

# keeping it clean

This good keen bloke has a long-held passion for keeping the country litter-free.

You can call Barry Lucinsky whatever you like – just as long as it isn't a tree hugger!

The 75-year-old from Te Horo, north of Wellington, may have been responsible for single-handedly breathing life back into the Keep New Zealand Beautiful (KNZB) organisation, but call him a lentil-munching, tree-hugging hippy at your peril.

"My focus is more on living harmoniously with nature and the environment," laughs the self-confessed Kiwi bloke.

"I come from a rural background and I think you'd be hard pressed to find someone from the country who doesn't care about the land."

KNZB is a not-for-profit organisation that operates as a charitable trust to promote litter abatement, waste reduction, and town and city beautification. It was established under the umbrella of the New Zealand Litter Act 1979. However, it wasn't until 2000 that Barry was invited to get involved.

Unfortunately, his arrival also coincided with the last gasp of the organisation. "Membership had dropped and they were going to disband it. But I thought the work they did was too important to let go."

So Barry revived KNZB, initially funding it himself and working as the sole employee. "I was the CEO, GM, event manager, you name it," he jokes.

Not one to shy away from hard yakka, Barry helped to turn the organisation's fortunes around, including increasing its corporate support base from one to around 35, and attracting record attendance numbers at the annual Clean Up New Zealand Week.

"The first year we had about 400,000 people and at the last week, around 1.3 million people got involved, which is fantastic. I think it's a sign that more and more people are taking pride in where they live. After all, who wants to live in a pig sty?"

But when he turned 75, the father of three chucked it in, saying it was time to hand over the reins to new blood.

Ask him what his legacy is, and Barry will point to a combination of leadership and tenacity. "It's probably the reason they asked me to

get involved in KNZB in the first place – I have the sort of personality that if I set my mind to something, then I'll do it. I also felt that I offered strong leadership, and I'd like to think that had something to do with the strong, vibrant organisation that KNZB is today."

It's been a long and winding road for the Foxton-born Barry, whose career has been more chequered than a dartboard. He left school at 15 to milk cows and, in his lifetime, has been a roading contractor, fencer, tomato grower, school bus driver, concrete supplier, flower grower and breeder of 3000 ferrets.

But no matter how Barry earned a living, his passion for the environment has always been to the fore and in the 1970s he was awarded an Energy and Conservation Award for an innovative roading basecoat he made from waste material.

Since retiring from KNZB, Barry has been doing anything but sitting idly by. He currently heads up four companies, including a business that removes graffiti for OnTrak, a billboard company, and his most recent venture, environmentally friendly toilets.

Barry's Silica Glass Crushers business, meanwhile, crushes bottles for use on roading surfaces, something he's been involved with for some time. The day we meet, he had just returned from towing his crusher down to Gore where he estimates he crushed around 600 tonnes of glass.

Is it any coincidence that most of his businesses have a strong environmental focus? "I'm totally committed to the idea of keeping this beautiful country of ours in a pristine state. Like many Kiwis, my ancestors came from somewhere else [Czechoslovakia] and this country has been good to me and my children and their children. Don't we owe it to be good back to the country?"

So does he have any advice on how to keep New Zealand beautiful?

"I try not to get too fanatical with people, because otherwise they think you're a nutter and they won't listen to you! I'd suggest leading by example, so not chucking stuff out of the car window and generally having some respect and pride for where you live. That's a pretty powerful force to be reckoned with..." [H](#)

## Less litter

Keep New Zealand Beautiful (KNZB) is a non-profit organisation operating as a charitable trust to promote litter abatement, waste reduction and town and city beautification.

KNZB delivers programs through local, school and national litter programs and cleanup activities. Work is done by volunteers, schools, community groups, local bodies, local councils, businesses and industrial organisations. Projects are co-ordinated by programme sites (eg Keep Porirua Beautiful) to keep the towns and cities, streets and parks, lakes, coastal and marine locations beautiful and litter-free.

Some of its more intriguing initiatives are the annual Best Loo competition and the launch of a Cigarette Butt Litter Toolkit.

There are Keep Your Town (or City) Beautiful organisations near each community. KNZB has roles for all types of members and it's highly likely there's an active branch not far away. A list of members and more information is available on the website, [www.knzb.org.nz](http://www.knzb.org.nz).

Australia hosts a similar organisation – Keep Australia Beautiful – see [www.kab.org.au](http://www.kab.org.au).

 Resene Parachute

 Resene X Factor

**Right** Barry Lucinsky... a fine legacy for a cleaner New Zealand.

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