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The REPORTER
Helping Bonaire Grow Responsibly

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Since 1994

**The Best Thing About
Cruise Ship Days:
The Craft Market**
Page 10

WEB Prices Too High?
Page 4



Julian Mercera-Piar shows off her handmade dolls and other crafts at the Cruise Ship Market.

Dutch civil servants want to push back the target date for the restructuring the Netherlands Antilles to December 2010. The current target date is December 15, 2008, but has been under political pressure since late 2007 because some believe the constitutional change process is not moving fast enough, particularly in St. Maarten and Curaçao. Constitutional Affairs Minister Roland Duncan told *The St. Martin Daily Herald* newspaper that pushing the target date back by two years would be unacceptable but stressed that there was no reason for panic at this moment because a final decision had not been taken as yet.



▶ The two passengers of the US registered Turbine Legend small plane that landed unexpectedly at Flamingo Airport were arrested by police on suspicion of drug smuggling. The police, acting on a tip, knew their identity because they were processed by the Immigration officers at the airport. The pilot, a 37-year old Canadian, A.T., and the 30-year-old woman who accompanied him on this trip were arrested in a hotel in Playa Pariba.

The Public Prosecutor had attached the aircraft that took off from Isla Margarita. Nothing was found on the two persons arrested. They remain in custody for further investigation. Traces of drugs were reportedly discovered aboard the aircraft.

▶ The increased checks on Dutch Antilles Express (DAE) Airlines operations was relaxed last Tuesday. The Civil Aviation Department had an inspector in the DAE hangar the past four days, checking every airplane before it could take off. Transport Minister Maurice Adriaens said the action was taken following reports that a DAE airplane twice landed with only one engine oper-

ating.
▶ Curaçao's Insel air announced they have added a second 19-passenger Embraer EMB-110 Bandeirante to their fleet to serve its Venezuela and Bonaire destinations. The plane was ferried from Rarotonga, in the Pacific's Cook Islands by two experienced pilots, 67 and 76 years old.

▶ Following years of neglect the lighthouses in Bonaire and Curaçao will get repaired. Repair started at Westpunt (West Point) in Curaçao. The lighthouse got a new light and solar panel. Repair of the lighthouses of Oostpunt (East Point) and Klein Curaçao will start later this week. Fixing Bonaire's lights, including Klein Bonaire, are to follow soon. Transport Minister Maurice Adriaens, who is responsible for marine navigation in the Netherlands Antilles, promised to keep up the maintenance which has been neglected for about 10 years. Radio Holland will do the work on the six lighthouses in Curaçao and Bonaire.

▶ Immigrants are far less likely than the average US-born citizen to commit crime in California according to a report issued late on Monday. People born outside the US make up about 35% of California's adult population but account for only about 17% of the adult prison population, the report by the Public Policy Institute of California showed. According to the report's authors the findings suggest that long-standing fears of immigration as a threat to public safety are unjustified. The report also noted that US-born adult men are incarcerated at a rate more than 2 1/2 times greater than that of foreign-born men. **An informal review of court reports in Antillean newspapers also indicates that on Bonaire, with a similar proportion of immigrants to native born people, the newcomers are less likely than locals to be in prison.**

▶ The Dutch-language *Amigoe* newspaper reported that Canada

▶ The population of Bonaire grew by 723 people last year. There were 142 births and 1,303 people reported to the Census Office as newcomers. On the other hand, there were 77 deaths and 645 people who emigrated. Following a long decline, this is the fourth year in a row that the population has grown.



There are currently **59 nationalities** registered at the Census Office, *Bevolking*. The registers were also purged last year. According to George Mensché, head of the Census Office, the purging is an intensive process. "We started in September of last year and will finish this year." Some 2,000 persons are registered who perhaps are not really living in Bonaire. Following the last census enumeration there was a disparity of over 2,000 persons between the count and the records at *Bevolking*.

Mr. Mensché continued, "We have categorized them in three groups: persons whose residence permits are not in order (409) and persons who are registered in the Netherlands as well as in Bonaire (1,048). The third group is of individual cases reported to the Census Office (414)."

The Office tried to reach these people via the media, letters and personal visits. **A total of 486 persons were deleted from the register** and the number of Bonaire's inhabitants was corrected to **14,243**.

Mensché warns that the purging process will be done differently in the future. Everybody is therefore asked, in case of a move, to register the new address within five days. Persons who are planning to emigrate must de-register 10 days before departure. In the future, there will be sanctions if these rules are not followed.

Post International Ltd. (CPIL) leaves behind a debt-free Nieuwe Post and will pay about NAf 13 million in outstanding concession fees and a penalty for prematurely ending its 20-year long concession to operate the Antilles Post Office. The transfer of shares by Canada Post to the Country Netherlands Antilles took place on March 1st.

With this, the postal services on all the five islands are again in the hands of the government. The Post Office employs 245 persons. Before the privatization and the transfer to CPIL by May 2003, the National Government had to subsidize the postal service NAf 7 million every year. The privatized post office was slightly profitable even though the traditional mail traffic dropped due to internet and e-mail.

▶ In contrast to its past offering, the Bank of the Netherlands Antilles (BNA) received a record

amount of subscriptions on the issue of the first bond loan of the National Government in 2008. On the 10-year loan at 7.5%, the Bank received almost NAf211.4 million in subscriptions.

Finance Minister Ersilia de Lannooy is pleased with the increased interest. She observed that there is a lot of confidence in the economy due to the debt takeover by the Netherlands. But there is more to consider, explained de Lannooy. There are the agreements with the Netherlands; the economy is picking up; **and the 7.5% interest rate (effective return is 7.2%) on the 10-year bonds is relatively high**, considering the anticipation that the general interest is going to drop considerably in the coming years.

▶ The tax treaty policy for the Netherlands Antilles will focus this year more on treaties to avoid double taxation (Double

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Underwater Heritage Sculpture Unique In The Caribbean

On Sunday, February 24th, a unique snorkeling and diving attraction was set in place underwater off Chachacha Beach.

An underwater statue depicting traditional Bonaire food preparation was gently placed in about 25 feet of water by a dive team. It was made possible by a grant from UNESCO and the dedication of the BONAI youth group.

As part of their project of underwater archaeology the high school students of BONAI (Bonaire Archaeological Institute) came up with the idea to create an exhibit bridging Bonaire's traditional land-based culture with its more recent underwater activities. The statue, *Palu di Lele i Wea di Funchi*, which illustrates the old tradition of cooking in Bonaire, is expected to become a popular destination for locals and tourists alike. It also will serve as an attraction to sea creatures by providing a substrate for coral growth.

The BONAI group worked on raising funds (UNESCO) for this idea and engaged local artist Ady Figaroa to produce it.

The project was led by Jackie Bernabela of the Department of Culture assisted by Dr. Jay Haviser, the founder of the BONAI program, with the cooperation and involvement of many on Bonaire including:

Organizations: Government of

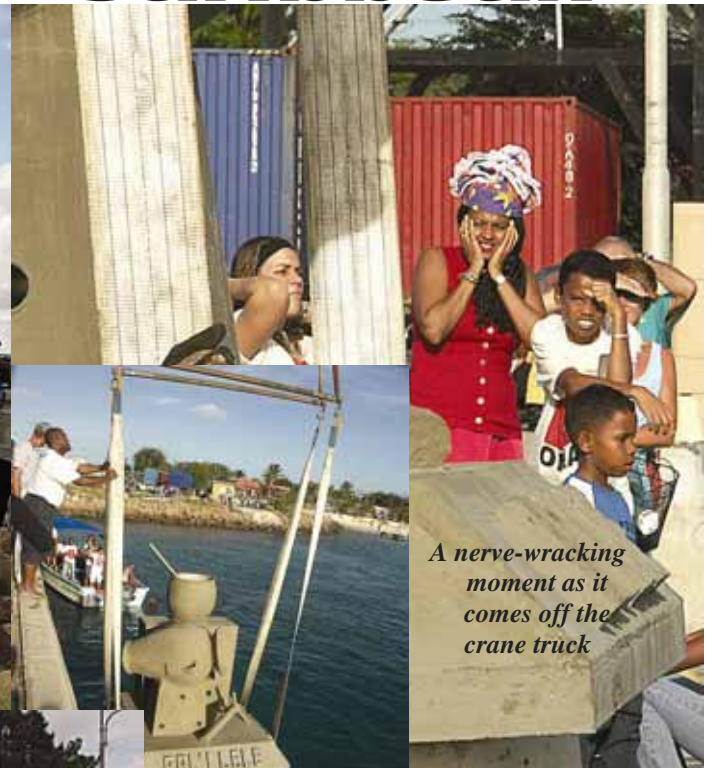
Bonaire (former Dep. Geraldine Dammers, Dep. Maritza Silberie), STINAPA – Marine Park Staff (Ramon DeLeon), SKAL (Hubert Vis), DROB, Harbor Master's Office (Robby Sint Jago), UNESCO (Marva Browne, Jeanine Wong-loising), Prince Bernhard Culture Funds, Donna & Georgio Restaurant, SGB, Uni-College, Commission Antillano Boneriano (Nolli Oleana/Broetje Janga), Bonaire Motorcycle Club, Skol di Musika.

