



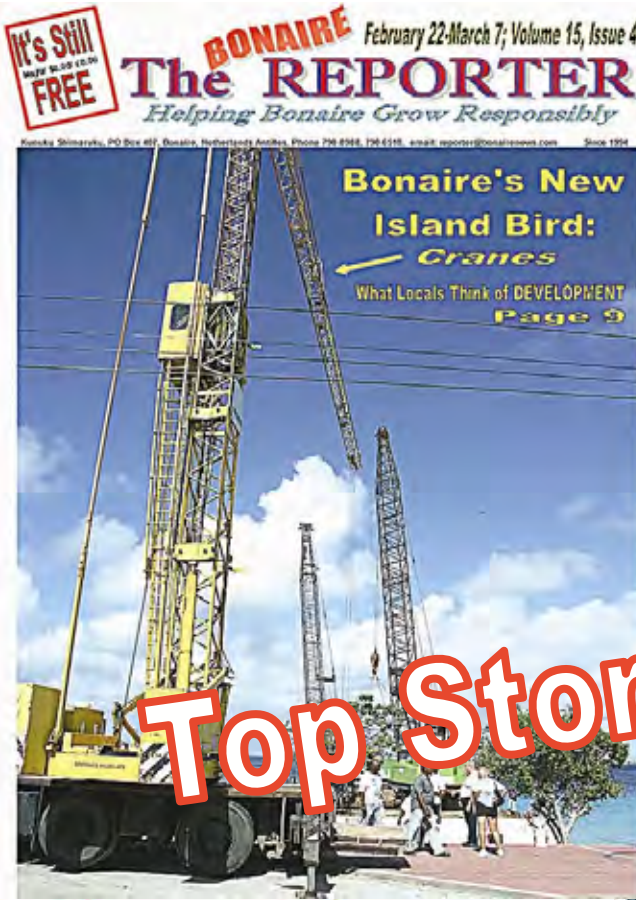
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The REPORTER

Helping Bonaire Grow Responsibly

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Kunuku Shimaruku, P.O. Box 407, Bonaire, Netherlands Antilles, Phone 790-6518, 786-6125, email: reporter@bonairenews.com Since 1994



Top Stories 2008

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 - Bonaire Dream Car? pg.10
 - Dusting Sponges pg. 18
 - ... and much more

The Bonaire Executive Council has officially taken note of the dangers to Bonaire's corals presented by the underground discharge of untreated waste water, especially from coastal properties. The government resolution followed a period of government investigation and strong recommendations by environmental advocates.



million, with the European Union contributing €19 million and The Netherlands €5 million.

The system will pipe the waste water inland and treat the waste sufficiently so that a portion of it can be used for irrigation in the coastal zone and for other agriculture. Construction of the system is scheduled to begin in mid-2010, with completion in 2014. An interim "Action Plan" to cut sewage discharge by trucking away wastewater that would otherwise percolate into the sea is set to begin this year.



Algal evidence of pollution at Lagoen

It's been proven that the trace nutrients in waste water are harmful to Bonaire's surrounding coral reef. These findings were reported to the government and published in *The Reporter*. In November, formal discussions were held with Bonaire's business community and environmental organizations to adapt the existing sewage treatment plan and adjust the capacity of the treatment plant. The Council expects that the number of beds in the tourist sector will double in the next eight years which makes the need for a sewage system in the coastal areas even more pressing. The sewage system, which includes third-stage nutrient removal, will require a capital outlay of €24

► Using the occasion of the first Kingdom Day, the Antillean Minister of Education, Sports and Culture, Omayra Leeftang, **released the Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands in three languages: Dutch, Papiamentu and English.** It is the first time that the entire Dutch Charter, issued on 15 December, 1954, has been translated into Papiamentu. Students of all secondary schools in the Antilles will get a personal copy of the Charter in three languages, as will public office holders and journalists. The first edition has a print run of 20,000 copies. It's expected that because of the coming constitutional changes in the Kingdom, the wording of the Charter will require changes.

► **Henk Kamp, who has**

► **The Bonaire jailhouse has been renovated.** The facility was reopened in early December by the Attorney General of the Antilles, David Dick, and the Minister of Justice of the Netherlands, Hirsch Ballin, in December. According to a press release the detainees themselves helped in the renovation during the three-month-long renovation. Facilities were added to aid in re-socialization of the inmates in addition to the former confinement-only environment. The six-man cells have been converted to four-man cells. The prisoners now sleep in ordinary beds instead of cots with thin mattresses. There are fitness facilities and day occupations available.



CAPTURED

► **Two prisoners escaped from the new jailhouse** between the hours of Saturday, December 20 at 11 pm and Sunday, December 21, at 9:40 am.

The cellmates who sawed through the bars, perhaps with tools stolen from the recent remodeling, were recaptured in Nikiboko on December 30. The men are: **Sigmar Inshron Fransisco Marchena**, born February 15, 1989 and **Rendolf Fransisco Engelhardt**, born December 19, 1983. Both are from Bonaire..

Marchena was being held as a secondary suspect in the Marlies van der Kouwe case. Engelhardt was in the first year of a six-year prison term for theft and robbery.

been appointed Dutch Commissioner for the BES islands-Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba, resigned from the Dutch Second Chamber last month and will be in his new job on January 5. Kamp was a right-wing Member of Parliament (MP) for the conservative VVD party. As an MP, Kamp made an impression by his strong opinions on asylum and integration. Kamp was born in the eastern Dutch city of Hengelo in 1952 and has been involved in national politics in the Netherlands since 1994.

► **Drug couriers can be sentenced to prison terms again now that their passports may**

no longer be seized. The Supreme Court decided last week that the ban on travel cannot be imposed because it is not included in the Antillean legislation.

Depending on the amount of drugs they had on them when they were caught, drug couriers will get prison terms of six to 18 months, half of which is conditional. This implies that the cells of Bonaire's jailhouse and of Curaçao's Bon Futuro prison are going to be heavily occupied again.

► **Jason Nisbet (40) was recently appointed as head of**

(Continued on page 8)

► **To help take the first steps to becoming a genuine unique municipality (gemeente) of the Netherlands, State Secretary Ank Bijleveld inaugurated the Regional Service Center (RSC) in the APNA building on Bonaire to serve Bonaire and be the headquarters for the BES islands.** The intention is to expedite the promised improvements in education, security, public health and infrastructure of the BES islands. Its executive services will begin the shift from

V&P photo



Antillean to Dutch methods of inspections, Tax and Customs Administration and licensing. RSCs were opened on Saba and Sint Eustatius as well.

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Cover Story **Top Stories of 2008**

The first breezes of the new Bonaire started to blow in 2008 as the wishes of the majority of voters in the 2004 Referendum started to become reality. Many of the year's top stories form the root of what is to come.

1— Bonaire Nobo

A steady progress of discussions, conferences and signings have led to Bonaire's departure from the Antillean constellation and into close ties with Holland.

A sure sign is the establishment of "Regional Service Centers" staffed by Dutch bureaucrats to guide the transition of the BES Islands into the mainstream of the Dutch establishment. In return for conformance to the Dutch standards Bonaire is promised an upgrade of its education, health care, social services, justice system, infrastructure and more.

Another indicator of the importance the Dutch are giving to the matter is the naming of a commissioner to guide the overall process of integrating the islands into the Netherlands as "public entities." Former conservative Dutch Defense Minister, Henk Kamp, with his reputation as a serious politician of few words, will take up



Bonaire's delegation at the latest "Round Table Conference" who confirmed Bonaire's willingness to cooperate in achieving integration with The Netherlands.

residence in Bonaire to carry out his czar-like role.

When a government wants to signal that an issue really matters, there is nothing like a czar. The idea is to have someone on the scene with the Dutch ministry's ear to coordinate policy and give the topic the weight it deserves. Such a post gives an issue prominence, allows for coordination among agencies and streamlines decision making.

2— The Environment

Sparked by a visibly fast decline in the health of its tourist-attracting coral reefs, environmental activists and environmental protection organizations applied unprecedented pressure on the local gov-

ernment to act to slow the reef's decline. Expert after expert, including the manager of the Bonaire National Marine Park, voiced the opinion that unless immediate action to stop wastewater discharge into the ground was taken the reefs would slowly decline and disappear.

The news of the delay in the completion until 2014 on the sewage system to remove waste water from the coastal zone was ameliorated by the promise of an "Action Plan" to truck waste to the interior of the island for treatment beginning in early 2009.

Good news was that the wind turbine project, including new biodiesel-capable generators, was on schedule and may be operational by the end of 2009.

3— Crime

The perennial complaints about police ineffectiveness against thefts took a back seat to general outrage when a trainee was abducted on her way home. For a month the disappearance of Marlis van der Krouwe was front page news in Bonaire and Holland. The poor police follow-up to the report of her abduction resulted in a shake-up in the department. After a month her body was discovered and several people are in jail awaiting trial on a variety of charges.

4— Tourism and Development

The government projected that Bonaire

will have double the number of "tourist-beds" that it has now by 2015.

In 2008 the number of cruise ship passenger arrivals almost doubled. Airlift from the US grew considerably. All of this seems to have created a building boom that shows no sign of stopping despite the worldwide economic crisis.

