

Go west to find nature's bounty

Derek and Kwan Lim, co-ordinators of the West Auckland Newcomers Network, Glen Eden.



Kwan Lim, left, and husband Derek volunteer their time to the Newcomers Network, while running their own immigration advisory business. PHOTO: EVA CORLETT

What do you like best about West Auckland?

West Auckland has lots to offer. It is a region of natural wonders. One can walk through untouched native rainforest, experience the rugged beauty of the wild West Coast surf beaches and visit Auckland's oldest wine region.

How long have you lived here and where are you originally from?

We are originally from Singapore. We have been here for about seven years and love living in West Auckland, which has a multi-cultural community.

What do you like least and how can we fix it?

Kwan: The horrifically high rate of family violence in New Zealand. Police are called to around 200 domestic violence situations a day. One way to prevent family violence is education — start that with the young.

Where's the best place to buy dinner in the west?

Derek and Kwan Lim

LOOK WHO'S TALKING

"One can walk through untouched native rainforest, experience the rugged beauty of the wild West Coast surf beaches and visit Auckland's oldest wine region."

We seldom go out for dinner as we prefer home cooked meals. Occasionally we visit the HaLong Vietnamese Restaurant at New Lynn, which serves authentic and delicious Vietnamese food.

And who does the best fish 'n' chips?

Derek: I recommend Fish Stop in Glen Eden.

Who is the Kiwi you admire most - and why?

Derek: I admire top defence lawyers such as the late Sir Peter Williams and the late Greg King. Their full focus was on justice and making sure people had a fair hearing in court.

Kwan: Burt Munro. His motto,

'I'll never give up until I've had a good run' is inspiring.

If I was Auckland mayor, I'd ...

Derek: The motorways are becoming more choked up. I would look into increasing more lanes and maybe building more linkages to alleviate the road traffic. The current state of public transportation is dreadful. I would put more money and planning resources into this area.

When I have got a free few

hours, I like to ...

Kwan: Catch up on news, chat with my friends back home and, if I feel inspired enough, try a new recipe!

The spot in the west I'd like to recommend to tourists is/4

Lake Wainamu, near Bethells Beach. The lake is safe to swim in and is a great picnic spot. The giant sand dunes by the lake is great for sand surfing for both adults and kids.

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Migrants get friendly welcome

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The words immigration settlement are unlikely to conjure images of charades, pizza and pot-luck dinners.

But a Glen Eden couple are helping to transform some lives through running a social group for new migrants.

Derek and Kwan Lim are licensed immigration advisers who have voluntarily taken up the mantle of providing better social support services for newcomers.

The West Auckland Newcomers Network is the first of its kind in the west, and linked to more than 30 other newcomer networks across the country.

The networks organise an array of events to facilitate friendships.

"New migrants have a multitude of problems when they first arrive," Derek Lim says. It is just as important making new friends as it is finding work and settling into schools, the pair say.

The West Auckland branch has teamed up with Auckland Regional Migrant Services (ARMS).

ARMS specialises in providing information to newcomers and



Kwan Lim, left, and husband Derek Lim moved to New Zealand seven years ago and wish to alleviate some of the challenges new migrants face.

PHOTO: EVA CORLETT

assisting with education, training, and employment support.

But it wanted to establish a more holistic approach to migrant support.

ARMS spokesperson Chinwe Akomah says there needs to be information support as well as social.

"West Auckland Newcomers Network is a great fit for us," she says.

The Lim's moved to New Zealand seven years ago from Singapore via a stint in the United Kingdom.

They are both active volunteers. As well as running a free advice clinic at ARMS and assisting with immigration cases at the Waitemata Community Law Centre; they also offer free legal advice at Citizens Advice Bureau Legal Clinics, and sit on the Waitemata Ethnic Board.

They have a good understanding of the challenges when moving to a new country, they say.

"We are quite happy to share our knowledge and experiences with the newcomers and help them settle into the

community and ultimately New Zealand society," Derek Lim says.

New members to the network are increasing each week and come from a variety of backgrounds.

Akomah says they will hold events across the city, in order to broaden the scope of people migrants can meet.

■ The next event is a charades night on September 19, 6pm till 8pm at The Peace Place, 21/22 Emily Place, Auckland CBD. Go to newcomers.co.nz or arms-mrc.org.nz.

Perfection in parfait comes with practise

Spending her childhood pocket money on cookbooks no doubt contributed to an Avondale chef's parfait prowess.

For the second year running, Genevieve Knight's cooking techniques have secured her a finalist position in the NZ Food Awards. She won the Assurance Quality Food Safety category with her seafood purees in 2014.

Now, her chicken liver parfait is up for the award. Although she uses the same heating techniques for both products, the chicken liver parfait is harder to perfect.

"In Europe, the duck liver parfait is far more stable; chicken liver is much harder," she says. Knight has paired up with fourth-year Massey student Sian Duffy to perfect their techniques.

Knight's business, called Genevieve's, began with artisan pate and now stocks a selection of products in 60 stores nationwide.

She would like to develop her product to export level but will need to push through licensing and find an "amazing kitchen" to do it.

The NZ Food Awards will be announced at a gala dinner at the Auckland Town Hall on September 17.

Go to foodawards.co.nz for more information.

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