

**It's Still
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The REPORTER
Helping Bonaire Grow Responsibly

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Since 1994



Maskarada
Page 3

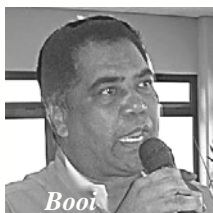


Also in this issue:
Karnaval Schedule-pg.11
Illegal Dumping -pg.15
Dust Devils Bonaire-pg. 6
Lionfish Invasion -pg. 18
Transition Report -pg. 9
First Baby-2009 -pg10
... and much more

Flotsam and Jetsam

BOINAIRE The REPORTER

In last week's kingdom meeting in Curaçao Bonaire political leader Ramonsito Booi said that the BES islands do not want "economic refugees" from the other Dutch Antilles. Residents of Curaçao, St. Maarten and Aruba who want to immigrate to one of the BES islands because the living and social conditions may be better than their own islands will find it difficult. His reasoning is that the BES islands in a direct relationship with the Netherlands will have better education, health care and security upgraded to levels that are acceptable to the Netherlands. It is expected that standards of welfare will also increase, though not anywhere near the amounts that are paid in the Netherlands.



Booi

prove the educational facilities on the three islands which in the future will be integrated into the Dutch Constellation as "public entities."

► **On the morning of January 4 former Dutch Minister Henk Kamp arrived at Flamingo Airport.** He was met by Lt. Governor Thodé. Kamp will serve as Commissioner for the BES islands, Bonaire, Saba and St. Eustatius for the next three years.

► The new head of the Antilles Immigration Service, **Jason Nisbet gives himself one year**



Nisbet

– **starting December 1 last year - to make significant improvements in his organization.** Outsiders as well as its own employees must be able to be satisfied with the aspects of the immigration policy that they are going to work with.

The objectives that Nisbet said that he strives for are "a pleasant physical environment, in which customers receive good service at the counter, after which their permit application is settled fast."

► **Effective Monday, December 29, the Bank of the Netherlands Antilles (BNA) lowered the official interest rate by 0.75%; from 1.75 to 1.00%.** The BNA stated that this lowering was motivated by "the recent lowering of the US Federal Reserve's Federal Funds Rate, the drop of the tariffs on the foreign money market and its effects on the domestic money market."

► **Although the euro is now 10 years old, it is about to face its biggest challenge as Europe's economy weakens,** Harvard University economist

► **The XXI (21st) Bonaire International & Local Fishing Tournament will take place from January 23-25.** Both local and fishermen from Curaçao, Aruba and Venezuela are expected to participate. Tournament headquarters will be at It Rains Fishes Restaurant at Club Nautico Bonaire. The grand prize will be a Toyota Hilux pickup, if the Antillean record of 803 pounds is beaten. First prize is a Rolex watch for a fish of 450 pounds or more. The tournament is a catch and release tournament, with a minimum of two and a maximum of four fishermen per boat. The start signal will be given each day at 0700 in the morning and the boats are expected in around 1600. The local boat fishing competition will start on Saturday at 1200. For that there will be cash prizes for the total weight caught and number of fish. Since there are a limited number of moorings available at Club Nautico early sign-up is suggested.



For further information and applications get in touch with Robur de Vries at 786070/516070 or email to info@itrainfishesbonaire.com.

Martin Feldstein said on Saturday. "In my judgment, the next few years will clearly be an important testing time for the European economic and monetary union and the euro," Feldstein told a panel at the American Economics Association meeting at Harvard.

Since 1992 Feldstein has been consistently skeptical about the need for a unified currency in Europe. He has said that the euro was motivated by politics and not economics and has predicted that the disadvantages would eventually outweigh the advantages. In its first decade the euro has seen only relatively good economic times, "But that may be about to change, as conditions in Europe are deteriorating rapidly," Feldstein said.

Feldstein was President Ronald Reagan's chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers from 1982 through 1984.

► **Two Antillean social improvement projects were named as recipients of Appeltje van Oranje- 2009 awards.** Bonaire's Stichting Project, which works with children with behavioral problems was one.

The other was the parent association, *Tokolitha*, in Curaçao.