The government is taking a harder line against developers who do not meet their commitments, suing to take away their concessions.

5— Cultural Preservation

Closer ties with the Dutch and the increased immigration needed to support development have troubled local people who fear for the suppression of their culture. However, if anything, cultural events and their commemoration are growing. Record numbers of people visited Rincon, a community that consciously works to preserve its heritage. Events like Rincon Day, the Kite Flying competition and the expansion of Man-gazina di Rey are encouraging.

The Bonaire tradition of volunteerism continued even in the face of economic hardship caused by escalating fuel prices and the declining dollar.

Overseas funds are more easily obtainable, perhaps because of the perception that closer ties with Holland will bring better financial responsibility. ■ G.D.

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On The Island Since... 2001 & 2008 *Rob and Silvia van de Vechte-Palomino*

“Since I was five I was crazy about the documentaries of Jacques Cousteau. I started diving in 1992 and in 2000 I came to Bonaire. From the very beginning I loved the island – it was home and since my divorce in 1998 I’d never found a place that felt like home. I saw this house, it was brand new, and I thought it over for two days and then I sold my company in Holland – an IT business and a diving school – and came to live here in 2001. I was 40.

I started a database development here and I had one client – that was all.” *He laughs:* “How horrible! So I sent out a mailing to 125 companies and I got zero response. But little by little and by word of mouth people started noticing my quality and the clients came, and now I’m working mostly for doctors and car rentals, but also for Bopec. And for the last year and a half I’ve had the area office for SSI (Scuba Schools International), the second largest diving organization in the world. I’ve all the dive equipment and books necessary for the training and I’m also printing the certificate cards for people who are doing the course on all the six islands of the Dutch Antilles.”

He smiles at his beautiful wife and says: “Last year, Silvia and I got in contact through the Internet over business, and after a while we also started writing privately. In July 2007 I bought a ticket to Lima, Peru, where she’s from, and when I saw her it was love at first sight. She was intelligent, caring and loving and, what was most important, we believed in it. Then everything went very fast.”

Silvia (32), says: “I lived in Lima, in a district called Paruro, but both my parents are originally from Cusco. I was working in my family’s company, professional audio and light equipment. I’d started working when I was 15 as a sales person and with my salary I paid for my study in administration. After I got my diplomas I worked with three associates in another business and when my brother returned from New York, where he was living, we formed the family company in 2002. Before I met Rob, I’d



Rob, Buddy and Silvia

traveled to various countries and I’d always felt that if I was ever going to get married my husband had to be from abroad, not from

my country. When I met Rob,” *she smiles gorgeously,* “I knew he was the love of my life and so I came to Bonaire in September 2007 to see my new future life. I liked the island and Rob’s dog, Buddy. Rob was very special – the man I’d always been looking for.”

“Then Silvia went back to Peru,” *Rob says,* “and I started

organizing the paperwork. We wanted to get married in Lima, but immigration told me it would be better for the permit to get married on Bonaire. I had an interview with Mr. Obispo to see if my reasons for marriage were honest and based on love and I was okay with that. It went very easy - just follow the rules. Im-

(Continued on page 5)

“I don’t want to see Bonaire big and crowded. I’d like to keep the open spaces and the low buildings. I came here to live in a normal way and to slow down and now you see so many regulations coming...”

			
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On the Island Since
(Continued from page 4)

migration is doing a good job and they are tough for a reason. We got married by law November 30th 2007." *He looks at Silvia and she says:* "It was the second time I came to Bonaire. I was alone but I'd met an Italian couple here and she was the first friend I met who spoke Spanish. They helped me with everything."

"It was a beautiful wedding," *Rob says,* "We got a special permit to get married in our own garden, and it was very private. Our families couldn't be here, but I'd put up webcams all over the place and so they could follow the entire ceremony through the Internet. And especially for the occasion my dog, Buddy, was wearing his tuxedo."

After the wedding Silvia went back to Peru to wait for her final permit and to organize the wedding in a church in Lima. It was a mixed marriage as she's a Catholic and I'm a Protestant and we needed a special permit. Usually it takes about a year to get it all together, but Silvia fixed it in four months. Christmas 2007 I went to Lima with all the papers and to get fitted for my wedding suit; then I flew back to Bonaire because I had to work. January 27th, I went back to Peru and I had Silvia's final permit with me."

"We got married February 2,



"And especially for the occasion my dog, Buddy, was wearing his tuxedo!"

2008 in the *Santisimo Nombre de Jesus* church in Lima," *Silvia says,* "55 people in total because my family is small." "I'd taken Spanish classes with FORMA," *Rob says,* "but I wasn't that fluent, so I had to listen very carefully to what the priest was saying in order to give the right answers at the right time, but we had practiced in an official rehearsal and everything went well. It was very impressive. Two days after the wedding we came back to Bonaire." *Silvia laughs:* "The first month I only stayed in the house and I didn't like it. I was used to going to work six days a week and to be independent, so it wasn't easy! I was looking for a job, but it was difficult as I didn't

speak English and I didn't have a driver's license. You know, in my country you don't need a car; taxis are very cheap and they take you everywhere. I had a nice life in Lima; I never had to clean, wash or cook because we have people for that. Every morning I went to the gym and then I started working from 10 am until 7:30 pm. I went out for lunch, at teatime and for dinner at night with my friends and so I really had to get used to being here.

Well, I took English lessons with Henk Piek and driver's lessons and I got my license and I learned to speak English and then, in October this year, I got a job as an administrator at Xavier Medical School. I like it and the

people and my colleagues are very nice. But I still don't like to drive. It makes me very nervous. Rob organizes his planning so that he can drop me off and pick me up for lunch – we always lunch at home – and so far we have the perfect marriage, but... you never stop learning things about each other."

Rob and Silvia are a wonderful couple and they make you feel at home immediately. She's a very smart girl and an absolute beauty, gracious inside and out, and he's a great guy, straight forward, open minded, sweet and a fast thinker. "This Christmas" *Silvia says, all smiles,* "we're going to Peru for three weeks and we're coming back with my parents who will stay here for the first time on vacation."

"I didn't see much of Peru yet," *Rob adds,* "but people are very caring and family oriented and I like that. Peru also has an impressive culture and I think if the time ever comes when we're not so happy here anymore, we will go there. Yeah..." *he sighs,* "there's a lot of change going on here and sometimes I'm ashamed of being Dutch – towards the local people – because the new Dutch have a very different attitude. They think money can buy everything and that's bad. I don't agree with that at all. I'm trying to help the island grow by bringing newer technologies which

help people do their work better and communicate with the world without harming the beauty of Bonaire. I don't want to see Bonaire big and crowded. I'd like to keep the open spaces and the low buildings. I came here to live in a normal way and to slow down and now you see so many regulations coming. I love the nature, the quietness, and I don't need a lot of things to be happy. The first traffic light they put up – I'll pull it out! We don't need that here!

And because of my hobby and diving profession I'm also very concerned about the reef; it will take a great effort to bring it back to its original state because a lot of damage has already been done and... it's the only source of income we have. What else do we have to offer? For me the beauty of Bonaire is simplicity and I think many debates have to take place to find the right way for the island. We're all in it together, 15,000 people, and we're all equal, no matter where you're from or the color of your skin – if only we could live and act with that thought in mind, the island would be a better place."

Greta Kooistra

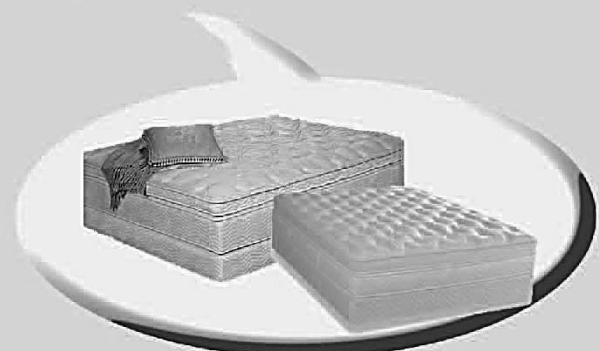


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MCB Honors STINAPA



MCB Director Evert Piar presenting the award to STINAPA Director Elsmarie Beukenboom. Looking on (l-r) Rudi Gomez and Orphaline Saleh from MCB and STINAPA Board members Papi Cicilia and Jeannette Nolan.

Seven years ago MCB Bonaire started an annual tradition at holiday time of recognizing an island organization that is active in our community and makes valuable contributions to Bonaire. Each year the Bank gives its employees the opportunity to nominate candidates, and from these nominations a winner is chosen.

This year's winner was *Stichting Nationale Parken* (National Parks Foundation – STINAPA Bonaire).

It is being honored for its long list of merits and achievements, not to mention the

priceless value its conservation efforts add our island. Again this year, as it has for the last seven years, Bonaire was selected as the Top Dive Destination Overall (Caribbean/Atlantic) in *Scuba Diving* magazine's Readers' Choice Awards 2008. In addition to the mentioned awards, this year Bonaire was also awarded the prestigious "Sustainable Tourism Award" by the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) and *Islands Magazine*.

