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□ ABOVE: Festival director Leo Koziol with Kiwi film-maker Katie Wolfe, who said Wairoa's film festival was one of "New Zealand's best-kept secrets".
 □ LEFT: Wairoa Maori Film Festival chairperson Huia Koziol, left, is interviewed by Maori Television after the festival's official powhiri. Opening night was a major hit with a packed hall at Taihoa Marae for Taika Waititi's film Boy.

Marae film screenings packs 'em in

A STORY about a boy from the East Coast was the big winner at the fifth Wairoa Maori Film Festival taking out the major festival prize as well as getting Wairoa punters back to the movies.
 Taika Waititi's box office smash hit Boy played to a packed wharekai (dining hall) at Taihoa Marae last Thursday night and also entertained a

large crowd in the wharenui (meeting house) of Kahungunu Marae on Sunday.
 Since the Gaiety Cinema closed in 2009, the festival screenings of Boy provided the only opportunity for the Wairoa community to watch the film on big-screen locally.
 It also provided a chance for locals to see Wairoa actor Pana Hema-Taylor

in Boy, who starred alongside Waititi as one of the Crazy Horses.
 Another actor with local connections, Tuhohe Isaac, won the award for best male actor in a short film for his performance in Day Trip.
 Actor James Rolleston, who played the role of Boy also picked up the best male actor award for a feature film.
 Festival director Leo Koziol said he

was ecstatic to see a large turnout from the Wairoa community at the screenings of Boy.
 "It was bursting at the seams. There was a great energy," he said.
 "Both screenings were fundraisers for each marae, which was one way of giving back to the community.
 "I think screening films on the marae is one of the special things about

the festival. There's a warmth there and also the hospitality of the home people."
 It was a positive turnaround from the community after the festival was criticised by Wairoa district councillors earlier in the year for not getting "bums-on-seats" and having a lack of community involvement in recent years.
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Mighty mad about stolen Mustang

THE man whose 1967 red Ford Mustang was stolen is determined in his efforts to get it back.
 Reg Williams is so furious his beloved Mustang was stolen that he has left town and has his Churchill Avenue home on the market.
 In the early hours of Sunday, May 23, Mr Williams' home was burgled and his distinctive and treasured classic red Ford Mustang worth around \$60,000 taken.
 Burglars also took an 8hp Mercury outboard motor, a blue generator, a Honda trail bike, \$4000 worth of mechanical parts, a laptop computer, a chiller truck and cooking implements.
 Mr Williams said the Mustang was towed away by his chiller truck which the thieves had filled with the other items.
 As the thieves were making their getaway, the truck got stuck in mud and they swapped vehicles throwing away the chiller truck key.
 The chiller truck was recovered in a damaged condition.
 Mr Williams thinks the



burglars were also looking for money as they ripped open couches and searched the roof cavity of his house.
 He said he had a fair idea who had stolen his property and was determined to get it back.
 Mr Williams, a long haul truck driver, has been off work searching for his car and is not giving in until he has got it back.
 "I've worked hard all my life to get this car.
 "It's heart-wrenching for someone to take something you've worked hard for all your life, from right under your nose.
 "I don't want any repercussions but I want my Mustang back and I will not stop until I get it."
 Mr Williams said if he recovers the other items it would be a bonus, but he is most concerned to get his Mustang back.
 With a suspicion the burglary

was gang-related Mr Williams has been in contact with leaders of different gangs in an attempt to find out more.
 "I will track down the people responsible," he vowed.
 He has heard the Mustang had been seen near Gisborne at Whatatutu and Patutahi, but he has also been led to believe it is still in the Wairoa district.
 Wairoa Police senior sergeant Tony Bates said he cannot stop Mr Williams from making his own inquiries but urges him to take care when doing so.
 "People are sometimes more willing to come forward to the complainant but sometimes they can go too far — it's a fine line Mr Williams is treading.
 "He will have to be careful he doesn't get into trouble," he said.
 As a result of the invasion and theft of his precious belongings Mr Williams, who was born in Mahia, has decided to move out of Wairoa.
 "It's not a bad town, but a few are ruining it for the rest of us.
 "In many situations the hands

of the police are tied.
 "If I stay, I might do something I will regret," he said.
 Mr Williams urges anyone who knows anything about the

whereabouts of his 1967 red Ford Mustang to contact him on 027 238 8996.
 A reward for the vehicle's return is being offered.

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