Individuals: Caren Eckrich, Sabina Engel, Deepak Dariyani, Albert Bianculli, Din Domacassé, Ady Figaroa, Nieves Sint Jago, Rudy Ellis, Leonard "Lele" Davidson, Nora deWindt, Hendrik Wuyts-ScubaVision, Bòl Antoin, BO-TV, Ivo Cecilia, and most of all, to the BONAI students and also their parents who have supported them throughout the BONAI work. ■

Jackie Bernabela/Jay Haviser/G.D.



Artist Ady Figaroa



A nerve-wracking moment as it comes off the crane truck



The Bonai team



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WEB Prices Too High?

Present WEB Power Plant in Belnem

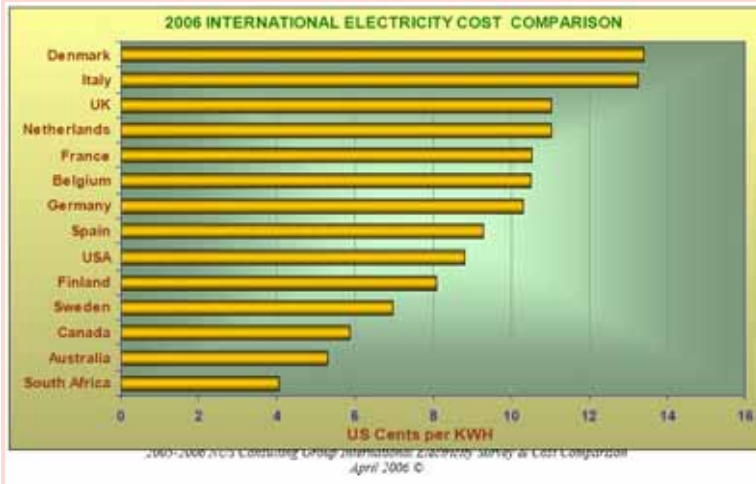


Gasel photo

I saw with interest your recent comparison between gasoline prices on the island versus other regions. It confirms what I thought – not so different from the rest of the world (in Canada it's more than \$1.10 Canadian per liter),

What concerns me more is the cost of electricity on Bonaire.

According to a 2006 report from the National Utility Service, **Denmark was the most expensive of 14 developed - economic jurisdictions surveyed.**



The price in Denmark then was just over \$ 0.134 / kWh. In 2008 it's \$0.24 / kWh

By comparison, from my January WEB bill, lumping together all charges (the published rate plus the *zegelbelasting* and the *brandstoffclausule electra*), I find I am paying \$0.3856 / kWh. for electricity, **nearly three times that of Denmark.**

Of course, Bonaire is a small island and suffered a major fire at its central power plant in 2004 and is continuing to use temporary clusters of small Aggreko generators.

For comparison, a very similar situation is found in Anguilla. The island has 14,000 inhabitants, about the same as Bonaire, and uses a cluster of diesel generators for a capacity of 24MW. The Anguilla power company ANGELEC told me by telephone they charge **\$US 0.36 per kWh.** Including their surcharge.

In Curaçao electricity is rather expensive, though less so than in Bonaire. The household using 1000kWh would pay about 88% of the price in Bonaire.

One has to conclude that the current very high prices for electricity are widespread in the Caribbean and Bonaire is not out of line. ■

Ian Mc Donald

New Power Plant



The layout of the wind-power park at Morotin

As far as we know, it is a Bonaire first: a comprehensive (159-page) environmental impact study done for a major project. The project is the new electrical power facility for Bonaire consisting of 12 –900 kw. wind turbines, an oil/biodiesel power plant and the associated transmission line. The new plant is scheduled to be operational towards the end of 2009, at which time about 40% of Bonaire's yearly average energy demand will be fulfilled using wind energy.

Ecopower intends to build and operate a 10.8 MW wind turbine park at Morotin near Rincon (see map) and a 14.25 MW diesel plant southeast of BOPEC. Furthermore, a 30kV (high voltage) power line connecting the wind park and diesel plant will be laid.

The study, in Dutch with an English language executive summary on pages 20 to 23, is open for public comment until March 13. Comments should be addressed to the MER (Milieu-Effect-Rapport) Commission, c/o

DROB, by letter. Comments must be received by March 13. If you want to have more information you can contact Marco Gravenhorst at 717- 8130. The MER is available on line at: <http://download.yousendit.com/424748254BA55935>

The report was prepared by the Dutch/Curaçao company, Ecovision, which was hired by the contractor, Ecopower, which will be in charge of the construction of the energy complex. It contains exhaustive comments on its effect on the environment, animals, cultural landmarks and nearby residential areas. Tables, maps and figures make it easier for readers to understand. Non-Dutch speaking people can translate the text using bablefish (<http://babelfish.altavista.com/>) or a similar program. ■ G.D.

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Profiles *Aura Janga, Pioneer In Women Empowerment Through Social Involvement*

The directions that Aura Janga gave me to find her house in Rincon are easy enough once I see her blue house opposite the cemetery. I don't know much about her yet, but hearing about a Bonairean woman who lives by herself and commits herself to various social causes makes me curious enough to make an appointment with her. We sit on her porch; her chickens are busy but the place is peaceful and quiet. She looks much younger than her 63 years and tells me she has a twin sister in Curaçao. She grew up in Rincon with her mother and three sisters; her father worked for Shell on Curaçao. At school in Rincon there were two other sets of twins in the same year as hers. "It must have been something in the air," she jokes.

The fact that she didn't marry nor have children was never a big concern to her; she took care of her mother after one of her sisters died. Then the day that her mother died Aura felt, for the first time in her life, disoriented and really alone in the house. Before she went to bed she asked her mother mentally to continue being close; and ever since she feels safe and at ease being by herself.

She never felt like an outsider because of her single status. It gave her the urge to connect with other women, married and unmarried, to meet and share stories and practical issues. Gradually the "Lady's Club" came into existence for women who didn't otherwise leave the house. The club has existed for 33 years and now 23 members officially meet once a month. Long-term friendships developed and the need grew to contribute something positive to the society of Rincon. Their first initiative was to set up a crèche for the children of mothers who work in Playa. Fundraisings were organized, and a house was rented to take care of the children. Fundraisings were also frequently used to aid the families whose children were having their first communion, to help buy a new dress or suit.

Years later, when the crèche was being subsidized and a new board had taken over, the Lady's Club found another cause that needed attention, money and organization: the elderly. A new foundation, later officially known as *Plataforma*, was organized for the elderly in Rincon. It started with renting a bus and taking the seniors, who don't have the means, to various interesting and fun places on Bonaire. Aura proudly mentions that at times two buses are needed because as many as 80 people participate. They've had trips to the Salt Company, Sorobon, Chapel, Plaza Hotel and many other trips are planned. USONA in Holland now contributes to make these outings possible once a month.

Another wonderful initiative that the Club established is the distri-

bution of a warm meal at midday for those elderly who live by themselves, who can't or don't want to cook a meal. For NAf 2 a meal the local restaurant Sjoni prepares the dishes and the Lady's Club makes sure the meals are delivered.

Aura says, "It would be so beneficial for the elderly to have their own old people's home where they can live in Rincon and be close to their families and their roots in the village. For many of them, Kralendijk is like foreign territory," she adds.

In addition to her social activities, Aura worked as a cook for the nuns for 16 years and later as a cleaning lady for as long as she can remember. Since her retirement she reduced her working week and now has to take the bus to Kralendijk only twice a week.

Along with the Lady's Club's social involvement the members started to organize some fun things just for themselves. Once a year at their Christmas party they have a raffle where each one draws a name of another member. During the next year each woman sends small (often self-made) presents to

this specific person without revealing their own name. "Each of us knows we have a secret girlfriend, but only during the next Christmas celebration will we reveal ourselves. It's so nice to know you have friends," she adds. "You feel special the whole year round." Aura is grateful to have so many lifelong friendships with other women, "because we really help each other in good and hard times." The good times are certainly the trips they have made with their group to Venezuela, Costa Rica and Curaçao, made possible by sales of their cooking and baked goods like *pastechis*.

Does she feel that Bonaire is changing too much? She remains silent for a while and doesn't comment (as I admit, I expected her to) on the increase of foreigners, cars and buildings. (Well, to be frank, in Rincon this isn't very noticeable yet.) She says that her concern is "the loss of the old Bonairean ways. Certain traditions are gone, like caring for your neighbors or just being friendly and interested in each other. Young people often forget how essential this is to feel

good within yourself. The concept of time has taken on another meaning since I grew up," she says. "People used to use their time wisely."


She just sits quietly, completely at ease with herself, with what life has presented her. She accepts life as it comes and appreciates every moment of it. She certainly honors the significance of her name, "Aura," in this way.

After our pleasant and relaxed conversation, I leave the house with a paper bag full of homemade cakes. Driving back towards Kralendijk I can't help but wonder why so many of us, newcomers to the island, too often forget to slow down, to accept life as it comes and enjoy every moment of it. Maybe this is what Aura meant by



"the old ways of using time wisely." ■ Photo & story by Louise Rood

Rood says, "Bonaire always had and still has a draw for many pioneers who contribute to the island in their own unique way. I am interested in their stories, their ideals, motives, philosophy and their experiences which can also inspire and stimulate others."




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Flotsam and Jetsam (Cont. from pg 2)
Taxation Agreement: DTA) and less on tax information-exchange treaties (Tax Information Exchange Agreement: TIEA), the government announced on Thursday. "I expect that we can this year negotiate DTAs with Mexico, Spain, Surinam, the United Arab Emirates and Colombia," said Secretary of State for Finance, Alex Rosaria.

