Ninjas covers it all. Their fleet includes CCTV-equipped drain unblocking vans and five powerful vacuum trucks for everything from hydro excavation (non destructive digging), septic tank emptying, stormwater maintenance, grease traps and everything in between! Certified drainlayers and

apprentices also handle repairs and new installations throughout the region.

But Drain Ninjas isn't just about what they do — it's how they do it. "Communication is key," says Sasha. "We let customers know when we're arriving, if we're running late, and we follow up every job with clear notes, photos, and invoices. It's about respect and transparency."

That same care extends to their team. The company fosters a culture of inclusion, collaboration, and continual improvement — where every voice matters. "We're all cogs in the machine," says Sasha. "And every cog counts."

And their commitment doesn't stop at the job site. Drain Ninjas gives back, donating \$1 from every job in 2023 to local charities, supporting flood-affected families, and raising funds for causes like Gumboot Friday, Daffodil Day, and Pink Shirt Day — often with a splash of slime!

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THE COST OF GOING IT ALONE

Small business owners in our patch are tough. Sometimes too tough. We absorb shocks quietly, tell the world we are fine, then stare at the numbers at night and wonder how long we can keep pushing. White knuckling it through one more quarter is not a strategy. It is survival mode, and survival mode always sends you a bill.

The pattern is common. A business grows on the owner's personal effort and relationships. Then it hits a ceiling. The phone still rings. Customers still like you. Yet margins thin, debt creeps, and work gets heavier instead of easier. Owners reach for the usual answers. Work harder. Add another product. Say yes to everything. Run a sale. Borrow to get through. It rarely fixes the root issue. Many firms that stumble are not bad at what they sell, they have left the business model underneath it unattended.

Here are four actions that change the story.

First, visibility. See your numbers weekly, not yearly. Cash on hand, aged payables and receivables, lead flow, labour capacity, and margin by product. If you cannot see it, you cannot steer it. If your system cannot produce this view, get help to fix the system first.

Second, focus. Find the offer that pays the bills with the least complexity. Push that. Not the one you enjoy most, the one that drives contribution margin and repeatable demand. Protect your time for this core.

Third, pipeline. Do one simple, consistent thing every week to generate demand. For example, a customer callback list every Thursday, a monthly demo day, a quarterly partner email, or ten door knocks with an Association representative. Small, consistent prospecting beats occasional heroic bursts.



ANDREW HOWARD - NWCBA CHAIR

Fourth, ask early. Talk to your accountant before tax becomes arrears. Talk to a business advisor before burnout. Talk to the Association before you feel cornered. There is no prize for being the most exhausted operator in the North West.

Resilience is not just keeping the doors open. True resilience is building something that has value beyond you, so it can be sold, succeeded, or scaled. That takes process, simple reporting, and a team that can operate when you are not there. It also takes community. During disruptions, a single call tree can get generators where they are needed, share temporary premises, or coordinate deliveries when roads are messy. In better times, the same network helps a new retailer find a landlord who will work with them, or a manufacturer find a machinist at short notice. That is what the Association is for.

You do not have to go it alone. That is why we are here.

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