

# TE WAHA NUI

FREE

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PHOTO: KATE FISHER

DZIAH Dance Crew, pictured on stage at the AUT Maori Expo, will appear at the Cult Couture Fashion Showcase at the Telstraclear Pacific Events Centre on October 7. Placed eighth in the World Hip Hop Championships in the United

States last month, the group's next big gig is their *Lost Boys* production at the Genesis Theatre in Manukau on November 19. For more great photos see *Darkness and Light* — page 24

## Sorry, nice try but no cigar

by Miles Erwin

The battle for the wooden spoon is too close to call.

Mel Whaanga, Northland candidate for the Direct Democracy Party, is currently the lowest polling candidate across the country, gaining only eight votes.

But close behind is the New Zealand Republican Party's Bevan Berg, who won nine votes in Maungakiekie.

A two-vote swing to Whaanga on the special votes would put him second to last out of 525 electorate candidates and put an end to jokes at his expense.

"I had my family going, 'Hey Dad there are eight people alive who got the names mixed up or thought you were someone else,'" says Whaanga.

"Eight people out of four million — what sort of ratio is that?"

Berg is disappointed in the result but is happy he didn't come last on election night.

"The specials aren't in yet — I might make double digits," jokes Berg.

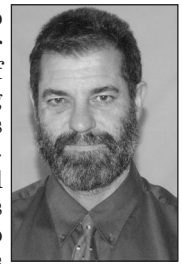
Whaanga did not set foot in his electorate and is unsure what the issues are.



Mel Whaanga

Living in Manukau and enrolled in Port Waikato, he could not even vote for himself.

A lawyer who has worked for the Union of Fathers, Berg thinks his votes came from people he has helped.



Bevan Berg

Whaanga has no idea who voted for him as he has no family or friends in Northland.

Neither candidate has been put off by the poor results and will run for office again.

"When you peel away the surface and look into it I do have some serious concerns with the way the country is moving," says Whaanga.

### ELECTION 2005 SPECIAL

# Personal touch pays off

by Britton Broun

The return of direct campaigning was a major factor in this year's election despite millions of dollars being spent on TV, radio and print advertising.

Political commentator Chris Trotter says candidates who used telephone polling, door-knocking and people on street corners got results, following a trend which seems to be growing internationally.

"It was just the old-fashioned way of getting people interested and getting them to the polling booths," he says.

Former Maori Party campaign strategist Matt McCarten says the face-to-face method worked well for that party.

Since the party began in the aftermath of the hikoi last year it has amassed 21,000 members.

McCarten says up to 3000 members campaigned country wide.

New Maori Party MPs Dr Pita Sharples and Hone Harawira had more than 500 people working in their electorates.

"If you look at their campaigns, it's very much door-knocking and winning them over one on one," he says.

McCarten says the direct campaigning helped lift Maori voter turnout from 58 per cent last election to around 67 per cent.

Trotter says successful campaigns by Rodney Hide in Epsom, Jonathan Coleman in Northcote and Chris Tremain in Napier — a seat held by Labour since 1951 — were also based on direct approaches to the voters.

"Rodney Hide had a huge number of people working that electorate from top to bottom," he says.

"Coleman was out months ago door-knocking, and stomping through that electorate, letting people know who he was.

"Tremain had been wearing

out shoe leather, meeting thousands of people over an 18-month period. This is the way you get elected."

Trotter, editor of *Political Review*, says in the last US presidential election campaign managers rediscovered the old methods — that to get votes you need people on the ground.

"In America huge numbers of people on both sides mobilised to get out the vote. You can't just do it by print media or radio advertising, or even by direct mail."

He says National and Labour put a lot of effort into mobilising their party voters.

National undertook a telephone and letter-box campaign, but added the personal touch this election with the "Brash Brigade".

The brigade's Auckland organiser, Margaret Voyce, says the purpose was to push the party vote by meeting voters and creating a positive image of the

National Party on the street.

This group of volunteers travelled around Auckland on a bus with MPs and candidates, and went to the rugby, opera and the Homeshow at Auckland Showgrounds, Greenlane.

"We needed more than just an advert or Don Brash on TV," she says. "We wanted to talk to and engage people. Personally I think that's been missing from politics for a long time."

Labour used its links with trade unions as a direct avenue to voters, but in the Mangere electorate MP Taito Philip Field spent most of his time campaigning in the community.

People responded better to personal contact, and language barriers made phone campaigns difficult in this largely Pacific electorate.

This seems to have worked. The Labour MP won by a majority of 13,680 — the biggest majority in the country.

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