

# TE WAHA NUI

"The Big Mouth" — an AUT journalism publication No 3, August 23, 2004



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# Wake up Auckland!

## Te Waha Nui poll shows too many voters are ignorant about upcoming elections

Staff reporters

One in three Aucklanders are unaware they can vote for a new mayor and council in October.

A street survey of 234 eligible voters was conducted by AUT communication studies students prior to Dick Hubbard entering the race.

It found 33% didn't know about the upcoming local body elections.

And that's not all they didn't know. Mayoral candidate Bruce Hucker has a serious problem with name-recognition.

Only 44 (19%) people surveyed could name him as a candidate for mayor.

In contrast, 135 (58%) people knew Christine Fletcher was in the mayoralty race.

Banks had a higher profile among the respondents — 75% could name him as the mayor.

But the introduction of a new high-profile name in the race could affect the balance.

Hubbard's years in the cereal business mean his face and name are

familiar to Aucklanders — if only for his association with their breakfast food.

But whether or not this leads to an increase in the number of people who vote remains to be seen.

In the 2001 Auckland City election, only 43% of registered voters bothered to vote.

Dale Ofsoske, electoral officer for Auckland City, says voter apathy is a major concern.

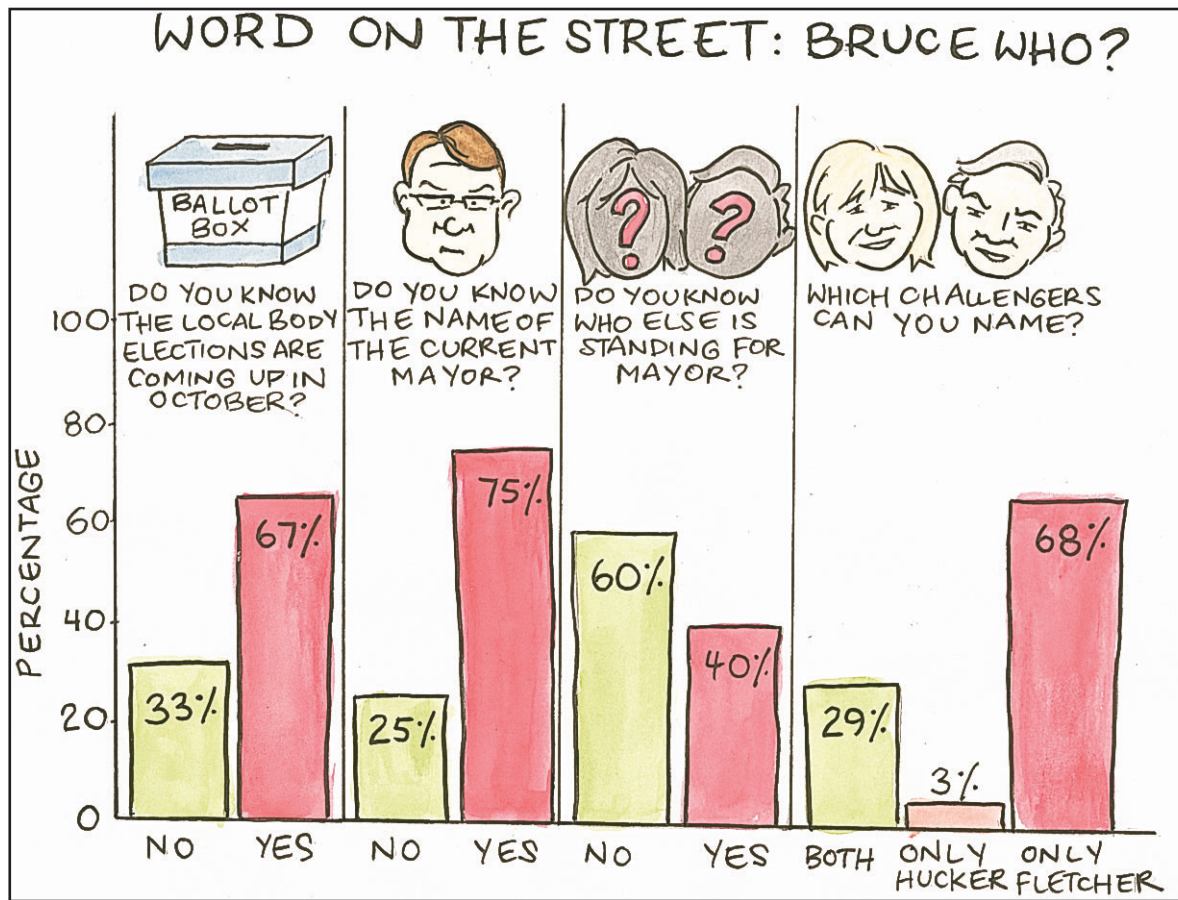
"Our main concern is how to get people to participate in the democratic process.

"What we don't want is for people to get their voting documents and just think 'I'm too confused, I don't know what it means — I'll just throw it out'."

Remuera resident Diana Hansen says she isn't too sure if she'll vote in the local elections, but she always votes in central government elections.

"I see it as having more of an impact," says Hansen.

She wants to see more accountability across the board and says she would vote in the local body elections



this time, "if there was an issue that really bugged me".

Good media coverage like write-ups in the local newspaper helps, she says.

Other survey respondents had more colourful ways to describe the mayor — some using terms such as "dickhead Banks" and "redneck Banks".

But Alan Munro is torn. "John Banks — he's a loudmouth, but he gets things done," he says.

Election coverage — page 8

## Amnesty slams Zaoui delays

by Edward Gay

Amnesty International's local director is condemning the delay in justice over the case of detained Algerian politician Ahmed Zaoui.

Ced Simpson says the length of Zaoui's imprisonment — 20 months without charge — is disturbing.

"Justice deferred is justice denied," he says.

"This government has claimed that they've achieved a world-leading human rights environment, but they have to maintain that."

Simpson sees New Zealand as a past leader in human rights.

It has been more than a year since the Refugee Status Appeals Authority declared Zaoui to be a refugee.

Appeal campaign — page 2



## Comics aren't just for the boys

Melissa Steiner and Tui Gordon want to shake up the central Auckland comic book scene. *Goodbye Wonderwoman* — page 10

## Hubbard adds snap, crackle and pop

Muesli magnate Dick Hubbard's surprise entry into the Auckland mayoralty race raises the question of where his votes will come from.

"I'm here to get as many votes as I can and have no idea which candidates they will come from," says the founder of Hubbard Foods Ltd.

Incumbent mayor John Banks welcomes the new contender.

"It will add some snap, crackle and pop into the campaign — and that's good."

But he is unsure about who will vote for Hubbard.

"I have no idea where the support for him will come from," says Banks.

Candidate Bruce Hucker says Hubbard's entry will make the race more interesting.

"It will make it even closer than it might have been."

He says that more people will get involved and vote.

Dr Wayne Hope, senior lecturer in communications at AUT, says the move is a positive one for Banks.

"It's good for the Hubbard brand but it makes it easier for John Banks to win."

Hubbard is pleased with the reaction to his announcement.

"The feedback has been overwhelming so far — very humbling."

He says his style of leadership is different because he will listen to the people.

Mayoral candidate Christine Fletcher, who lost to John Banks at the last election, was not available for comment.

