Big crowd to hear Reserve Bank Governor

A capacity crowd of around 140 West Coast business people attended last week’s luncheon with Reserve Bank of New Zealand Governor, Mr Graeme Wheeler. The luncheon at Shantytown was part of the Reserve Bank’s community engagement programme. Mr Wheeler discussed the New Zealand economy and outlook and how it relates to the West Coast.

DWC CEO Joseph Thomas says the Reserve Bank Governor was impressed with the turnout and his presentation was informative and well received.

Many in the audience were interested in seeing the forecast trends for interest rates and exchange rates as these influence business decisions and the commercial viability of businesses. Also of interest was the fact that China is now the major purchaser of products exported from New Zealand. Issues relating to the housing market also drew attention, in particular affordability for the “new” home owner, property values and personal debt/equity levels, he says.

Business coach comes up ‘trumps’

It is not often you can find a connection between American business magnate Donald Trump and the West Coast.

But for Kate Riley, co-owner of Riley Build and the West Coast Wine Company, a light-bulb moment happened while listening to Donald Trump’s tax advisor at a Sydney marketing seminar.

“Sitting there listening to him speak I realised all successful business people had professionals who guided and mentored them,” she says.

Back home Kate contacted Development West Coast who put her in touch with business coach Leah Paulden. Better still, through the Regional Business Partnership network she was eligible for a 50% subsidy for business coaching.

“I am his poorest, smallest client,” she laughs. But I wouldn’t be doing what I am doing without him — not because he tells me what to do but because he re- programs me how I think about things. He makes sure I always have our core goals in mind”,

Kate owns Riley Build with her husband. The building company won last year’s Service Excellence Award and was also submitted for the West Coast Leading Light Business Excellence Awards.

Coaches are experts in business and can help you clarify your goals and objectives, look at different strategies and how to achieve your objectives. They can help you to increase your profits and productivity, while also giving you a new perspective on your business.

... and I would recommend that any organisation aspiring to expand and grow. Sometimes it is really helpful to have a smart sounding board on your side,” she says.

Luminaries opportunities

A year ago most West Coasters had not heard of Eleanor Catton and her novel ‘The Luminaries’, yet the Man Booker prize winning novel could be the biggest economic development opportunity the West Coast has seen for some years.

To discuss the opportunities ‘The Luminaries’ could bring to the Coast, DWC is promoting a month of all interest of ‘The Luminaries’ and the prospective mini-series represents.

DWC’s Business Development Manager Helen Wilson and Advisory Body Member Jenn Bestwick recently travelled to Wellington to meet with industry representatives including Victoria University Press, the publishers of the novel.

“The feeling we got from these meetings was that there are long-term benefits to be gained from ‘The Luminaries’ for the West Coast and New Zealand from more than just the mini-series. Jenn Bestwick is on the board of Tourism New Zealand and she believes, if managed well, the book could have significant long-term economic benefits just like the Lord of the Rings and the Hobbit,” says Helen.

In October last year Eleanor Catton became the youngest person to win The Man Booker Prize for her goldrush novel set in Hokitika. The Man Booker Prize is considered one of the top literary awards in the world with several of the previous winners’ books having subsequently been adapted to film and television.

In July Eleanor Catton spoke at Hokitika’s Regent Theatre to a packed crowd. She was accompanied on that visit by UK producer Andrew Woodhead who has produced hit BBC shows such as Law & Order and Spooks. He is planning to film a mini-series of the book in New Zealand.

“This is an opportunity that no-one saw coming and consequently nobody has budgeted on, but it is far too good to miss. Already businesses in Hokitika are reporting an increase in visitor inquiries. The difference between Hokitika and Middle Earth is that we are real, both historically and geographically,” says Helen.

DWC is inviting anyone interested in discussing these opportunities to attend a meeting at Hokitika’s St John facility in Weld Street on Friday 6 June at 10am. It will be an opportunity to identify key local organisations, businesses and individuals who are interested in making the most of the opportunities ‘The Luminaries’ offers the Coast and to look at “where to from here”.

If you are interested in attending, please RSVP to Helen Wilson at helen@dwc.org.nz, 03 768 1067 or 027 252 0158 by 30 May 2014.