

A feast of fab furniture

PAULA Lynch hears it a lot – people go into her Paraparaumu store, Paula's Furniture and Beds, and are "blown away" by the range of furniture, beds and furnishings on display.

"Lots of Wellington people say 'Wow, why haven't you advertised this in Wellington, it's amazing'."

"Our range is huge, and quite unique," Mrs Lynch owns two other stores, a Paula's in Levin and a Beds R Us in Lower Hutt. All stores incorporate Beds R Us, but the Levin and Paraparaumu branches include so much more than beds, Mrs Lynch says.

The Paraparaumu shop on Epiha St is huge with 2000 square metres of space and it has a real "wow factor", she says. "It's bigger than anywhere else in Wellington, not only in terms of the range of things we have such as home decor and giftware, but it is all displayed as if it was set up in a home."

"So people can see what their lounge suite would like, plus there's all the home decor pieces around it such as rugs and wall art."

Mrs Lynch says they stock plenty of big name brands such as La-Z-Boy and Do-mani, and a great range of beds. They



Decor galore: Paula Lynch from Paula's Furniture and Beds with some of the huge range of furnishings and decor.

currently sell some Danske Mobler furniture such as the Stressless chairs but will expand the line in a major way with a big launch within a couple of months.

Mrs Lynch says this range of things sets the store apart, but there are many other qualities as well.

"It's a really relaxing customer shopping experience at our store."

"Since we're locally owned and operated we don't have the hard sell like in some of the big chains."

"We have our own in-house delivery team and all our staff are well trained with our products."

Mrs Lynch says a new service on offer is a design service from

Heather Thorley of Colour Options. If people want to get a visualisation of what some furniture or decor would look like in their home, Colour Options will give them a good idea so they can pick exactly the right look.

Paula's Furniture is also big on kids, having a great range of children's furniture.

"We have a whole floor dedicated to children's furniture which is ideal for families."

"We have a children's play area which is somewhere they can go and play."

Mrs Lynch and husband Paul have five young children, so she makes plenty of use of that area herself.

The stores are at 25 Epiha St, Paraparaumu, 73-181 Oxford St, Levin and the Harvey Norman Centre in Lower Hutt.

■ For more information go to: paulas.co.nz

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John Psathas: Tarantismo

Tchaikovsky: Piano Trio in A Minor

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Talented trio to entertain

THE WAIKANA E Music Society's concert this Sunday introduces the Te Kōkī Trio to Kapiti music fans.

Formed in 2012, the trio is made up of three members of the staff from the New Zealand School of Music where they are artists-in-residence – Martin Riseley (violin), Inbal Megiddo (cello) and Jian Liu (piano). (Te Kōkī means "dawn chorus" and is the Maori name of the school.)

Chinese-American pianist Jian Liu is a sought-after solo pianist, chamber musician and educator, who has been honoured in several international competitions. He impressed his Waikanae audience last year with an electrifying solo performance when he stood in for Piers Lane at 24 hours' notice.

Israeli/American cellist Inbal Megiddo has received many awards and international accolades and brings to her performances years of experience under the influence of master teachers.

New Zealand-born violinist Martin Riseley is head of strings and associate director of performance at the school. He is a graduate of the Juilliard School of Music, holding a master of music degree and a doctorate of musical arts.

Musical treat: The Te Kōkī Trio, from left, Martin Riseley (violin), Inbal Megiddo (cello) and Jian Liu (piano).

The trio's programme includes Beethoven's well-known *Ghost Trio* and the *Tchaikovsky Trio*.

Tarantismo, a brief piece by New Zealand composer John Psathas will provide an interesting contrast.

The concert is in the Waikanae Memorial Hall and starts at 2.30pm. There will be door sales or tickets can be purchased at Waikanae New World, Moby Dickens Books in Paraparaumu Beach or at Lush Design Gallery in Raumati.

■ For information go to: waikanaemusic.org

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WORLD

El presidente: Guards of honour stand beside the mausoleum of late president Hugo Chavez to mark three months after his death in Caracas. In that time, Venezuela has introduced food rationing in its most populous state.

Food rations start as economy crumbles

VENEZUELA

VENEZUELA has the largest proven oil reserves in the world and was once the source of much of Britain's meat imports, but its crumbling economy has now led to food rationing in its most populous state.

To counter shortages of the most basic goods, the government of the far-western state of Zulia, home to 3.7 million people, has introduced strict controls on the purchase of 20 staples. Price controls will be slapped on items such as toilet paper and chicken, as the state-controlled economy shrinks and supermarket shelves are frequently bare.

Last month the government ordered an emergency purchase of 40 million toilet rolls after complaints that shoppers could find none.

The Roman Catholic Church has said that it will have to restrict mass because of a lack of communion wine and flour for the Eucharist.