Currently, the Netherlands Antilles has 12 signed TIEAs (with the US, Australia and New Zealand, Sweden, Iceland, Denmark, Greenland, Finland, the Faroe Islands, Spain, Canada and Mexico.

► The Kingdom Council of Ministers as well as State Secretary of Kingdom Relations Ank Bijleveld-Schouten



© Vincent Menzel

have agreed to **propose Antilles Governor Frits Goedgedrag for re-appointment on July 1.**

Aruba-born Goedgedrag has had a long career in the public administration of the Netherlands Antilles. After serving as a lawyer at the Department of Legal and General Affairs of the Central Government he served Bonaire at the beginning of the 1980s, first as Secretary of the Island Territory of Bonaire and from 1992 as Lt. Governor.

► **The Social Insurance Bank SVB informed all persons insured in Bonaire that a referral to a specialist in Curaçao by the family doctor must be submitted to the local SVB office in advance.** Reason for this is the new policy of Dutch Antilles Express (DAE) that the ticket must be paid one week before departure.

► **Four journalism and graphic communication students from Florida A&M University will travel to Bonaire** over the spring break to help a group of teenage students improve a radio magazine program and to produce a multimedia Web site and podcasts that feature the program's highlights.

The students will be supervised by Prof. Joe Ritchie, the Knight Chair in journalism at FAMU, who visited the island a year earlier with his wife, Dr. Louise Reid Ritchie, as volunteers training the Bonaire youth group on the basic principles of journalism.

► A detailed map highlighting the world's hotspots for emerging infectious diseases (EIDs) has been released showing that **conserving biodiversity is important in preventing diseases.** Bonaire's biodiversity, like most other areas, is threatened by development. The map uses data spanning 65 years and shows the majority of these new diseases come from wildlife.

Scientists say conservation efforts that reduce conflicts between humans and animals could play a

key role in limiting future outbreaks. "Our analysis highlights the critical importance of conservation work," said co-author Dr. Kate Jones, a research fellow for ZSL. "Conserving areas rich in biodiversity from development may be an important means of preventing the emergence of new diseases."

► Last week's report by Antilles State Secretary of Public Health Joan Berkel, who once was an employee of the Curaçao Sea Aquarium, **that there were no violations of international treaties in the import of dolphins by the Sea Aquarium, has been questioned by conservationists.** They are skeptical that the transport of dolphins from Cuban waters last year was in conformity with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and the Special Protected Area on Wildlife (SPAW) Protocol.

The Antillean Central Government gave Sea Aquarium an exemption concerning the dolphins from Cuba, but such an exemption may not even be legally possible. Curaçao parties in the Central Government support the Sea Aquarium. The situation is cur-

rently under review by the office of Antillean Governor Frits Goedgedrag, who took the initiative for an investigation.

► **World renowned parrot author Rosemary Low has donated yet another book to the Washington-Slagbaai National Park library for the people of Bonaire.** Everyone is encouraged to come and look at these and the growing collection of other books. There is no charge for this but the books must remain in the Park.

► **Other bird news: After a quiet period on parrot-watch.org Lora researcher Sam Williams is pleased to inform us that there are now new**


movies and blog posts on the site. If you have not already checked out www.parrotwatch.org you are missing out on some fantastic videos of Bonaire's Lora and from the parrot project.

► **The Ban Boneiru Bek Foundation has a goal of getting Bonaireans living in Holland back to their home island.** It has drawn praise from several sources for its efforts. The Foundation will participate in the Emigration Fair in Nieuwegein on March 8 and 9. The foundation will focus and give information on living, working, re-migration and employment in Bonaire. For more information, please visit: www.banboneirubek.com or www.emigratiebeurs.nl

(Continued on page 7)



► **Do you recognize "Taika, the Jungle Queen?"** She's none other than Czella Donaldson-Williams, winner of the 2007 Picture Yourself competition shown in the last issue of *The Reporter*. The publicity photo from Czella's days as a dancer was provided by Greta Kooistra. Inset is Czella's fabulous smile as she received her prize from *Reporter* Editor Laura DeSalvo last week.



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Klinika Veterinario Bonaire
Animal Hospital
Dierenkliniek

Dierenartsen team:
 Drs. Arie Binksmā
 Drs. Hans & Ety Lambeek
 Drs. Seib Fietsma
 Drs. Ytzen v.d. Werf

Kaminda Lagun 24A, Tel 717-4255

Next to the Animal Shelter
 Banda di Dierenaisel
 Naast het Dierenaisel



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 De kliniek is geopend van:

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 Tuesday, Thursday 17:00-17:30; Saturday 11.00-12.00
 or by **appointment** every day
 available 24 hours a day, including weekends: Tel. 790-6001

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 of volgens **afspraak** elke dag
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Flotsam & Jetsam (Continued from pg. 6)

► **Uni College, Bonaire's first and only private high school, will be enrolling students for the coming year** (see notice on page 16). It began in August 2005 with just seven students and now has 21 students mainly from Bonaire. It offers a "different" learning method from the traditional schooling and has attracted many students of the HAVO/VWO (academic) level. In August 2008 the school will begin its fourth year.

► **No Fish Zones have finally become a reality for Bonaire.** Following long consultations with local fishermen and scientists, the coastal zones between Playa Chachacha and the marina at Plaza Resort plus the area between Punt'i Waya (north entrance to Hato) and the Harbour Village marina are closed to all fishing except for the following: *masbangu* longer than 8 centimeters, *boka largu* longer than 20 centimeters and *Moulo* longer than 15 centimeters. It is hoped this measure will help replenish fish stocks.

► **Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire announced the launch of its new website about the turtle awareness campaign "Proteha nos tortuganan."** The new website was possible with the funding from DCNA (Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance). Go

to www.bonaireturtles.org for a look.

► **The "Captains of Industry" art auction, organized by the Bonaire Lions Club, was a great success.** The proceeds of this fundraising activity was NAf 16.650. More details in the next issue.

► **If you need to go to Curaçao for medical treatment or an operation there is a place you and your escorting friend or family member can stay.** The After Care Curaçao Foundation provides homelike accommodations. Their aim is to make their guests as comfortable as possible and to relieve the discomfort they might be experiencing while away from home. Guests have their own bedroom and bathroom and share the living room, kitchen and laundry. They pick up and drop off at Hato Airport and provide transportation to and from the relevant facility. Their website: Aftercare-Curaçao.org. E-mail: Aftercare-Curaçao@yahoo.com. Telephone 09-868-2174 or 09-524-4004.

► The *Servisio di Salubridat i Higiëna* (Hygiene Service) gives notice, after being



advised by the US FDA (Food and Drug Administration), that **botulism tainted canned products might be on local market shelves and were to be withdrawn.** The items were processed by the New Era Canning Company, New Era Michigan. No illnesses from the products have been reported on the island. The following brand names are suspect: Classic Sysco, Code, Frosty Acres Restaurant's Pride Preferred, GFS, Kitchen Essentials, Monarch Heritage, Necco, New Era, Nugget and Reliance Sysco. For a list of the code numbers of tainted cans go to: <http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopic/newera.html>

► **Did you know that every issue of The Bonaire Reporter is exclusively produced with renewable energy resources- solar and wind power?** The first time *The Reporter* meets paper is when it rolls off the big web-press at DeStad in Curaçao.

The Reporter was the first Antillean newspaper to be 100% computerized. And with this issue the first to be all in color.

The Reporter depends on YOU, its readers, to visit our advertisers and let them know you are *Reporter* readers. It's their support that keeps it free. Thanks for reading. ■



► **On Wednesday February 27, Customs and STINAPA found onboard the Curaçao-registered fishing boat, *Libertador*, NC239, 369 pieces of conch (*karko; strombus gigas*).** The boat had come from Venezuelan waters. It is not allowed to bring conch into Bonaire without the proper permit. This is according to the international CITES Treaty. Customs confiscated all the conch and handed them over to STINAPA, who later donated them to *Fundashon Mariadal* (St. Francisco Hospital) with the permission of the prosecutor. ■ *Report & photos by Dennis Lensink*

► **2008 auto registrations renewals are due by March 7.** Deliveries of some low number plates have been delayed, but renewal is still required. Enforcement is expected to begin shortly.

Vehicle Type	Fuel	Full Year	Half year	License plate	Sticker
Personal Autos/Trucks	Gasoline	€ 340,00	€ 170,00	€ 15,00	€ 4,00
	Diesel	€ 1.500,00	€ 750,00	€ 15,00	€ 4,00
Taxi- Autobus	Gasoline	€ 245,00	€ 122,50	€ 15,00	€ 4,00
	Diesel	€ 375,00	€ 187,50	€ 15,00	€ 4,00
Scooters/Motorcycles Heavy Equipment	Gasoline	€ 245,00	€ 122,50	€ 10,00	€ 2,50
	Diesel	€ 2.250,00	€ 1.125,00	€ 10,00	€ 2,50

G./L. D. Pay at the **Ontvanger (Collector)**. Office Hours: Monday-Friday 08.00 – 12.00 and 13.30 – 16.00.