These were the highlights of 2008, however, for many years Bonaire has been con-



sistently receiving international praise for how we go about protecting our natural environment. All over the world Bonaire is recognized as a pioneer and leader in nature conservation. Our Marine Park was founded in 1979 when people were hardly aware of the importance of preservation. The Marine Park, as well as Washington/Slagbaai Natural Park, have served as models for a great number of similar initiatives around the Caribbean and the rest of the world. International experts come to Bonaire to study its unique biological diversity, and needless to say, our island continues to be a very popular destination for eco-tourism, as tourists visit to enjoy our natural beauty.

STINAPA's logo correctly states "Nos ta Biba di Naturalesa" (We Live From Nature). It is our livelihood. In this context it is impossible to understate the enormous value of STINAPA's efforts and labor over the course of more than 46 years, for our lovely island Bonaire.


At the conclusion of the presentation Orphaline R. Saleh, Assistant Managing Director of the Bank, offered all present "heartfelt best wishes for the Holidays, and that in 2009 our island and its people will continue to shine, so we can positively manage any challenges that await us in the coming year." ■ *Press Release/G.D.*

Karnaval Is Coming



In 2009 the Karnaval Season begins early. **Karnaval time opens officially on January 10** with activities in Wilhelmina Park. More dates below.

- 1 February— Election of the youth Prince and Pancho
 - 7 February— Grand Tumba Festival
 - 8 February— Youth Tumba Festival
 - 9 February— Kabo Jump-up
 - 13 February— Election of the Queen, Prince & Pancho of Karnaval
 - 14 February— Children's Parade Rincon
 - 15 February— Children's Parade Playa
 - 20 February— Schoolchildren Parade
 - 20 February— Jump-up Jump-in
 - 21 February— Karnaval Parade– Rincon
 - 22 February— Karnaval Parade– Playa
 - 23 February— Youth Karnaval Farewell Parade (King Momito)
 - 23 February— Karnaval Farewell Parade (King Momo).
- This schedule was provided by Bonaire Karnaval Foundation (FUKABO), Robert Sances, President. *The Reporter* will continue to provide event details as they approach. ■ L./ G.D.



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BONAIREAN VOICES

MCB Recognizes The Press

VOLUNTEERS

Sometimes we talk about so many subjects but forget about our volunteers. If you had been to the SGB high school recently and visited the main bathrooms you would be amazed by the big change. It all started when one of the parents, Vicky Bissessar, was at the school with her children. When she went to the bathroom she was shocked at its condition. It was unhygienic and unclean. She couldn't believe that our whole community would accept the fact that their children who are going to the SGB would have to use the bathrooms in that state.

She explained, "After I had a conversation with the director, Mr. John van't Hof, about general purposes for the school I got permission to make a list of all the volunteers we needed to repair the bathrooms. Other volunteers and I began by getting the tiles, materials and the workers to do the job. Unfortunately, we had a list of some SGB students and other people who committed themselves to help but they didn't show up. So we had to look for others. I called Dennis Martinus, President of the Bonaire Youth Outreach Foundation and they sent four kids to help. Together with other volunteers we got the work done. We took the old tiles off, scraped the floor, removed the broken toilets and painted the bathrooms. All this we did in only three days. Some adults were very negative about this project, but we did it. We started it and we finished it. And if more parents would take the initiative a lot could be done, like cleaning the yard for instance.

Parents should realize that their children have to face these unpleasant situations every day, so if they can give a hand to improve things at school I think we will have a better community. Everybody should help: teachers, board members, everybody. And when people make a commitment they have to stick to their commitment because others are depending on them."

An ex-student of SGB and winner of a Gold Medal for 2008 as a volunteer, Sidney Vanblarcum (22), who participated in this bathroom fixing project, said, "I was motivated to help because I attended this school



Siomara Albertus photo

Youth Outreach Foundation volunteer

for more than four years and I know what the problems are. I had some very sad times when I was going to school and I met people who really wanted to bring a change to the school so I wanted to help and motivate other students to help keep the school clean.

Now that the bathrooms are totally new I encourage them to keep it this way, and they should encourage others to keep the bathrooms clean too. Usually people talk badly about the SGB students, but I don't agree with that. That's not where the problems are. It wasn't easy to repair the bathrooms and it was a very costly job. But definitely it was about time to do something. I hope that more can be done on a broader scale for the school and that te students commit themselves to do more for their school."

Volunteers are hard working people. They are always helping their community because they choose to do so. This year FESBO (Organization for the Community) rewarded six people and foundations. The Bonaire Youth Outreach Foundation was one of them.

Remember, volunteering is a contribution to your island Bonaire, the community and yourself. ■ Siomara E. Albertus

Send your comments to *The Bonaire Reporter*, P.O. Box 407, Bonaire, or email reporter@bonairenews.com.



MCB officers with members of the Bonaire Press Corps

Evert Piar, Managing Director of MCB Bonaire, offered some economic words of wisdom to members of the press gathered for the Bank's annual award party at Kon Tiki restaurant on Friday, December 19. "We are entering a new year with many dark clouds on the horizon with regard to our economies caused by worldwide financial turbulence. It is advisable that we start making our people alert and aware to be prepared and create strong reserves in case this turbulence hits our islands as well. There is no reason to panic, however, I do believe that with these developments you as the Press have an important task to create awareness. Aside from all the information and advice already being given on all fronts about how to live more economically, we should continue to educate our people to adjust their spending patterns and live within their means and create reserves for a rainy day.

Particularly at the closing of the year, when we have the habit of spending more than usual, I find it appropriate for this message to reach our citizens. I thank you in advance for your contribution in this, while our Bank will also certainly look after our part."

Following that advice, Orphaline R. Saleh, Assistant Managing Director of the Bank, as the in past years, presented MCB memento gifts to the press. She said, "we have the pleasure of giving our local members of the press a small gift to show our appreciation for their support. This year (in conjunction with the award to STINAPA.. ed.) we hoped to make a small contribution towards conservation, preservation and re-usage. This is why we assembled a package of useful items that one can apply to reduce consumption and waste. It includes among other things an Energy-Saver bulb, an insulated cup to take along your coffee or tea (and skip the disposable cups), a cooler bag that can be used as lunch box (eliminating the need for lunch purchased in foam containers, common on our island). And so on.

The wonderful thing about conservation is that we can all participate. Each individual can choose to use less energy, to stop using disposable items and reduce trash and to only take the car when it is really necessary, etc. Aside from helping to curb climate change, it also helps us deal with the the other global crisis, the financial

DO YOU SUDOKU?

To solve the puzzle, enter the numbers 1 through 9 to the partially filled in puzzle without repeating a number in any row, column or 3 x 3 region. **Answer on page 9.** Supplied by Molly Bartikoski-Kearney

		2			9			
		1					9	5
		6		8	1		3	
6					3		2	8
9	8			2			5	1
5	2		4					6
	6		8	7			5	
3	4						2	
			3				6	



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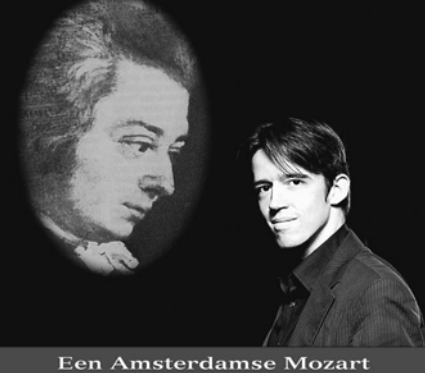
Flotsam and Jetsam (Continued from page 2)

Immigration Service, as the Antilles Ministry of Justice reorganizes Immigration operations. In this newly created function, Nisbet must drive the new organizational changes. In concept Immigration functions are divided. The police part of the immigration service – control, detention and deportation – remains under the Chief Immigration Bureau Curaçao, Pedro van der Biezen, and under the Police Corps. Nisbet will lead, as an independent organization, the administrative part of the Immigration service that deals with residence permits. This plan is subject to modification as it may conflict with the realization of new political relations in the Kingdom.

► **Once again, the island of Bonaire has swept top honors** while continuing its reign as one of the world's top dive destinations. For the seventh consecutive year, Bonaire has been rated the **Top Dive Destination Overall** (Caribbean/Atlantic) in *Scuba Diving* magazine's Readers' Choice Awards 2008. Bonaire also received the number one rating in eight other Caribbean/Atlantic categories: **Top Marine Life, Top Marine Environment, Top Macro Life, Top Shore Diving Destination, Top Destination for Underwater Photography, Top Destination for Beginners, Top Value, and Top Snorkeling.**

For the Reader's Choice awards, thousands of Scuba Diving subscribers and web users rated their dive experiences on a scale of one to five. Results of the 2008 Awards will be featured in the January/February 2009 issue of *Scuba Diving* magazine.

HET CONSOCIUM MARTINA
PRESENTEERT
RICHARD FLEMMING
piano



Een Amsterdamse Mozart

There will be a piano concert by **Richard Flemming** a performer of international stature, on **January 12 at 9:30 pm at the Plaza Resort.** Flemming is an outstanding Dutch pianist, 26 years old. He will perform compositions of Beethoven, Mozart, Chopin and Bach. The concert is organized by Consocium Martina. Tickets are available from December 30 at the Bonaire Museum and in the bookstores on Kaya Grandi and later on at the concert.