The government of the Socialist president Nicolas Maduro, who narrowly won April's elections, denied that the

measure amounted to food rationing, and said it was aimed at curbing smuggling of subsidised goods from Zulia into its neighbour Colombia. Blagdimir Labrador, a senior official in Zulia, said that the state would start issuing smart cards next week that will allow a limited purchase of staples such as rice, flour, cooking oil, sugar and powdered milk.

The system would apply to 65 supermarkets in two cities and would ensure that "the same person can't go to a different store on the same day and purchase the same product".

Maduro has been trying to breathe life into a struggling economy that is almost entirely dependent on oil exports, while fending off challenges to his legitimacy from the opposition, which claims it won the election.

The government was at pains to stress that the measure was not nationwide.

"This is only in Zulia state and it is not rationing," said Raimundo Urrechaga, a spokesman for the Information Ministry. "It is focused only on Zulia, to control contraband."

Many economists have blamed constant shortages on the state's existing price controls, a move aimed at ensuring that the poor can afford staples.

But the artificially low cost of basics, including petrol, has also led to rampant smuggling to neighbouring countries. Many storekeepers ignore the price controls and hoard goods to sell at higher prices in times of scarcity. Economists predict that the oil-dependent economy is contracting and will be in recession this year.

Inflation reached almost 30 per cent in April and many people worry about how much they will pay for everyday goods, or even whether they will be available at all.

Meanwhile, Venezuela said yesterday that it had deported an independent American film-maker arrested after April's elections for spying.

Timothy Tracy, 35, had been working on a film about the divisions in Venezuelan society when he was accused of inciting opposition members to violent protests against Maduro's victory.

Mau Mau-era abuse victims win payout

BRITAIN/KENYA

THE British Government has agreed to pay nearly £14 million (NZ\$27.2m) in compensation to Kenyans tortured during the Mau Mau uprising against British colonial rule in the 1950s.

William Hague, the Foreign Secretary, is expected to make a statement in the House of Commons today expressing "sincere regret" over the mistreatment of detainees during the violent rebellion against British rule in Kenya.

The government will pay a total of £13.9m to compensate about 5200 Kenyans, and finance the building of a permanent memorial in Kenya to the victims of torture during the Mau Mau insurgency.

More than 100,000 Kenyans were detained in British-run camps, where many were subjected to systematic mistreatment, including beatings, torture, rape and castration.

The landmark settlement marks the end of a long legal battle in which the government repeatedly denied liability for colonial-era abuses in Kenya.

Lawyers for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office unsuccessfully argued that legal responsibility for what happened under the colonial government had been inherited by the government of Kenya when the country gained its independence in 1963.

In 2009, four elderly Kenyans filed a suit at the High Court, claiming to have suffered brutal abuse in the camps. Before the case opened, *The Times* revealed the existence of a secret Foreign Office archive at Hanslope Park, Buckinghamshire, containing documents removed from Kenya and other former colonies.

Detained: A captured Mau Mau fighter stares from behind the wire of a British prison camp in Kenya.

David Anderson, Professor of African history at Warwick University, told the court that the secret archive contained "a highly significant amount of new information" about human rights abuses during the Mau Mau uprising, and revealed how British officials at the highest levels sought to cover up what was happening and protect British officers from prosecution.

Negotiations over a financial settlement began last October after the High Court ruled that there was ample evidence to allow the case to proceed.

The so-called Kenya Emergency erupted in 1952, when Mau Mau insurgents launched a bloody, eight-year rebellion against colonial rule, killing more than 1600 people, including 32 white settlers.

Thousands of Kenyans were detained without trial on suspicion of being Mau Mau supporters, and many suffered horrific abuse.

Environment in perilous state – report

CHINA

MORE than three quarters of China's cities lack "safe" air, while the countryside is facing an increasingly "grim" environmental crisis, according to the environment ministry's annual report.

The ministry laid bare the challenges facing new president Xi Jinping as he seeks to build what the incoming leadership has dubbed a "beautiful China".

Just 27 of the 113 largest Chinese cities enjoyed "safe" air last year while nearly a third of China's most important rivers were polluted or severely polluted. Government officials also found that 60 per cent of ground water was of "bad" or "extremely bad" quality.

The report's authors described an even bleaker situation in rural China, where it admitted "increasing pressure from mining" and "heavy pollution from livestock farming" was wreaking havoc.

"Rural environmental problems have become increasingly prominent," they said. "As industrialisation, urbanisation and agricultural modernisation continues, the rural environment is in a grim situation."

The report concluded that China was a long way from building what the Communist Party has dubbed an "ecological civilisation" and said overall environmental trends "remained extremely serious".

The report skirted over the issue of soil pollution, which has become one of China's most controversial environmental topics. Estimates have suggested that up to 10 per cent of Chinese farmland could be contaminated with toxins.

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