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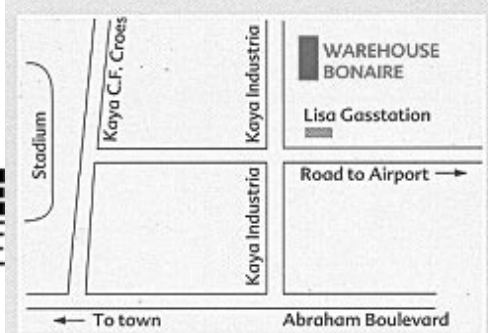
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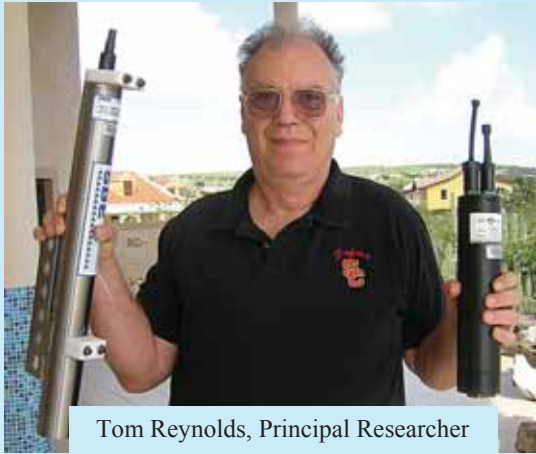


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CLEAR BLUE WATER NEWS

Sensors To Be Calibrated and Verified

Albert Bianculli, coordinator of the LMSP (Light and Motion Sensor Project), welcomed Tom Reynolds, principal researcher and associate Dr. Burton Jones, at Flamingo Airport this past Sunday. They will be on-island for the next two weeks to calibrate



Tom Reynolds, Principal Researcher

and institute authentication for the LMSP sensors that have been deployed and recording data since last August. Once calibrated the output from the sensors will output verified legitimate data.

In preparation for his arrival, LMSP volunteers retrieved their sensors from the sea and turned them over for reprogramming and re-launching. When reinstalled underwater they will record data each minute at seven key sites along Bonaire's west coast. This week and next, additional teams of volunteers in boats will be deploying highly sophisticated instruments recording data simultaneously at the selected "Rainbow Mooring Arrays" for calibration purposes.

The FLATUSB Instrument used as a reference records chlorophyll

(organic matter) and backscatter (particles) while the CTD records conductivity (fresh water), temperature and pressure depth. The instruments, shown in the photo with Tom, are highly sensitive, and very expensive. It's all part of Phase 1 of the LMSP project. Resulting data will soon be available for viewing on the STINAPA, Applied Ocean Science and Sea Monitor Foundation websites. □

Story & photo by Albert Bianculli

Donations accepted by Support Bonaire (US tax deductible) or you are invited to directly deposit your donation to SEA MONITOR Foundation accounts:

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MCB Sponsors Obesity Study

Obesity is a growing phenomenon throughout the whole world. That's why the tendency is to use the word "globesity" instead of obesity. The percentage of obese children is growing fast everywhere and Bonaire isn't an exception. Obesity is a result of an unhealthy lifestyle which includes bad eating and drinking habits and little physical activity. Obesity causes a lot of health problems, like heart disease, diabetes and more.

Among children this can be catastrophic because they can develop these diseases at a young age with greater risk of acquiring the complications that they bring with them early in life.

Starting this month, The Richard Visser Institute of Aruba, in collaboration with the VU Medisch Centrum, Amsterdam, and the Department of Healthcare of Bonaire, will begin a study on the prevalence of obesity among Bonairean children from four to 18 years of age.

The Richard Visser Institute has done similar studies in Aruba and in Holland by the VU Medisch Centrum. Such studies are very essential for Bonaire, considering that we still don't



At the press conference held at the Plaza Resort on February 27: (L to R) Dr. S. Gromotka-Pourier (head of department of Healthcare Bonaire), Dr. R. Visser (Head of Richard Visser Institute), Prof. R. Hirasig (VU Medisch Centrum in Amsterdam), Mr. Evert Piar (Director, MCB bank), Mr. Leonard Domacassé, Mrs. Orphaline Saleh, Mr. Rudy Gomez (staff MCB bank)

have that huge flow of fast food chains on the island like McDonalds, Wendy's, and other popular ones.

Statistics gained from this study can be very useful for the development of more activities to stimulate a healthy lifestyle to prevent the growth of even more obesity among our youth.

Our friendly bank, Maduro & Curiel's Bank-Bonaire, is proud to support the study with a gift of NAf 25.000. MCB Bank is convinced that by investing in the health of our children it is investing in the future of the island and a healthy community. ■



Angèlique Salsbach is a Dietitian at the Bonaire Department of Public Health

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YOUTH

“Children” “Youth,” “Our youth.”
Have you heard these expressions? Yes, you might say. Everybody, from small to big, has something to say about our youth. An SGB (School Gemeenschap Bonaire) class is concerned about what is happening with our young people. If you ask them, all of them in their teens, what they think about our youth, they talk about the negative things, just as most of us grown ups do.

One of them (17) said, “They get in trouble at school, get into fights but most of them are very quiet people at home. When trouble starts their parents can’t believe that it is their child who is involved in such things. Some teens don’t get enough attention at home so they get into gangs or groups of young people with bad reputations. For them to be part of the groups they got a lot of pressure to be like them. Because they don’t want to be excluded they prefer to be like the group, with all the consequences. It is not easy to be a youngster. You get a lot of peer pressure and if you don’t know how to deal with it you can get yourself in a lot of trouble.”

Others say, “Parents may help in these matters. When other people approach them about a problem with their child they should listen and investigate. Talking with parents is a good idea because the parents can give support to help them make the necessary changes. Some youngsters might think that Bonaire is boring, but creating activities and sound recreation is good. There is a lot you can do on the island. We do a lot of fundraising to do whatever we can do, like traveling in a group, participating in workshops outside Bonaire etc. There’s always something to do.”



Like their coach (35) said, “They can come with different projects to help the Bonaire young people like a youth café where you have games, Internet, television, food and of course non-alcoholic beverages. This is a way to keep the young people out of trouble. Well, these are ideas that can be presented to the school board and even to the government. There’s always something we can do to help young people, but we need to move and do it, not to sleep over it.”

If we move forward we need to have a person who always thinks positively about our youth like this 50 year old lady who said, “Children: you have to know them from the inside. You can go on judging young people’s behavior without knowing their roots. But what they have experienced during their very young age in life makes them the person they are today. Some have small scars, but others have big wounds. Sometimes these kids need profes-

sional help. Some parents just ignore those cries for help and these children, instead of improving, they are worsening. It is a minus point for our community too. That’s why you have a lot of young people involved in all kinds of crimes and unwanted pregnancies. It’s getting out of hand when the authorities don’t know how to deal with it. That’s why we have to start from scratch and grab the problem, like the bull by its horns. We can’t take anything for granted. Let’s move and do whatever needs to be done for our children, our youth.” ■

Story & photo by Siomara E. Albertus

If you have any comments about these topics send your letter to *The Bonaire Reporter*, P.O. Box 407, Bonaire, or email reporter@bonairenews.com.



Bonaire's Foundation for the Care of Sight and Hearing (*Fundashon Kuido pa Bista i Oido*) is offering the public an opportunity to check their eye-sight, blood sugar and blood pressure, often factors in causing blindness.

The free clinics will be held at the following Community Centers from 6:30 to 8:30 pm:

- Sentro di Bario Rincon – Completed
- Sentro di Bario Antriol – 13 March
- Sentro di Bario Nrd. Salinja – 27 March
- Sentro di Bario Amboina – 3 April
- Sentro di Bario Tera Cora – 10 April
- Sentro di Bario Nikiboko – 17 April
- Jeugdhuus Jong Bonaire – 24 April

This activity is supported by the Bonaire Lion's Club, Diabetic Association, the medical schools, R. Marin (Asst. Eye Doctor) and Olaf Friederichs (Optometrist of Optica Antillana).

For more information contact Dr. Dorvil's office in Tera Cora, on Kaya Mgr. Nieuwindt, Monday through Friday, from 9 to 11am at 717-5761. Other phone numbers for information are 717-8171 or 785-0518.

■ Press release

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Cruise Ship Craft Market

One good thing about cruise ship visits is that it's spawned Bonaire's Handicraft Market which sets up every day when a cruise ship visits. Local artisans purchase a space and set up their stands. Nearly everything is hand crafted and made from materials found on the island.

Some of the craftspeople are **Diana Winklaar** who has a big display of frames made of local woods with sliced apricot pits for decoration. She has cut wood necklaces and magnets made of coconut shells. **Josie Smit** shows her mosaics, **Hellen Leter** her handmade tiles, **Marjolein Verhoef** her glass jewelry and ornaments, **Desiree Bogert**, her Bonairean salt products, her paintings and other crafts. There's **Dianir Stapert** with her unusual jewelry. The resident artists and craftspeople are of many nationalities: Antillean, Dutch, South American, Surinamese, which one would expect with an island of 59 different nationalities. **Volunteers from the Animal Shelter and Donkey's Help** man their stands. Visitors said they are impressed that these animal foundations have a high profile on the island.

Music fills the air, sometimes live, sometimes from CDs, as the tourists and locals stroll through the shaded Wilhelmina Plaza.

The ambiance is gay and festive, according to two English ladies who'd just purchased a bracelet. "This is just a lovely local market with such friendly people," they gushed.

There has been opposition to the crafts market from some of the shop keepers on Kaya Grandi, alleging that the market takes away from their business. That's hard to comprehend as most of what the Kaya Grandi vendors sell is imported whereas the crafts market features mostly hand made items made on the island from things on the island. Let's all support this new island tradition. ■ L.D.