► **Soufriere Hills volcano on the island of Montserrat erupted several times in December** causing a pyroclastic flow on the western side of the lava dome. The explosion occurred without any warning. There was no precursory seismic activity. The eruption poses no threat to the surrounding islands, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba Meteorological Service reported.

► Every January 1 a group of children and adults in colorful costumes and masks show up to dance and perform

short skits. They arrive, quietly and mysteriously.

They don't speak and only communicate through their actions. No one knows who they are; even the members themselves may not know who else is among them...**It's the Maskarada, a Bonairean tradition.**

They begin at the Governor's homes at 10 am, then go to the Kas di Sosiego (old folks home at the hospital). At 1 pm they'll be in Wilhelmina Park, then to homes in Nord Salina. On Sunday, January 4 they'll be in Antriol and Nikiboko, beginning at 9 am at the Panaderia Selektta.

► **Attention all sailors on Bonaire.** You can help the island's young sailors. Volunteers to support the Optimist sailing lessons on Friday are urgently needed. Please call Agnes at **717-3720** or send an e-mail to agnes-ap@hotmail.com.

► Welcome to new regular *Reporter* advertisers: **Regimac**, for the best in aluminum doors and windows; **Patagonia Argentinean Restaurant**, the originators of Argentine cuisine on Bonaire; **Bonaire Basics & Eveline Mind Body and Spirit** who are having their grand opening on January 21.

► *The Reporter* is "Still Free," and wishes all our readers, sponsors and advertisers who keep it that way, a rewarding New Year. ■ G./L.D.



Pet of The Week

So far, this little kitten, "Edgar," has had a horrible life, then a very happy one. He was found abandoned on the streets of Bonaire and brought into the Animal Shelter.

He was so thin, so sick and so terrified of everything that it looked like he was going to have to go to kitty heaven. But there was just something about him that caught one of the staff member's hearts, so she brought him home with her and nursed him back to life.

Look at him now! He's peppy; he's perfect; and how handsome he is with his red and white fur. For an even happier ending to Edgar's short life he should be adopted into a loving and appreciative home. That would be the answer to all his dreams. As are all the other adoptees at the Shelter Edgar is in top health, having been examined by the vet, has had his shots and worming and will be sterilized when he's old enough. All this in the Cat Adoption Fee of



Edgar

only NAf 75.

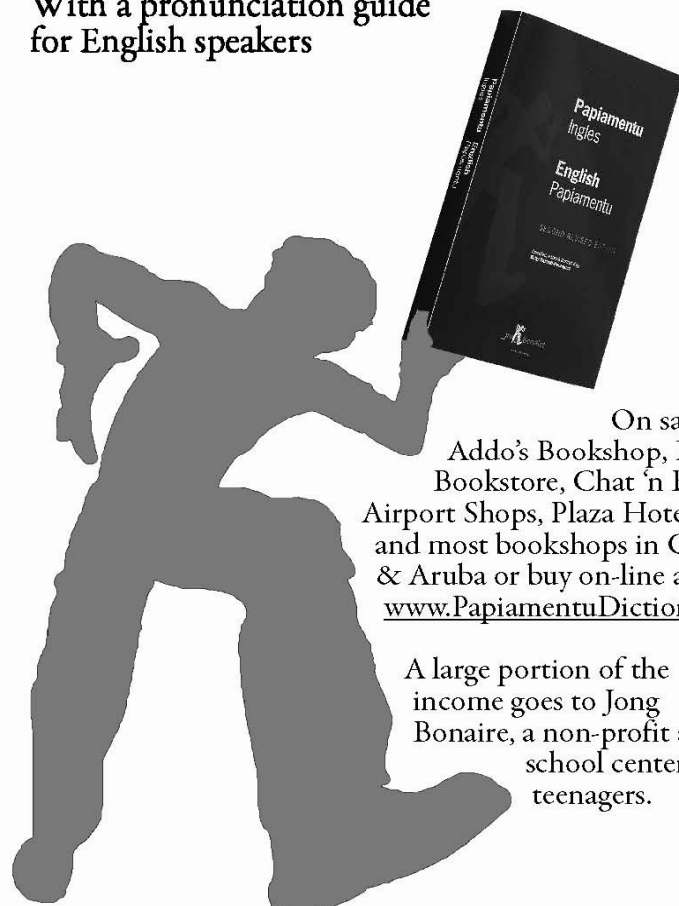
The Shelter is on the Lagoen Road, open Monday through Saturday, from 9 to 1 and from 3 to 5. Tel. 717-4989.

This is the time of year with all the fireworks that pets run away and become lost. Please remember: the Bonaire Animal Shelter will be acting as an information contact. If you have lost a pet or if you've found one call the Shelter at 717-4989. ■ L.D.

Papiamentu-English Dictionary

by Betty Ratzlaff

With a pronunciation guide for English speakers



On sale at Addo's Bookshop, Flamingo Bookstore, Chat 'n Browse, Airport Shops, Plaza Hotel Shop and most bookshops in Curacao & Aruba or buy on-line at: www.PapiamentuDictionary.com

A large portion of the income goes to Jong Bonaire, a non-profit after-school center for teenagers.

Jong Bonaire

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End Of Year Regatta



Participants

One of the most rewarding sailing events of the year is the annual End Of Year Regatta. This year was no exception as the prizes weren't trophies but consumables, like ham. Results are listed below:

Optimist A

- 1 place Santiago Alvarez
- 2 place Blue Burger

Optimist B

- 1 place Kasper POT
- 2 place Dillon Ranou

Sunfish Juniors

- 1 place Ruben van Eldik
- 2 place Noah Oleana
- 3 place Ernd Chirino

Sunfish A

- 1 place Sipke Stapert
- 2 place Franklin "Cachan" Soliano
- 3 place Fred Corporal

Laser

- 1 place Ton Nuijten
- 2 place Dick de Jong

Catamaran

- 1 place Rob Taal/ Pieter Zweers
- 2 place Stevan/ Daneke Verbiest
- 3 place Merel/Pieter Wttiveen

Windsurf Kids

- 1 place Amado Vrieswijk
- 2 place Dylan Robles
- 3 place Jurgen Saragoza

Windsurf Juniors

- 1 place Bjorn Saragoza

Windsurf Men

- 1 place Elton "Taty" Frans

Yachts

- 1 place Ella Rosa

Fishing Boats

Ethienne

■ Results & photo by Jessica Sint Jago

Delta Adds JFK-BON Flight



TCB photo

Just in time for the Christmas season Delta Airlines began non-stop flights from New York City's John F. Kennedy Airport to Bonaire's Flamingo Field. The first flight crew was given a warm welcome by government and tourism officials (photo).

Flight 553, scheduled to leave at 10:35 am, actually left JFK at 3 pm because of a snowstorm. The return flight, 554, is scheduled to depart Bonaire at 5:15 p.m. arriving at 9:05 p.m. in New York. Delta is flying a Boeing 737-800 with 138 coach and 16 first class seats. ■G.D.

Bonaire Government Website Launched

Governor Thodé, Island Secretary González and Commissioner el Hage, symbolically clicked a mouse to launch Bonaire's Government website: www.bonairegov.an. The eclectic Papiamentu/Dutch site contains government-related news, information, reference materials and forms for download. ■G.D.



Photo V&P



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Animal Hospital Dierenkliniek

Dierenartsen team:
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Drs. Hans & ETTY Lambeek
Drs. Seib Fietsma
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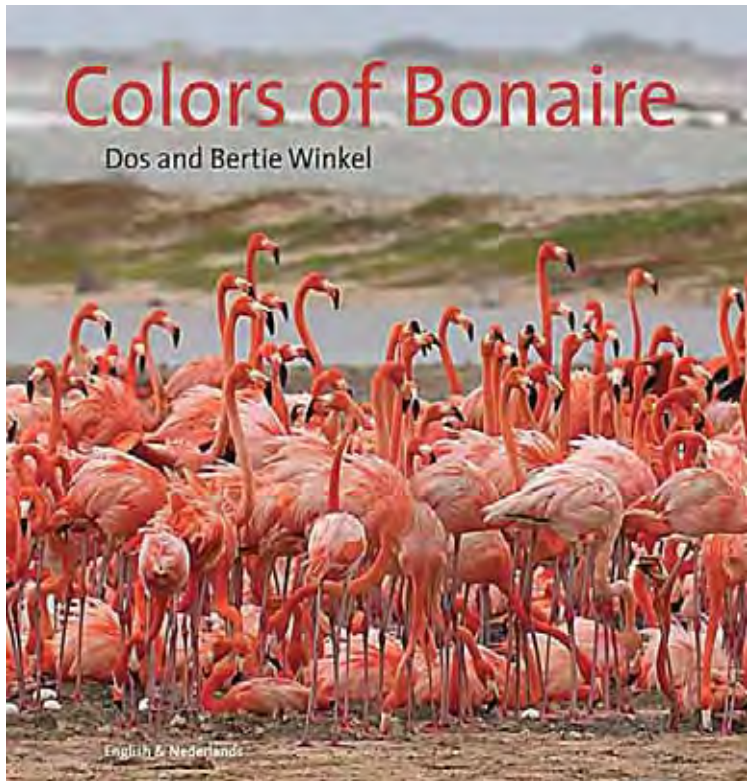
SOLUTION TO DO YOU SUDOKU?