Diana Winklaar with the pretty smiling face proudly displays her work, all made from Bonairean natural products.

↑ *Lace maker, Jannie Koning, shows her skills to onlookers.*
← *Miguel and Baldwinina entertain the crowd*



Maritza Camellia and her son with their work: handmade rattles, ceramic slave houses, mobiles and more.

Lize Singosemito helps her mom selling delectable homemade Surinamese foods

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Mangazina di Rei Open House



Last weekend, the bastion of Bonairean culture and history, Mangazina di Rei, opened its door to the community to celebrate its nomination for the *Appeltje van oranje* 2008 in Holland. The Mangazina was filmed by the *Oranje Fonds di Hulanda* and will be presented in Holland on March 12.

Festivities were rampant with demonstrations of *maishi* cutting, charcoal making, dancing, music, tours of the open air museum, storytelling, wonderful local food and the presentation of the video, *Herensia*,” (Heritage) by Bòi Antoin. Some photos from Danilo Christiaan give the flavor of the day. Visit the Mangazina. Contact information in advertisement at the bottom of this page. ■ L.D.

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Personals

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Pet of The Week

Quizzical "Miranda" poses for the camera, wondering, "Who is going to see my photo and come in to the Bonaire Animal Shelter to meet me?" This pretty little pup with attractive black, brown and white colored fur is about a year and a half. She's so alert and friendly and is especially adorable when she perks up those big ears. She's considered a "medium sized dog," and to make her even more interesting she has the telltale "Ridgeback" reverse growing hair down her back. Unusual for a smaller dog, no? Miranda is the picture of good health, having been examined by the vet and given her tests and shots. You may meet her at the Shelter on the Lagoen Road, open Monday through Saturday, 8 am to 1 pm and 3 to 5 pm. Tel. 717-4989. ■L.D.



Puppy Miranda

The Shelter's Gift Shop –

Toys and Things for Cats and Dogs

What a deal! Thanks to the donations of these brand new items by Bonaire Talk visitors and other tourists and residents there's an incredible array of goodies for your pets at the Shelter's Gift Shop. There are all sorts of cat and dog toys, collars, harnesses (even for big dogs), leashes, Kong toys, pet treats and more - all at low, low prices (from NAf2 to NAf25). The entire purchase price goes towards keeping our Shelter open and running. Check out the human gifts too: Shelter t-shirts, tank tops and shirts for kids. ■ L.D.



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ANNOUNCEMENT



Happy Birthday, Friday, March 7, to Yuchi Molina. Yuchi, a dear friend of *The Reporter*, has been delivering the newspaper every week to Rincon shops and restaurants for many years. Pabien, Yuchi, and many, many years of joy and happiness in the future.

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Diving With Dee

The Chromis Baby Boom



At the end of December, I was cruising along the reef when I noticed an area with slightly lowered visibility. Then I realized there was a lot of fish action that day, and even more brown chromis than usual hanging around the bottom, wriggling furiously.

Ta dah! My mental trumpets blared. I recognized what was going on: the brown chromis were spawning.

If you're not sure which are the brown chromis, here's some help: they're grayish-brown, 2-3" long as adults, have a gold spot where their tail meets their body, and are the most numerous fish on Bonaire's reefs. Clouds of brown chromis pluck plankton from mid-water off the dropoff, and smaller groups or individuals hang around just about everywhere.

Pairs of brown chromis can occasionally be seen spawning: the female swims over the area the male has cleared, depositing eggs. He then fertilizes them, and guards them as they develop. They function a lot like the sergeant majors, except less flamboyantly.

What I saw on this day, however, was the pair spawning multiplied by ... oh, every chromis on that 50' wide section of the reef!

Naturally, the spawning chromis were seriously preoccupied with spawning, creating perfect opportunities for chromis predators – and the predators of chromis (and other small fishes) were there. I saw a big rock hind, a black grouper, three spotted morays, and more trumpetfish than usual. A pair of big horsey jacks and a pair of big bar jacks both cruised ominously back and forth (I could almost hear the roar of their motorcycle engines and see their black leather jackets).

I saw brown chromis mass spawning on the next day on this reef, and figure there were other mass spawnings of chromis along Bonaire's dropoff in late December. The fertilized eggs hatch into larval chromis, which drift at the surface for a week or two, then settle down to the reef. Many of the eggs, and the larval fish, are eaten – but, at least this time, quite a few survived: hundreds – thousands – of one-inch or so brown chromis appeared about six weeks later. They were everywhere around the reef, especially around protruding coral heads. They were also around the rubble areas, the rocks along shore, and anywhere else they could hide. The only place I didn't see them was sand.

Thanks (at least in part) to this chromis baby boom, Bonaire's flounders, trumpetfish, and all the little groupers are looking very satisfied lately, have you noticed? The first day of the baby boom, I saw four scorpionfish – an unusually high number for that area – out in the open eyeing brown chromis babies. The young chromis aren't as naïve as we might think, though: the scorpionfish's lunging distance is about one-third its body length, and you'll notice that the chromis – most of the time, at least – are doing their hovering safely outside that lunging distance.

The predator I'm looking for is frogfish, though. I figure one of those little chromis would make a perfect frogfish meal. The only trouble I'm having is since there are so many chromis, there are also zillions of places where a frogfish could stalk them! ■ *Story & photo by Dee Scarr*

Dee offers close contact **TOUCH THE SEA** dives for all Bonaire divers.

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Bubbles from the Biologist

Did You Know...

That fish have the equivalent of a car wash like humans do?

Much like mud and dirt clumps to cars after a rain shower or a drive down dusty roads, parasites and various other particles tend to clump to the surface, mouths and gills of different fish. Fish are able to drive up to different cleaning stations in coral reefs, park and get "washed" off by different species of cleaner shrimp (i.e. Pederson shrimp) and cleaner fish (i.e. wrasses and gobies).

This relationship is an example of mutualistic symbiosis, a situation where both parties benefit; the fish benefit by having parasites removed from them and the cleaner shrimp and fish get a tasty meal. Shrimp even advertise their cleaning stations sometimes by congregating at the top of the coral and waving their antennae around until client fish arrive and assume a non-threatening position (i.e. an unnatural position which may include changing of color and opening of the mouth) Check out the photos at right for some examples.

■ *Luisa Velasquez.*

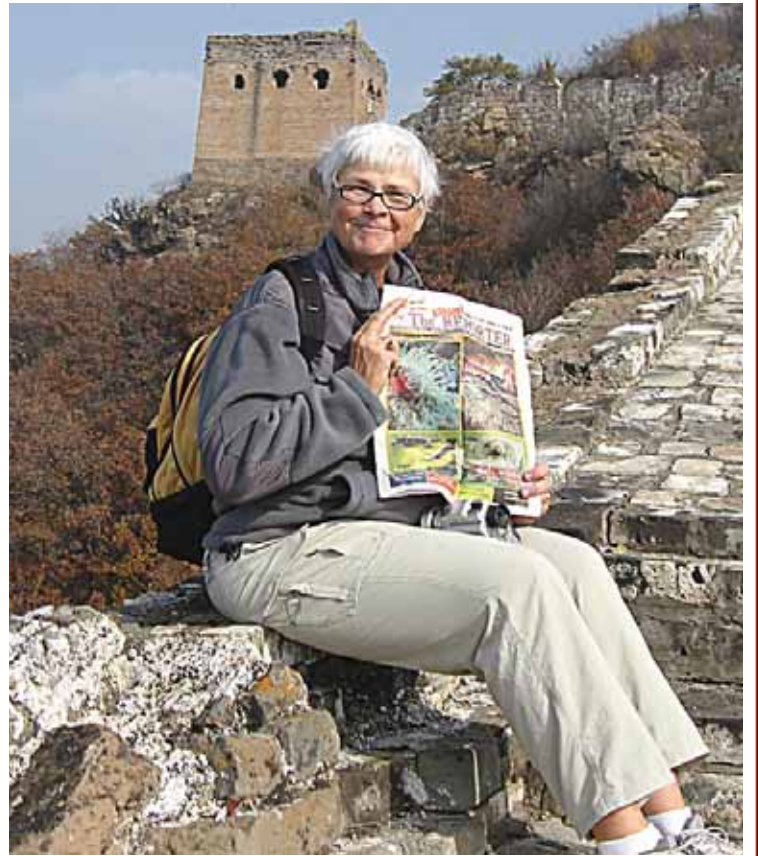


My name is Luisa Velasquez. I come from Tulsa, Oklahoma, a state positioned above Texas in the central part of the US. I am currently a junior at the University of Tulsa and am majoring in biology. This semester I'm studying Tropical Marine Ecology and Conservation at the CIEE Research Station Bonaire.



Picture Yourself With The Reporter Simatai - The Great Wall of China

Peg Hart and Mike Guerin just returned from a two-week trip to China when they sent us this photo. They added, "...we travelled to the Great Wall, the Simatai section, which is approximately 2.5 hours outside of Beijing where we took these photos. This was our second trip to China. Take the politics out of it and it's a wonderful place to visit. The people are just fantastic. And for our next trick, we'll be in Bonaire diving for two weeks arriving November 20th! We totally enjoy our subscription to *The Bonaire Reporter*. It keeps us updated on the island till we can get back again." ■



WIN GREAT PRIZES! Take a copy of *The Bonaire Reporter* with you on your next trip or when you return to your home. Then take a photo of yourself with the newspaper in hand. **THE BEST PHOTOS OF THE YEAR WILL WIN THE PRIZES.** Mail photos to *Bonaire Reporter*, Box 407, Bonaire, Netherlands Antilles (AN). E-mail to: info@bonairereporter.com. (All 2008 photos are eligible.)

DINING GUIDE

RESTAURANT	PRICE RANGE / WHEN OPEN	FEATURES
Balashi Beach Bar Bar and Beach Service At the Divi Flamingo Beach Resort Waterfront	Open every day 8am - 8pm. Happy Hour, two for one, 6-7 pm.	On the beach Extensive snack/salad/burger menu available daily from noon.
Bella Vista Restaurant, Buddy's Pool Bar Sea Side at Buddy Dive Resort 717-5080, ext. 538	Moderate. Breakfast daily 6:30—10 am - Lunch daily 11:30 Dinner on theme nights 6—10 pm	Buddy's Magnificent Theme Nights: Sat. - Steak Night; Mon. - "Dive and Dine;" Wed. - "Live Cooking by the Chefs;" Fri. - Free Rum Punch Party (5:30-6:30 pm) and All-u-can-eat BBQ for \$19.50 (7-10 pm)
Bistro de Paris Kaya Gob. N. Debrot 46 (half-way between hotel row and town) 717-7070	Moderate Lunch Monday - Friday 11 am—3 pm Dinner Monday - Saturday, 6 to 10 pm	Real French Cooking in an informal setting Superb dishes prepared with care and love by a French chef Owner-operated Eat in or Take away
Calabas Restaurant & Chibi Chibi Restaurant and Bar At the Divi Flamingo Beach Resort Waterfront 717-8285	Moderate Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner Open 7 days	Biggest BBQ Buffet on Bonaire every Saturday from 6-9pm. Only NA/ 28,50 or \$16.
Casablanca Argentinean Restaurant One block south of the Post Office 717-4433	Moderate Lunch Tues-Sat—11:30-2:30 Dinner 7 nights— starting at 6 pm	Indulge your whim—beef seafood, chicken, vegetarian Mondays—All you can eat and special slide shows starting at 6 pm Great value anytime.
Hilltop Restaurant At the Caribbean Club Bonaire—on the scenic Rincon Road 717-7901	Moderate Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner	Bar-Restaurant poolside—in Bonaire's hill country Frequent Dinner Specials Happy hours 5 to 6 daily, to 7 on Tuesday BBQ night.
Pasa Bon Pizza On Kaya Gob. Debrot ½ mile north of town center. 780-1111	Low-Moderate Open from 5-11 pm Wednesday-Sunday	Bonaire's best. The Real Thing! Freshly prepared pizzas made with the finest ingredients. Salads, desserts. Eat in or take away. Nice bar too. Call ahead to eat-in or take out 780-1111

SHOPPING GUIDE

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APPLIANCES / TV / ELECTRONICS / COMPUTERS

City Shop, the mega store, has the island's widest selection of large and small home appliances, furniture, TV, computers, cell phones and more. Fast service and in-store financing too.

BANKS

Maduro and Curiel's Bank provides the greatest number of services, branches and ATMs of any Bonaire bank. They also offer investments and insurance.

BEAUTY PARLOR

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BICYCLE / SCOOTER / QUADS

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BOOKS and TOYS

At last, a real book and toy store on Bonaire, Addos, in downtown Kralendijk sell books in three languages and has a variety of quality toys.

CELLULAR SERVICE

Mio offers by far the clearest, most phone reliable signal on the island. And their personnel are trained and friendly. Check out their unlimited calling plan.

DIVING

Carib Inn is the popular 10-room inn with top-notch dive shop and well stocked retail store. Best book trade on Bonaire. Good prices on regulator repair, dive computer H.Q.

Dive Inn—For your diving with a personal touch. Located in town at Chacha cha Beach. Drop ins and cruise ship passengers welcome

WannaDive - They make diving fun while maintaining the highest professional standards. In town at City Café and at Eden Beach.

FITNESS

Fit For Life at the Plaza Resort Mall. Classes in Pilates, Aerobics, TaeBo and more. Professional trainers, fitness machines and classes for all levels.

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RESORTS & ACTIVITIES

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Letters to the Editor

Our Schools 1 Our Schools 2 Misguided Welcome

OUR SCHOOLS -1

Dear Bonaire Reporter,
I am Bonairean and also went to SGB high school. Now my own child is in school in Bonaire. Our schools have some problems. It is especially very sad our school SGB has bad classrooms and problems with rats and needs cleanup. Then I read the son of a political leader goes to a high school in America for \$22,200.00/FI 39,500.00 per year - I can guess this school has no rats. With the minimum salary about FI 13,200.00, most Bonaireans cannot pay to send their children away to school or we want them to stay at home. We depend on SGB. Not all our kids and parents can choose something else.

Our schools need help. Maybe to help make schools better for our island and the Antilles we need to vote for the leaders whose kids are school aged and who send them to school in Bonaire. This will get them to make it better for our kids and they will believe in it. We need to make good and clean and safe schools for our kids a priority.

A concerned Bonairean mother

OUR SCHOOLS -2

Dear Editor:
Reading about the high school (SGB) in the Feb. 8 issue with the picture of the unkempt grounds made me want to cry! I was shocked to learn of chemistry rooms not working, gas leaks, rats

in the ceiling. WHAT?! Talking to some of the students, I learned these and other suspicions are true.

This isn't just 'another' controversial issue! This is Bonaire's **Future**. Education is the backbone of a society. If the maintenance of the school is suffering it leads to more questions: are teachers getting materials needed? Is the budget enough? If not, why? Are we doing the best we can for our children?

I beg everyone- politicians, education commissioner, school board, people with/without kids- look at the children today, drive by the SGB or any other school, take a moment and a long hard look. Ask yourself: **Is this the best we can do?** If you can answer "yes" then continue on. If "NO", now is the time to act! If you **have power** to make island decisions for our children, please do so...today, don't wait! **WE BEG YOU!** If you can't directly make decisions for the schools, find out how to make a difference. We can't just sit back in our **rat-free air conditioned offices and homes** allowing this to continue, not if we have a conscience!

This is not a money issue, but rather an **investment** issue in Bonaire's future. Money was found for a new brick sidewalk in Playa Pariba. What about money for clean, safe schools, new books? Money is an easy excuse. It's time to stop making excuses and time to



Outside the SGB school
HvL photo

implement solutions. **There is always a solution.** Here's just one idea (suggest your own): Collect \$1 per year from residents and visitors (eg. 240,000 cruise, 15,000 residents, 65,000 stay over) for an Island Education Fund, then, use the money strictly for schools. People would be glad to pay if they saw it being used for the future of dushi Bonaire and her children.

Think what an impact this situation has on Bonaire's children. Issues we struggle with such as school dropouts, students leaving the island for education and not returning, teen pregnancy, theft, violence, attacks on our streets - these are all rooted in the same foundation...Education. Would you want to go to a place with rats, dirty grounds, infighting? Or would you find something else to do?

Will you work tomorrow in a dirty place with old bad equipment and rats? Educators we entrust with our most precious thing -our children—who deserve the cleanest environment, safest classrooms and best materials. Then their focus can be on educating our future.

We know our schools should be a safe haven full of opportunity and hope. What is going

on? Caregivers need to know children are safely learning when taking them to school. Kids need to feel safe and comfortable to focus on learning. Bonaire has

new computers. Let's create a legacy showing that quality education, good equipment and safely maintained buildings are important so students prioritize this for their children also. They will be running this island someday!

There's only one public high school and it needs to be the best Bonaire can offer herself and her children! We owe it to ourselves!" Now is the time for action!

*With much love and concern,
A Mom*

several controversial issues but SGB needn't be one. Instead, let's read about SGB's awards, events,

MISGUIDED WELCOME



Dear Editor:
We who live on the island usually don't see it exactly the same way as cruise ship passengers see this greeting on arrival.

I trust you can view the photo of the lovely WELCOME TO BONAIRE sign that was installed by someone who didn't think things through enough.

Please look at the picture again and note the BARBED WIRE across the top!

How inviting! Might as well say WELCOME TO GUANTANAMO BAY.

Now that I have brought this to your attention, I will be willing to bet no one will ever correct it, or am I the only one that cares?