Puzzle on page 7

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731 264 895
496 581 732
617 953 428
984 627 351
523 418 976
169 872 543
345 196 287
278 345 619

Colors of Bonaire

by Dos and Bertie Winkel



wide angle, close up and amazing aerial view photography. Of particular interest is that the books have been printed

In the spirit of Dos and Bertie Winkel's concept of "vanishing worlds, the newest in their series of books about Bonaire, "Colors of Bonaire," may be your last chance to see what Bonaire was before the acceleration of development began.

Previous books by this talented and energetic couple were primarily collections of spectacular photos, both above and below the water. However, in "Colors of Bonaire," there's something new. Dos explains, "There is a lot more text in this one with some very useful information. There's more about Bonaire's history, its culture, its parks, caves, birds and reptiles. Every chapter is by an author who has lived, worked or studied here. It has all new photos, new subjects, even inside information on special people living on the island." It is the most beautifully illustrated book on Bonaire to date. Learn about the plants, the birds, amphibians and reptiles, history of the aloe vera, the salt pans, the archeology, accompanied by

with new inks which makes the colors more vivid and gives the photos more dimension. It's called the Kaleido system and there are only three printers who can do this, according to Dos. The colors are so vibrant and alive it's almost like viewing a slide.

The book, in English and Dutch, is available at shops around the island and sells for about \$50.

For more information go to their website: WWW.dos-bertie-winkel.com

Other books of Bonaire and the Netherlands Antilles by Dos and Bertie Winkel: *Watercolours Bonaire; Island Colours Bonaire; Nature Colours Curaçao; The Nature of Saba; Eye on Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao; Eye on St. Maarten, Saba and St. Eustatius.* ■ L. D.



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Miss/Mr. Jong Bonaire 2008



And the winners are ...
Heleane Domacassé and
Edgar Perez.

and five male) under the guidance of the dynamic promoter Angelo Domacasse.

The auditorium of Jong Bonaire was packed to see the spectacular "Western Cowboy" themed pageant and determine the winning candidates.

The results for Miss Jong Bonaire 2008 competition were:

- Heleane Domacasse** -Miss Jong Bonaire 2008
- Danik Thielman** -First Runner-up
- Mihayley Mercera**-Miss Dynamika
- Albaloes Melaan**- Miss Popularity

The results for Mr. Jong Bonaire 2008 were:

- Edgar Perez**- Mister Jong Bonaire 2008
- Benjamine Winklaar** First Runner-up
- Reuben Vlijt**- Second Runner-up
- James Victoria**- Mister Simpatiko
- Milton Frans**- Mister Dynamik

The response to this event proves that the Jong Bonaire program continues to have a positive influence on the community. The organizers extend their thanks to the sponsors and parents who contributed to the success of the program. ■ G.D.



Jong Bonaire photos

We are closed for the holidays...

Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year!
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Helpers Recognized



At a reception at Plaza Resort Police Chief John Schagen gave special recognition to individuals and organizations on Bonaire who gave significant help to them in solving the case of the disappearance of Marlis van der Kouwe. They included: Vrijwillige Korps Bonaire, SSV, STINAPA, BIA, Cultimara NV, Domein Beheer, DROB and WWSP. During the September-October investigation relations between the police and local groups became strained. The recognition helped to mend feeling. ■ G.D.

Picture Yourself With The Reporter Australia



While visiting family in Australia Marion and Eddy de Wit-Korschilgen posed at the highest township in Australia, Cabramurra, in the Snowy Mountains at 1488m (4881 feet) with the *Bonaire Reporter*. They also didn't miss the famous opera house in Sydney. ■

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.



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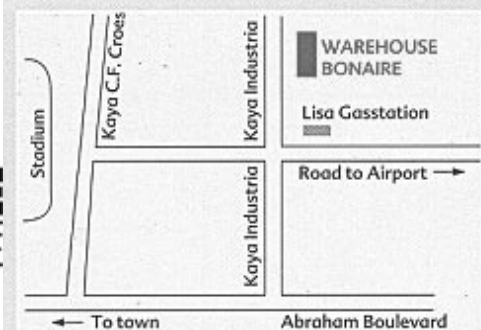
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KRALENDIJK TIDES (Heights in feet, FT)

1-02	0:11	1.0FT.	9:27	1.5FT.				64
1-03	8:04	1.6FT.	23:37	1.0FT.				57
1-04	8:09	1.7FT.	23:22	1.0FT.				50
1-05	8:33	1.9FT.	18:12	1.0FT.	20:03	1.0FT.	23:18	49
1-06	9:10	2.0FT.	18:37	0.9FT.				53
1-07	9:49	2.1FT.	19:19	0.8FT.				62
1-08	10:28	2.2FT.	20:02	0.7FT.				74
1-09	11:17	2.2FT.	20:39	0.7FT.				86
1-10	12:01	2.2FT.	21:26	0.7FT.				95
1-11	12:49	2.1FT.	22:08	0.7FT.				101
1-12	13:41	2.0FT.	22:42	0.8FT.				103
1-13	14:28	1.9FT.	23:13	0.8FT.				100
1-14	15:27	1.7FT.	23:44	0.9FT.				93
1-15	0:01	1.0FT.	7:04	1.4FT.	11:37	1.4FT.	16:20	83
1-16	0:14	1.0FT.	7:21	1.6FT.	14:09	1.2FT.	17:38	71
1-17	0:04	1.1FT.	7:50	1.7FT.	15:53	1.1FT.	19:08	58

Who's Who on The Bonaire Reporter

Take The Reporter Home—1-year subscription: By mail to US \$65; By mail to Europe \$130. By Internet \$25 donation. For information about subscriptions, stories or advertising in The Bonaire Reporter, PO Box 407, Bonaire, Netherlands Antilles; phone (599) 790-6518, 786-6125, E-mail: info@bonairereporter.com

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Letters to the Editor



CRUISE SHIP RED ALERT

Dear Editor:
This is madness!!!! These people should not be bought ashore.
Jopie Abraham

----- Forward of a message sent to tour operators and others involved in transporting Bonaire's cruiseship tourists -----

Sent: Tuesday, December 23, 2008 5:27 PM

Subject: EMERALD PRINCESS RED LEVEL ALERT

Dear All,
 Please be advised that *Emerald Princess* is on Red Level due to a Numbers of **ACUTE GASTROENTERITIS** increasing onboard and all Red Level Protocols must be initiated with immediate effect..

The role of Shore Excursion staff is vital to preventing the spread of illness since any passengers who become ill while on tours (**particularly while on coach transport**) are highly likely to spread the illness to many other people.

All Shore Excursion staff must be prepared to prevent individuals who report illness from participating in Shore Excursions.

TOUR TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

-Tour Operators will be provided with vomit bags.

-Passengers who report nausea while on the bus should be escorted off the bus and provided alternative transportation, if possible. If vomiting occurs in the bus, the affected area must be isolated where possible. The vomit/diarrhea residues must be covered with paper towels or absorbent powder and sprayed with Virox; the ship will provide this. The bus should be taken out of service as soon as possible, until it is fully cleaned and disinfected.

-If the incident occurs away from the ship, the coach should stop and allow passengers off the bus until the affected area is cleaned. Surrounding areas should be thoroughly sprayed with Virox and left for at least 5 minutes before wiping down. All cloths and contaminated materials should be bagged and disposed of. Passengers should be kept out of the vehicle for as long as possible and all doors and windows opened to ventilate the area.

You must report any ill passenger during a Shore excursion and keep the tour tickets separated by bus number.

I appreciate in advance your cooperation in this matter.

I will request you report at the end of the day an email confirming no PVI/PDI incidents while on the tour.

With Best Regards,

Roxana Calderon
 Shore Excursion Manager
 m/v *Emerald Princess*

Received by *The Reporter* 12/26/08.

Bonaire Dream Car?



What may be the ideal vehicle for Bonaire, the island that probably has the most air compressors per capita than anywhere else on earth, is coming into production. It's an air-powered car and may be available sooner than you think at a price tag that will hardly be a budget buster. The vehicle may not run like a speed racer on back road highways, but developer Zero Pollution Motors (<http://zeropollutionmotors.us/>) is betting consumers will be willing to fork over \$20,000 for a vehicle that can motor around all day on nothing but air and a splash of salad oil, alcohol or possibly a pint of gasoline. On Bonaire you can even "refuel" it at a dive shop!

The expertise needed to build a compressed air car, or CAV, is not rocket science, either. Years-old, off-the-shelf technology uses compressed air to drive old-fashioned car engine pistons instead of combusting gas or diesel fuel to create a burst of air to do the same thing. Indian carmaker Tata has no qualms about the technology. It has already bought the rights to make the car for the huge Indian market.