JP Richau

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DATE	Time	Ht.	Time	Ht.	Time	Ht.	Time	Ht.	COEF
3-07	0:51	1.4FT.	5:40	1.1FT.	12:35	1.6FT.	19:28	1.1FT.	89
3-08	1:28	1.5FT.	7:15	1.1FT.	13:35	1.5FT.	19:17	1.2FT.	95
3-09	2:14	1.6FT.	9:25	1.1FT.	14:40	1.3FT.	18:57	1.2FT.	98
3-10	3:12	1.7FT.	11:48	1.1FT.	16:45	1.2FT.	17:48	1.2FT.	96
3-11	4:09	1.8FT.	13:28	0.9FT.					91
3-12	5:16	1.9FT.	14:30	0.8FT.					82
3-13	6:14	1.9FT.	15:28	0.8FT.					72
3-14	7:17	2.0FT.	16:12	0.7FT.					62
3-15	8:09	2.0FT.	16:52	0.7FT.					56
3-16	9:02	2.0FT.	17:34	0.8FT.					56
3-17	0:44	1.2FT.	9:52	1.9FT.	18:04	0.8FT.	23:50	1.2FT.	61
3-18	2:57	1.2FT.	10:36	1.8FT.	18:28	0.9FT.	23:43	1.3FT.	69
3-19	4:24	1.2FT.	11:27	1.7FT.	18:48	1.0FT.	23:59	1.3FT.	77
3-20	0:14	1.4FT.	5:48	1.2FT.	12:09	1.6FT.	18:56	1.1FT.	83
3-21	0:50	1.5FT.	7:22	1.2FT.	12:56	1.4FT.	18:38	1.2FT.	86

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BONAIRE SKY PARK*

*to find it... just look up

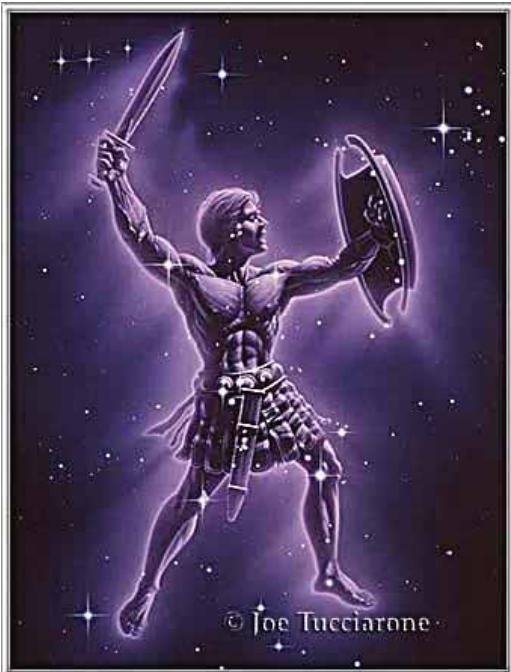
The Two Stars Above and The Two Stars Below The Fabled Belt Stars of Orion

Everyone loves winter's brilliant constellation, **Orion the Hunter**, because his three belt stars are the only three stars equally spaced in a row we can see with the naked eye. But the two bright stars above the belt and the two bright stars below the belt are also quite wonderful.

Just after it gets dark out in the Sky Park look up and west. To find Orion simply look for the three bright evenly spaced stars in a row, which mark his belt. The two above of course are his shoulder stars and the two below mark his knees. Now although the night sky doesn't look very three dimensional, in reality all the stars are different distances away from our **Earth** and each other. And one way to measure these distances is with the speed of light. Light travels 186,000 miles a second. So when we look at the star closest to Earth, which is our **Sun**, since it is 93 million miles away we see the light that left it 8 and 1/3 minutes ago. So we say that our Sun is 8 1/3 light minutes away. All the other stars, however, are so far away it takes years for their light to reach us.

For instance, of Orion's four bright stars, his shoulder star **Bellatrix** is the closest, 240 light years away which means we see the light that left it 240 years ago. **Betelgeuse**, the next closest, is over twice as far away, 520 light years. Which means we see the light that left it 520 years ago. But Orion's two knee stars are even farther away. **Rigel** is 800 light years and **Saiph** 820 light years, which means that the light we see now, left them 300 years before Columbus' voyage to America. To remember the distances closest to farthest, just remember right shoulder, left shoulder, right knee, left knee.

What's equally impressive is that stars come in all different sizes. And the easiest way to illustrate this is to compare them to our almost-million-mile-wide Sun, which is considered a rather small star. Orion's shoulder star Bellatrix is 6 times as wide as our Sun which really sounds impressive until you look at the knee star Saiph which is 38 times as wide as our sun. And it gets even better. The other knee star Rigel is 50 times as wide as our Sun. But you ain't seen nothin' yet, because Betelgeuse, the red shoulder star, is a what we call a **variable star** and changes its size regularly. Contracted to its smallest size it is 500 times as wide as our Sun and when it is expanded to its largest, 900 times as wide. And an easy way to remember the order of size of these stars is right shoulder to left knee to right knee to left shoulder. Try to imagine the sizes and distances of each of these four stars. And believe me after a while you'll almost see them in your mind in three dimensions. ■ *Jack Horkheimer*



THE STARS HAVE IT

By Astrologer Michael Thiessen
For March 2008

ARIES (Mar. 21- April 20) Jealous coworkers may try to sabotage your attempts to get ahead. If you're preoccupied, be careful while operating a vehicle or any kind of equipment or machinery. Self improvement projects should be your key concern. Get out and enjoy some entertainment. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

TAURUS (Apr. 21- May 21) Plan to do things with your faithful pet or with youngsters who have interesting hobbies. You could do extremely well in competitive sports events. Don't torment yourself. Disharmony in the home will be extremely stressful. Relationships will form if you get out and do things that you enjoy. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21) Try not to skirt issues if you think you'll hurt some one's feelings. Plan a trip to the country or take a drive to the beach. Help if you can, but more than likely it will be sufficient just to listen. Travel could bring you the adventure and excitement you require. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

CANCER (June 22-July 22) You will enjoy events that lean toward theater, art, or music this month. Visitors may drop by unexpectedly, resulting in tension with your lover. Overindulgent people will cause disruptions in your life. You have a tendency to think that no one else will do things properly. Your luckiest events this month will occur on Wednesday.

LEO (July 23-Aug 22) Be cautious and use your head wisely in situations that deal with the use of machinery or vehicles. Your mind will be on matters that deal with secret affairs. Pursue outdoor activities or any physical exertion. Don't let yourself get rundown. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 -Sept. 23) Relatives may play an important role in your social activities. Get them to pitch in, if you need help. Romance is likely if you can bring yourself to go out with friends. It might be best not to spend your money on luxuries this month. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 -Oct. 23) You may be confused regarding your love life. Don't make promises you can't keep. You could overreact to emotional situations regarding your relationship. All your energy should be directed into moneymaking opportunities. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Monday.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22) You might have a problem juggling your time. Your mind is on moneymaking ventures. Your social activity should be conducive to finding love. Uncertain changes regarding your personal life are evident. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 -Dec. 21) Socialize with friends, but don't overspend on lavish entertainment. Take a day to relax and pamper yourself. Your mind may not be on the job. Avoid letting family get involved in your personal life. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22.- Jan. 20) This may not be your month if you are overly melodramatic and unnerving everyone around you. You should get involved with activities that can be enjoyed by both young and old alike. You must make sure that all your personal documents are in order. You can stabilize your financial situation if you make property investments. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 -Feb. 19) You won't have much time for your mate this month. You'll find travel or involvement in large groups gratifying. You may find that family members may not be too easy to get along with. You must use discretion when talking to others. Gambling should not be an option. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

PISCES (Feb. 20-Mar. 20) Put your energy into home renovations. You can become obsessed with detail and must be sure to divide your time appropriately. You will accomplish the most in the work environment this month. Enlist coworkers in order to get the job done on time. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

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New Bird Species Sighted

On Monday, 26 February, Sam Williams, best known as “one of the parrot guys from England” (who have been studying our Yellow-shouldered Parrot as part of the fulfillment of their studies leading to their PhD.) knew that the calling of a bird in an inner garden at Hilltop was something he did not recognize. The two biologists, Sam and Rowan Martin, have spent countless hours in the field here on Bonaire and have learned the calls of all the birds.

“This call immediately caught my attention,” Sam related. Upon tracking down the mystery bird, he saw a turquoise-colored bird with a black face and white underbelly and quickly started looking through his *Birds of Venezuela* field guide. After a time sorting out all the more than 1,300 species found in the guide, he landed on Swallow-Tanager, *Tersina viridis*, a small member, reaching a length of around 6 inches, of the *Thraupidae*, or the Tanager family of birds.

Tanagers are found only in the New World where they are basically tropical in distribution, reaching maximum diversity in the Andes, where a dozen or more species can be seen in a single mixed flock.

Swallow-Tanagers are frugivorous, meaning fruit-eating, but also consume insects as well. They are found throughout Venezuela, primarily in humid lowlands, south to northwest Ecuador, central Bolivia, central Paraguay, to northwest Argentina.

The species’ common name is spelled with a hyphen between the two names, Swallow-Tanager, which refers to its placement in the Tanager family, but with reservations. It is the only member of the Tanager family that nests in holes in trees and also the only one of the family that has a broad flat



Sam Williams photo

Visiting Swallow-Tanager at Hilltop

flattened bill. An excellent field mark for this bird, besides the beautiful turquoise color on its back and wings, is the prominent barring under the wings along the flank of the belly. And its size is small for most of the Tanagers that we see here on Bonaire during spring migration, which are brilliant red in color. It is about the same size as our common Black-faced Grassquit.

I was more than delighted at Sam's discovery, and immediately informed Tineke Prins, who is the collection manager in the bird department in the Zoological Museum Amsterdam, University of Amsterdam. Tineke is in the process of compiling and publishing the official bird checklist for the Antilles islands and was also delighted with the discovery and said that she would include the new species in the checklist.

With so few good field biologists on Bonaire, it is quite possible that many bird species from Venezuela are here on our island without being discovered. The distance from Venezuela, just 95 km. across the Caribbean Sea, is by no means enough of a barrier to the birds to keep them from finding our island in their flights. Recently, I sighted two other species from Venezuela: a Southern Lapwing, in May, 2006 (also a new species for Bonaire) and a Red-legged Honeycreeper, also from Venezuela, was photo-

graphed and sent to me for identification from residents of Kontiki Beach Club in 2006. This was the second record of this species on Bonaire.