On highways, the CAV can cruise at interstate speeds for nearly 800 miles with a small motor that compresses outside air to keep the tank filled. The motor isn't finicky about fuel. It will burn gasoline or diesel as well as biodiesel, ethanol or vegetable oil. Pollution is said to be insignificant.

This car leaves the highest-mpg vehicles you can buy right now in the dust. Even if it used only regular gasoline, the air car would average 106 mpg, more than double today's fuel sipping champ, the Toyota Prius. The air tank also can be refilled when it's not in use by being plugged into a wall socket and recharged with electricity as the motor compresses air. ... or at your favorite Bonaire drive-in air filling station.

Automakers aren't quite ready yet to gear up huge assembly line operations churning out air cars or set up glitzy dealer showrooms where you can ooh and aah over the color or style. But the vehicles will be built in factories that will make up to 8,000 vehicles a year, likely starting in 2011, and be sold directly to consumers.

There will be plants in nearly every state, based on the number of drivers in the state. Although not in the current plan, a CAV plant would be perfect for Bonaire. ■

G.D.

General Specifications:

Length - 13.4 ft
 Width - 5.97 ft
 Height - 5.74 ft
 Seating - 6 seats
 Trunk volume - 35 cubic ft
 Weight - 1874 lbs
 Engine - 6 Cyl.
 Power - 75 hp
 Max Speed - 96 mph*
 Mileage - 106 mpg*
 Range - 848 miles (8 gal tank) *
 Co₂ - 0.141 lbs/mile (at speeds >35mph; zero emissions at <35mph)
 * estimated performance and subject to change

Standard Features will include:

Computer based screen display of vehicle control parameters
 Full CFC-free A/C
 Airbags
 Fully reclining driver's seat
 Power windows, door locks and mirrors
 Deluxe AM/FM stereo with cassette and

cd player, optional GPS
 Rear window defogger
 Concealed spare tire
 All season 13-inch radial tires
Engine and Transmission Characteristics include:
 Horsepower: 75
 Power source: Electronically injected compressed air
 Oil volume and oil change interval: 0.8 liter at 50,000 miles
 Engine mount: Rear
 Transmission: Automatic, Continually Variable Transmission. Rear wheel drive.
 Suspension: Front coil spring, rear pneumatic.
 Steering mechanism: Rack and pinion.
 Chassis and body materials: Aluminum and fiber glass.
 Tanks: Thermoplastic lining and carbon fiber.
 Fuel Characteristics: Compressed Air: 3200 ft³ @ 4500 psi
 Charger: On board 5.5 kwh 110/220 v

NEW RESTAURANT LISTING

Advertise your restaurant in *The Bonaire Reporter* the only island newspaper exclusively for Bonaire's locals and tourists.

In English, the language of bargains and business. People read it because they need it!

With your advertisements get



- Directory Listing
- Advertising on the Internet
- Editorial Coverage

6 ad special

Call Laura 790-6518 / 786-6518

Bubbles from the Biologist

Did You Know...

that Parrotfish are partly responsible for the accumulation of sand on the shores of Bonaire?

Without their defecating sand particles onto the reefs, the substrate



would be mostly rocky. In addition, they feed primarily on algae, which is very important for the corals especially since the long-spined urchins had a massive die-off over two decades ago. Both urchins and parrotfish are voracious consumers of algae and their grazing habits prevent the reefs from being overgrown and overrun by the faster-growing algae. Parrotfish are therefore essential for Bonaire's reefs if corals are to be preserved. Currently Bonaire has a decent population of these fish and it is important that we are mindful of not overfishing or polluting the waters and harming the Parrotfish population to ensure that a healthy and diverse ecosystem is maintained in Bonaire and elsewhere for generations to come. Besides their contribution to coral reefs, they are also quite captivating such as the Queen Parrotfish in the picture above. ■

Chiu Cheng

Cheng's hometown is Easton, Pennsylvania. She is currently a student at Moravian College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, graduating next spring with a major in Environmental Studies. For the Fall 2008 semester, she's studying abroad at the CIEE Research Station Bonaire.



Bonaire Images in the USA



Bonaire Iguana



Nick and Britta Monaco, pictured at right, regular visitors to Bonaire displayed their photos of the island in an exhibit Images Above and Below the Waves of Bonaire, at the Arts Barn Invitational Gallery in Gaithersburg, Maryland during the month of December. Visit the City's website at www.gaithersburgmd.gov/artsbarn for more information. ■

Bonaire's transplanted Dutch artist Henk Roozendaal painted this photo of the American photo artists. Henk Roozendaal's recent exhibit at Kas di Arte, was entitled "Indians of Bonaire." The exhibit ran from December 21 to 31. "This was a project for a new resort," Henk explains. "Indians are part of the history of our island. For my models I wasn't looking for 'Indians by race,' but Indians at heart!" For more examples of this prolific artist's work: <http://henkroozendaal.exto.nl/gallery/objects/id/12543822.html>. ■ L.D.

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28A. Tel # 717-6446 or 717-6448
Fax # 717-6447 Email: tis@telbonet.an

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BONAIRE BASICS

Grand opening: Bonaire Basics, Centre for Awareness

Saturday January 24th 3.00 – 6.00 pm
Kaya Korona 47, 717-3041 of 786-3341

- Massages: relaxation, hot stone, herb bags, ear candling and deep tissue.
- Coaching/Training: the Work by Byron Katie, Non Violent Communication by Marshall Rosenberg, Mediation
- Workshops: Theatre, Drawing (portrait) Painting, Glassblowing
- Space for rent: clean, neat and colorful For meetings, workshops, retreats or classes.
- Shop: Eveline, body, mind, spirit
Indulge your 'self' in the luxury of our earth friendly delights; oils to nourish the BODY, books to enhance the MIND, and music to lift the SPIRIT

Follow your heart to **Eveline; body, mind, spirit**

WHAT'S HAPPENING

HAPPENING SOON

Wednesday, December 31 – New Years Eve – fireworks all over the island and at many of the resorts. Culmination at midnight.

Thursday, January 1 – Maskarada – Adults and children in costumes and masks perform skits and play music, 1 pm, Wilhelmina Park. A Bonairean tradition. - More on page 8.

Saturday, January 3 – Rincon Big Monthly Marché, local food, tours, gifts, music and more, 6 am to 2 pm. WWW.infobonaire.com/rincon

Saturday, January 3 – Open Flea Market, Parke Publiko Bonaireano, 3 pm. Free entrance. To rent a table call 786-1592

Sunday, January 4 – Maskarada, 9 am Panaderia Selekt. More on page 8.

Sunday, January 11 – Full Moon

Monday, January 12—Richard Flemming piano concert, Plaza Resort, 9:30 pm. Tickets at the Bonaire Museum, bookstores on Kaya Grandi or at the door. More on page 8.

Arts & Crafts Markets at Wilhelmina Park on Cruise Ship Days, usually 10 am to 2 pm:

Fri., Dec. 19- Enchantment of the Seas

Mon., Dec. 22 – Grand Princess
Tues., Dec. 23 – Seven Seas Voyager, Sea Princess

Wed., Dec. 24 – Summit, Queen Mary 2

Fri., Dec. 26 – Enchantment of the Seas, Emerald Princess

Sat., Dec. 27 – Rotterdam

Sun., Dec. 28 – Oceana

Mon., Dec. 29 – AidaAura

Wed., Dec. 31 – Enchantment of the Seas, Summit

Thurs., Jan. 1 – Caribbean Princess

Tues., Jan. 6 – Ventura

Wed., Jan. 7 – Sea Princess

Fri., Jan. 9 – Enchantment of the Seas, Ocean Village

Mon., Jan. 12 - AidaAura

Tues., Jan. 13- Emerald Princess

Wed., Jan. 14 – Summit

Fri., Jan. 16 – Enchantment of the Seas

Tues., Jan. 20 – Seven Seas Mariner, Sea Princess

Fri., Jan. 23 – Ocean Village, Enchantment of the Seas

Sun., Jan. 25 – Oceana

Mon., Jan. 26 - AidaAura

Wed., Jan. 28 – Summit, Caribbean Princess

Fri., Jan 30 – Enchantment of the

REGULAR EVENTS

- By appointment – **Rooi Lamoenchi Kunuku Park Tours** \$21 (includes tax). Discounts for residents and local people. Tel. 717-8489, 540-9800.

- **Parke Publico** children's playground open every day into the evening hours.

Saturdays

- **Rincon Marshé**—6 am-2 pm. Enjoy a Bonairean breakfast while you shop, fresh fruits and vegetables, gifts, local sweets, snacks, arts, handicrafts, candles, incense, drinks, music. **Big Marché first Saturday of the Month**—www.infobonaire.com/rincon.

- **Flea Market at Parke Publico every first Saturday of the month, 3 to 7 pm.** Everyone welcome to buy and to sell. NAf5 per selling table. More information and reservations for a spot call 787-0466

- **Soldachi Tours**—See the real Bonaire and be transported back in time. Learn about the history, culture and nature by Bonaireans from Rincon. Call Maria Koeks for more information—796-7870.

Mondays

- **Soldachi Tours of Rincon**, the heart of Bonaire, 9 am-noon. \$20-Call Maria, 717-6435-best island tour value
- **Dee Scarr's Touch the Sea Slide Presentation**, Capt. Don's Habitat, 8:30 pm. 717-8529

Thursdays

- **Flamingo Rockers at "Admiral's Hour" for yachtsmen and others**, Vespucci Restaurant, Harbour Village Marina. HH drinks, gratis tapas, 5-7 pm

Fridays

- **Harbour Village Tennis, Social Round Robin** 7-10 pm. \$10 per person. Cash bar. All invited. Call Elisabeth Vos at 565-5225

FREE SLIDE/VIDEO SHOWS

Sunday– Creature Feature— John and Suzie Wall of Buddy's Digital photo center present a multimedia slide presentation about Buddy's House Reef - pool bar **Buddy Dive**, 6:30-7 pm, 717-5080

Tuesday —Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire presents the *Sea Turtles of Bonaire Slide Show*. Every 1st & 3rd Tuesday, Buddy Dive Resort, 6:30 pm—717-3802.

Tuesday-- Bonaire Land and Ocean presentation by Fish-Eye Photo staff, 7pm on the big screen inside the Sunset Bar and Grill at Den Laman Condominiums.

Wednesday– Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire presents the *Sea Turtles of Bonaire Slide Show*, every 2nd & 4th Wednesday at Bruce Bowker's Carib Inn (717-8819) at 6:30pm.

BONAIRE'S TRADITIONS

Kas Krioyo Rincon—Step into Bonaire's

past in this venerable old home that has been restored and furnished so it appears the family has just stepped out. Local ladies will tell you the story. Open Monday thru Friday, 9-12, 2-4. Weekends by appointment. Call 717-2445.

Mangasina di Rei, Rincon. Enjoy the view from "The King's Storehouse." Learn about Bonaire's culture. Visit homes from the 17th century. Daily. Call 717-4060/790-2018

Bonaire Museum on Kaya J. v.d. Ree, behind the Catholic Church in town. Open weekdays from 8 am-noon, 1:30-5 pm. Tel. 717-8868

Washington-Slagbaai National Park, Museum and Visitors' Center. Open daily 8 am-5 pm. Closed on some holidays. 717-8444/785-0017

CLUBS and MEETINGS

AA meetings - every Wednesday at 7pm; every Sunday at 5pm. Phone: 786-7699 .

Al-Anon meetings - every Monday evening at 7 pm. Call 790-7272

Weekly Bonaire Talker Gathering and Dinner at Gibi's - Tuesday - 6:30 pm - call 567-0655 for directions.

Bridge Club - Wednesdays, 7.30 pm) All levels, NAf2,50. Call Joop 717-5903 for venue.

Darts Club plays every other Sunday at City Café. Registration at 4, games at 5. Tel. 717-2950, 560-7539.

JCI - First Wednesday of the Month- Junior Chamber International Bonaire (JCI Bonaire, formerly known as Bonaire Jaycees) meets at the ABVO building, Kaminda Jato Baco 36 from 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Everyone is welcome. Contact: Renata Domacassé 516-4252. **Kiwanis Club** meets at APNA Plaza, Kaya International, every other Tuesday, 7 pm. Tel. 717-5595, Jeannette Rodriguez.

Lions Club meets every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at 8 pm at Kaya Sabana #1. All Lions welcome. For more information call 510-0710. **Rotary** lunch meetings Wednesday, 12 noon-2 pm - 'Pirate House', above ZeeZicht Restaurant. All Rotarians welcome. Tel. 717-8434

Toastmasters Club meets every two weeks. For more information call Crutita de Palm at 786-3827 or Lucia Martinez Beck, at 786-2953.

CHURCH SERVICES

Protestant Congregation of Bonaire: Kralendijk, Wilhelminaplein. In Papiamentu, Dutch, English, Sundays, 10 am.

Rincon, Kaya C.D. Crestian, in Papiamentu, Sundays, 8:30 am.

Children's club, Saturdays, 5 pm, in Kralendijk

Sunday School, Sundays, 4 pm, in Rincon. Bible Study and Prayer meetings, Thursdays, at 8 pm, Kralendijk.

New Apostolic Church: Centro di Bario Nord Saliña, Sundays, 10 am. Services in Dutch. 700-0379 .

International Bible Church of Bonaire, at SGB High School auditorium (Kaya Frater Odulfinus, off Kaya Korona.) Sunday services in English at 9 am; Sunday evening prayer meet-

ing at Pastor's home, 7 pm. Fridays, 6 to 8 pm, Light & Life Club, children 5 to 12 yrs. Tel. 717-8332.

Catholic: San Bernardus in Kralendijk – Services, Sunday at 8 am and 7 pm in Papiamentu, 717-8304.

Our Lady of Coromoto in Antriol, Saturday at 6 pm in English. Mass in Papiamentu on Sunday at 9 am and 6 pm. 717-4211.

Assembly of God (Asemblea di Dios): Kaya Triton (Den Cheffi). In English, Dutch & Papiamentu on Sunday at 10 am. Wednesday Prayer Meeting at 7:30 pm. 717-2194

Ministerio di Kristu Hesus Services Sunday mornings at 10 am at Jong Bonaire Youth Center in English, Dutch and Papiamentu. Preaching the full gospel. Contact: 786-2557.

Prayer and Intercession Church, in English. A full Gospel Church located temporarily at Kaya Alexandrit # 20, Santa Barbara, Republiek. Services are held on Sunday mornings from 10am until 11:30am. Bible studies in English are on Monday nights from 7 to 8 pm.

Contact: 717-3322

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: Kaya Sabana #26, Sundays: 9 am Sacrament Services (Translation to English and Papiamentu upon request) 10:20 Sunday School, 11:15 RS/YM/YW/PH Primary held from 10:20-12 noon Visitors Welcome: 701-9522 for Information **Send event info to:**

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SHOPPING and DINING 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

Hair Affair. Expert hair cutting, styling, facials and facial waxing.

BICYCLE / SCOOTER/ QUADS

De Freewieler rents bikes, scooters and quads. Professional repairs on almost anything on two wheels. Sells top brand bikes. Have your keys made here.

INTERNET AND CELLULAR SERVICE

MIO offers by far the clearest, most reliable phone signal on the island PLUS WIRELESS HIGH-SPEED INTERNET almost everywhere on Bonaire.

DINING

De Bonairiaan Restaurant is a unique restaurant run by the students of the Stichting Project with their advisors. Each day a different menu.

Kaya J. A. Abraham Blvd., #21
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WannaDive - They make diving fun. In town at City

Café, at Eden Beach and Windssock Apartments .

ScubaVision - Document your Bonaire vacation above and below the water with a custom DVD by Bonaire's top videographer

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.

Top Health Bonaire Fitness and Health Center Modern workout rooms and machines, professional trainers and low prices make it easy to lose weight and get fit.

GARDEN SUPPLIES AND SERVICES

Green Label has everything you need to start or maintain your garden. They can design, install and maintain it and offer plants, irrigation supplies and garden chemicals. Now in new expanded location off Kaya Industria.

INSURANCE

RSA, Royal Sun & Alliance is your one-stop shop for all your insurance needs: auto, home, boat and personal liability. Top notch service assured.

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REAL ESTATE / RENTAL AGENTS

Bonaire Sunshine Homes is the realtor with a local touch. Ask them to show you the good value homes they list. Call them if you are thinking of selling your home.

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Caribbean Homes, "the Refreshing Realtor," specializing in luxury homes, condos, lots, rentals and property management.

Re/Max Paradise Homes: Lots of choices in real estate—International/US connections. 5% of profits donated to local community. List with them to sell fast.

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RETAIL

Benetton, world famous designer clothes available

now in Bonaire at prices less than those in US. For men, women and children.

Best Buddies and Pearls—Stunning fresh water pearl jewelry, fashion, gifts, t shirts. Wonderful service, free gift wrap.

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Rocargo Freight Air and sea shipments in/out of Bonaire. Customs agents. Professional and efficient. **FedEx agent.** What would we do without their superb services?

SUPERMARKETS

The Island Supplier (TIS)—Enjoy shopping the "Caribbean Way" – fresh, open air feeling with reasonably priced produce, frozen meats, canned goods, wide selection of beverages and juices. Good rum selection.

Warehouse Supermarket on Kaya Industria—Biggest air conditioned market with the, largest selection and lowest prices on the island.

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WINDOWS and DOORS

Regimac, located across from E Teras, has fine aluminum windows and doors ideal for new homes or remodeling at great prices.

WINES

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Downtown, near the waterfront next to Little Havana
Tues-Fri: 9-12, 2-6 Sat: 9-2 non stop

Sponge Dusting

I don't remember the name of the first storm that came over Bonaire after I moved here, but I remember the powerful waves that kept us out of the water for almost a week, and how silty everything was when we finally started diving again.

Captain Don asked me how the reef looked, and I reported that I'd seen much less coral damage than I expected. "Oh, and there's silt on the sponges," I added, "but that's no big deal."

Shows you what I knew!

A sponge formation is a colony of many individual cells of a few different types. Sponge cells pull water into the small pores in the colony's outer surfaces. As the water passes through canals within the sponge, cells remove oxygen and edible particles. Then the filtered water is ejected through openings larger than the intake pores.