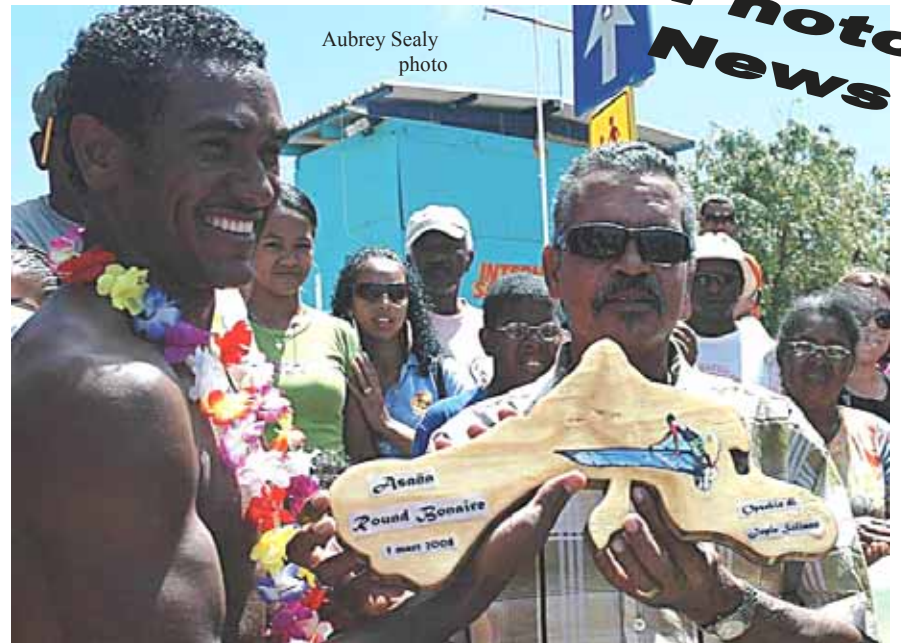
Presently we are trying to get photos and more information of a Scarlet-fronted Parakeet that has been seen at Dos Pos by both myself and Sam, who first reported “a strange Aratinga” flying with the Brown-throated Parakeets that are native to Bonaire. We currently do not know how this parakeet with brilliant red on the face got here, whether illegally captured in Venezuela by a native countryman who also lives and works on Bonaire, and brought the bird here and released it, or whether it did indeed cross the distance from mainland South America to Bonaire. The parrot family members are not known to be highly exploratory, so this species has not been added to Bonaire's avifauna list. ■

Jerry Ligon

Jerry Ligon is the Naturalist at Bonaire Dive and Adventure



Swallow-Tanager postage stamp



Aubrey Sealy photo

Photo News

One of Bonaire's champion windsurfers, Tati Frans, took only three hours and 45 minutes, a record, to windsurf around Bonaire last Sunday to raise funds for Bonaire's entries in the 2012 Olympics. He met waves of more than seven feet (two meters) high as well as light winds. In the photo Jopie Soliano presents Tati with a memento of the achievement.



Jong Bonaire photo

Jong Bonaire welcomed a new board member this week, Kerenza Rannou-Frans (circled). In the photo are members of the board: Alex Senchi, Selly Gromotka-Pourier, Alan Gross and Jane Townsend with Jong Bonaire Manager, Bilha Thomas (2nd from left) and their new colleague, Kerenza. Board President, Rene Hakkenberg, was not on island for the photo. Jong Bonaire intends to continue expanding its board.

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Island View

Transitions



VWO-5 students from the SGB high school get a sample of winter temperatures in the freezer of Warehouse Supermarket

Imagine you are still young, about six years old. And at home your parents speak (just as an example) English to you. On the streets you hear English; on television the cartoons are in English; and your friends communicate in a simple form of English. So all you hear and speak is this one language. Then you go to school and suddenly you have to understand Chinese. You have to learn to write Chinese, to count in Chinese, read Chinese and you have to speak Chinese. Can you see this little child that you are in your imagination, struggling with this new never-before-heard-of language? It is not fair to do this to this child, are you thinking that right now? Hold that thought, because this is exactly what is happening to a Bonairean child.

A Bonairean child (for the most part) speaks only Papiamentu with his or her parents and with his or her friends. The only language he or she will hear and speak is Papiamentu. But still when this child reaches the age of six, he or she will have an education in Dutch. This is a major obstacle for every child. For example there are children who cannot count in school, but when they help their parents in the shop, they will give the right amount of change to the customers. So the problem is not the counting, it is the language they have to count in.

For some time people are starting to recognize shortcomings of a Dutch educational system on a Papiamentu island. One of the ways to help the Bonairean child learn the basics (read, write and count) is the establishment of the 'Funderend Onderwijs'.

When a Bonairean child manages to finish high school with a diploma, he or she has managed to overcome the obstacle of language. It is an accomplishment which deserves a standing ovation. But the hurdle race is not finished yet. What to do after high school? Because this child has a diploma within a Dutch educational system, he or she will have to continue in the same system. Today more and more students can find their studies on the Netherlands Antilles themselves. But a lot of students have to leave the Caribbean for their studies, mostly for the Netherlands.

These students are forced to leave their island for the unknown. If they are leaving for another Antillean island, it will be strange but at least they will hear the language they are used to and they will be in the same climate. If they have to leave for the Netherlands, well, then Dorothy is definitely not in Kansas anymore. They have to get used to another culture, another climate, different kinds of people, being away from their family, and oh yes, they have to succeed in their studies as well. That is a whole bunch to deal with in one go, wouldn't you say? For a lot of students it is too much to deal with. Many Antillean students do not finish their studies successfully. That is a shame, because Bonaire needs students with diplomas for its progress.

So here I am, a mentor of a VWO 5. A VWO diploma gives you access to universities, and most universities for these students are in the Netherlands. It is a difficult transition from high school to the next level, and that is even without the emigration and the leaving-your-family-behind part. What can I do to make that transition go more smoothly? I am taking my class to the Netherlands! There they can meet the people, see the country, experience the weather and most importantly, visit different universities and colleges. This will help them to choose the right studies, and (hopefully) make things more easy and familiar for when they actually have to leave for real. Choosing the right study and quick acclimatization will increase the chance that a student will finish with flying colors. Ultimately this will help Bonaire when these students come back with their degrees.

Next time you read *The Reporter*, we will be in the Netherlands (which is largely made possible by the parents of VWO 5, thank you parents!). I will give you an update on what is happening across the ocean... it might be in Chinese, start practicing! To be continued. □

Story & photo by Mary Ann Koops
In addition to observing us, Koops teaches Biology at the SGB High School.



What's Coming Our Way?

This time exploring "what's coming our way," we head for the so-called hotel row on Kaya Gob. Debrot, just north of the roundabout. It wasn't too long ago that the land opposite Sand Dollar, Buddy Dive, Captain Don's and Hamlet were all just *mundi*. That has changed, and not just a bit.

Big pieces of land have been cleared. On some we already see construction appearing; on other ones no activity yet, but that must be a matter of time as billboards already announce the developments that will arise there. What about the complex of some wooden houses we see opposite the entrance of Hamlet? No billboard here, and at first sight we don't have much of an idea of what this will become. Time to check things out.

We learn from the owners that this place is going to become a small-scale resort. It will be called "Bamboo Bali," will consist of five, one-bedroom apartments, and its tagline will be "Where East meets West." That gives you an idea.

The location has been leased since 1998 by the owners/developers, a family who lived and worked on the island at the time. Around 2002 they left Bonaire for Holland but held on to the lease. They had some vague plans for the location, but they felt the time wasn't right yet.

In the years after they had the opportunity to travel extensively, especially through Asia. Plans for a small-scale resort were in the back of their minds, and they found inspiration in places like Thailand and Indonesia. They also travelled around many Caribbean islands where their plans could have been realized, but in the end they decided that Bonaire was the place to do it. And to make things somewhat easier...the location was still available here.

With the inspiration from



The wooden cottages at Bamboo Bali

Asia and their idea to set up "something different" they were sure they wanted to build wooden constructions. They looked for and found proper wooden do-it-yourself-kits that met their requirements. Only the concrete foundations were made by a contractor, but the rest of the entire construction has been, and still is being done, with their very own hands. From the beginning in April 2007 that wasn't always easy as their first eight months on the job no electricity was available, and their generator had the tendency to quit its job a little more often than they had wished for. During these days sleeping was in the back of the truck or, in case of rain, in the container.

Sounds like tough times, although Bastian Kuipers (who will also be managing the place once open) was active as a Dutch marine before and has probably experienced tougher conditions than this during his career.

Extensive rainfall over the last couple of months didn't make the construction job easier either but had its advantage too: the gardens planned for will be very lush and anything that had already been planted received their

fair share of water. We also see bamboo around (hey, now we get the name of the place!) and we are told that they have selected and brought 12 different types of it that will soon be growing around. Learning that bamboo can grow up to 8 m (24 ft) in height, it must make for mature gardens in no time.

Bamboo Bali aims to become a reasonably priced, small and intimate resort. One of the apartments will become the "Love Suite," featuring a hot tub and other amenities. We're getting curious here and will come and have a look once it's finished. That will be around October.

For sustainability, it is probably a wise decision not to have gas available in the kitchenettes in these wooden apartments. All cooking is electric. Although they are nice guys, you don't want firemen to become repeaters at your resort.

□ Story & photo by Marcel Leurs

Leurs is a developer himself (Brisas Lodge)



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