At least, that's how things work until something like Hurricane Omar comes along, stirring up the water, lifting sand and silt off the bottom. When the waters calm down, the silt lands on whatever's below it.

It can stop its intake but cannot reverse it.

Captain Don didn't see the need to tell me any of those things. He simply looked at me and said, "You have to fan the silt off the sponges."

"Oh, sure," I replied. "Like I have nothing else to do underwater but dust sponges."

Don crossed his arms against his chest, looked me in the eye, and commanded, "DUST THE SPONGES."

So, I've been dusting sponges and sharing Don's advice ever since. (It was fun, though, to finally learn **why** I was doing it.)

Immediately after Hurricane Omar, the most important thing that divers could do was to take care of the corals, but by now most of the coral situations are mostly irreversible. We **can** help corals by gently freeing them of debris, and reporting large pieces of debris on the reef to the Bonaire National Marine Park for removal.

Now, however, is the perfect time for us to take Captain Don's advice and **DUST THE SPONGES**.



In this photo, Melissa Keyes fans silt from sponges beneath the Frederickstead Pier in St. Thomas, USVI. At the time this picture was taken, more than a decade ago, sponges on Bonaire had much less silt. Now, as a result of Omar's churning, our sponges are as in need of help as these.



One characteristic of Bonaire's reefs that I haven't seen elsewhere in the Caribbean is the lush sponge growth. Even thin sponges, such as these rope sponges, have acquired a layer of fine silt these days, and benefit from dusting.

A sponge that's heavily silted can't pull water in as easily -- or at all. The cells of heavily silted sponges have a tougher time getting oxygen and food. A sponge colony does much better when it's not silted.

The problem is that although a sponge colony is perfectly suited for life in an unsilted world, it has no defense against silt.

But first, a prerequisite: In order to truly help the reef habitat by dusting sponges, **you must be a skilled enough diver to avoid making any contact with the reef.** Remember to be very aware of your position in the water. Be sure that you're neutrally buoyant and that you keep your fins away from the reef. Make no contact with

the reef, especially with living coral*.

A few sponge-dusting guidelines:

Fan with your hand for best control. Our fins move too much water and can't be as perfectly controlled as simple hand-waving. The sponge colony will be healthier, and so will you, if you don't make contact with it. Some sponges, such as dark volcano sponges and lumpy overgrowing sponges, are quite fragile and can be gouged by even a gentle contact. Other sponges, such as the Touch Me Not sponge, have spicules like fiberglass, which embed themselves painfully in our skin. The name should be a clue, don't ya think?

After the sponge is cleared of silt, look to see where the silt went. If chunks of it landed on living coral*, gently fan it off, being especially careful not to make any contact with the coral. Remember that any contact is more harmful to the coral than the silt is.

Be especially cautious when you're fanning close to the sand bottom, since the water movement that fans the sand off the sponge also fans it off the bottom -- and on top of everything around it! Make sure you very gently fan those areas free of silt!

The seas and their inhabitants are faced with serious problems that can't be solved by individuals, problems that need international solutions. The best way we can help is to donate money to international organizations that protect oceans. But it's all so impersonal!

That's what's wonderful about dusting sponges: we may only be making a tiny difference in the grand scheme of things, but it's a difference at a very personal level.

■ Story & photos by Dee Scarr

Underwater naturalist Dee Scarr is the recipient of numerous awards for her coral reef conservation efforts. Her "Touch the Sea" guided dives are legendary. Catch her multimedia show at Captain Don's habitat Mondays at 8:30 pm.



Dee's quickie guide to distinguishing living coral from everything else:

- Live coral looks clean and crisp. It has very regular patterning. It never has algae growing on it.
- Live coral, in the Caribbean, is usually greenish, tannish, or brownish in coloration, although once in a while it looks red or orange.
- Much live coral is boulder-shaped or branched.
- Unintended contact with anything on the reef must be avoided. It's easy to do no harm when you move slowly and deliberately and pay close attention to your position.

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Welcome in 2009 with the Brightest Planet and the Brightest Star Plus the Lord of the Rings

As you regular readers know every year I entreat you to celebrate New Year's Eve and New Year's Week in the Sky Park with something I have long called "the New Year's star" because it is the brightest star we can see with the naked eye above the horizon. And every year it reaches its highest position at midnight during New Year's Week. Plus this year we have some extra added cosmic attractions to ring in 2009.



On any night the first week of 2009 just after sunset face southwest where the brightest planet we can ever see in the night sky will be absolutely dazzling. It is planet number two and almost the same size as our 8,000-mile-wide planet **Earth**, the most reflective planet in the solar system because it is covered with a brilliant layer of clouds which acts like a giant mirror, the planet named for the goddess of love, **Venus**. And it will be absolutely beautiful every night after sunset all week long. And if you were lucky enough to go out just after sunset on New Year's Eve you would have seen that it was joined by an exquisite crescent **Moon** which made an absolutely sensational sight on New Year's Eve. But of course the Moon has since gone merrily on its way and will reach full on January 10 and will be the closest full Moon of 2009! Watch it grow bigger every night!

So this year the most brilliant planet of them all shines on the New Year every night during the first week of 2009. Plus we can also see the New Year's star at its highest point every night at midnight during the first week of 2009. Simply go out at midnight any night the first week of January, look due south and smack dab in front of you at its highest point above the horizon you will see the brightest star we can see with the naked eye, the star which marks the eye of **Canis Major**, **Orion's** bigger dog, the star we call **Sirius**. And for over a quarter of a century I have been alerting all of you to go out every New Year's Eve and to use this star as a welcoming beacon for each New Year. But in case you missed it on New Year's Eve it's still there at midnight all of New Year's Eve Week. It's one of the closest stars to Earth, only 8.6 light years away, which means that when you look at it this week you'll be seeing Sirius not as it exists now but as it existed 8.6 years ago in late spring 2000. Do you remember what you were doing in the spring of 2000?

But that's not all because if you look toward the east at midnight, just below the bright stars which make up the constellation **Leo the Lion**, you'll be able to see another planet not as bright as Venus of course but in my estimation the most beautiful planet of them all, 75,000-mile-wide, ringed **Saturn** whose rings right now appear almost edge on to us. So there you have it. Welcome in 2009 every night New Year's week with the brightest planet, the brightest star and the ringed planet. Just after sunset look southwest for Venus, at midnight look for Sirius at its highest in the south and in the east the Lord of the Rings. Happy New Year. ■

Jack Horkheimer



THE STARS HAVE IT

By Astrologer Michael Thiessen
For January 2009

ARIES (Mar. 21- April 20) You just hate waste, and when someone else costs you dearly you see red. Avoid extravagance or risky financial schemes. Travel for business purposes may bring the highest returns. In-laws or older individuals may give you a bit of a hard time this month. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Thursday.

TAURUS (Apr. 21- May 21) Alienation may be the result of a misunderstanding. Responsibilities with respect to older relatives may be a burden. Some situations may be blown out of proportion. Take a short business trip if possible. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21) A change of attitude has probably disrupted your home environment. You need to get out and be an observer. Get together with friends and catch up on reading and letter writing. Don't let criticism upset you. Hassles will delay your plans. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

CANCER (June 22-July 22) You should be in business for yourself. Opportunities to make advancements through good business sense are apparent. Be careful that you don't spend too much time with a person belonging to someone else. Travel and educational pursuits may help alleviate the stress you have been feeling. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

LEO (July 23-Aug 22) You can enhance your reputation if you treat family and friends with respect and dignity. Be sure to take time for old friends or relatives you don't get to see that often. You may have problems with those you live with. You may want to make changes that will turn your entertainment room into a real family affair. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 -Sept. 23) There's a good chance that they won't come back. If you put your mind to it, you could entertain or host a multitude of social events. Romantic relationships could be under pressure. You are likely to be left alone if you aren't willing to bend just a little. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 -Oct. 23) You may want to talk to your boss about your future goals. You have bent over backward trying to help them and now it's time to let them stand on their own two feet. Your family may not be pleased with your decisions. If you act with anger you may blow the relationship. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22) Coworkers may not be giving you all the pertinent information. Someone you live with will get angry if you are neglecting your duties. Travel may be confusing. Don't fall into the trap. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 -Dec. 21) Your leadership qualities will come in handy. Uncertainties are still prevailing. Elders may need your help. You will learn a great deal about yourself if you go somewhere secluded. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22.- Jan. 20) Don't let others restrict you from saying how you feel about family issues. You can make a difference if you offer your help at functions that involve children. Set a limit on the amount you're willing to spend, and be sure to stick to it. You can make new friends and experience new things if you do a bit of traveling. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 -Feb. 19) Go directly to the source if you want to know exactly what's been going on. It might be time to do some of those chores at home. Use your creative talent in order to accomplish your goals. Put some energy into getting back into shape. Listen to reason. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

PISCES (Feb. 20-Mar. 20) Emotional partnerships may develop through projects you initiate. Travel should be on your mind. Risky ventures may turn in your favor. Investments that deal with property will be lucrative; however, upsets with family members may be likely. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday. ■

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