The "Little Orange Apple Award" consists of an orange colored apple figurine and a grant of €15 thousand. Nominations for the *Appeltje van Oranje* come from all parts of the Dutch Kingdom. Being selected not only means an immediate financial reward, but it ensures more recognition, subsidy flows and can attract additional participants or volunteers. The *Oranje Fund* is the largest Dutch social action fund. Approximately €2 million is paid annually to deserving projects in the Netherlands, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba. Prince Willem Alexander and Princess Maxima administer the fund.

From humble beginnings a few years ago Mick Smit's vision to use group specific training to build positive experiences that bring about favorable behavior has achieved remarkable success. Two of the most visible Stichting Project activities are its greenhouse and nursery and the restaurant De Bonairiaan.

For further information on the Stichting Project get in touch with Mick Smit, (599) 717-6921.

(Continued on page 8)

Table of Contents

This Week's Stories

Fishing Toumey	2
Maskarada	3
Dust Devils Bonaire	6
Transition Status Report	9
First Baby	10
Historical Walk Seru Grandi	10
20 Years Benito Dirksz	12
Marcel Leurs Eulogy	13
Letters to the Editor: Dusting Sponge	
Reaction, Fireworks Aftermath	14
Environmental Police Fine	15
Aliens Invade-Lionfish	18

Weekly Features

Flotsam & Jetsam	2
Born on Bonaire—Caesar Finies	4
Bonairean Voices (New Year Plans)	7
Island View (Dominica)	7
Sudoku Puzzle	7
Pet of the Week ("Fabian")	8
Sudoku Solution	9
Picture Yourself (New York)	12
Classifieds	13
Reporter Masthead	13
Tide Table	13
Bubbles-Did You Know (Sparks in the Water)	15
What's Happening	16
Dining, Shopping Guides	17
Sky Park (Three Seasons)	19
Star Power (Astrology)	19

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Maskarada - Uniquely Bonairean

It's become a true Bonairean tradition. Every January 1 a group of colorfully costumed and masked children and adults show up at the Governor's home to dance and perform short skits. Later on they parade through town and the neighborhoods where they performed with mystery and humor, sometimes teasing the audience. No one knows who they are but we did find out that year after year the parts are usually played by the same people, many from the same family. They don't speak and only communicate through their actions. Certain characters are the same every year: the policeman who directs the group, the donkey, the shark, the fisherman in the boat, an old kunukero, the matador and the bull.

This year we caught up with them at the



Piling on the "bull" after he is downed

home of 90-year-old Petra Thodé in Nord di Salina. A group of neighbors were there to enjoy the Maskaradas who were warmed up after having performed earlier starting at 10 am at the Governor's home, the Kas di Sosiego (old folks home), Wilhelmina Park, and at other homes in the neighborhood.

The music started, with an accordion leading and the dancing began. During one of the dances the matador tried to entice the bull with a red flag. The bull charged through the crowd narrowly miss-



Triangle player in the Maskarada band, Mourens Evertsz with his daughter Morelia

ing people with his sharp horns. Finally he's caught and thrown to the ground and all the others, including the donkey, pile on top of him. The crowd loves it. During another skit the fisherman in the boat tried to catch the shark. When he does the fish fights madly and finally when caught lies on the ground with his legs quivering in a final death spasm. We were reminded by a friend in Bonaire that this maskarada theme does appear in other parts of the world. But no one knows for sure how the



Petra Thodé, the 90-year-old family matriarch of some of the Maskarada performers. The photos were taken as the troupe performed at her home in Nord di Salina.

tradition got to Bonaire. Some say Africa, others say it's Indian. Still others say it's South American or even European. Culture guru, Papi Cicilia suggests Spain, saying the "crowns" worn by the company represent the Spanish monarchy which ruled Bonaire for a time. But, considering the polyglot makeup of Bonaire maybe the concept came from all those places and then turned into something totally Bonairean that we see today. ■

L.D.

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Born on Bonaire - March 20th 1983

Caesar Finies- Master Trickster

“Bonaire is my piece of paradise. I can go anywhere, but after a while I’m longing to come back. I have my friends here, my family and the sea, and the climate is beautiful every day, and I know almost everybody and everybody knows me – it’s just relaxed.

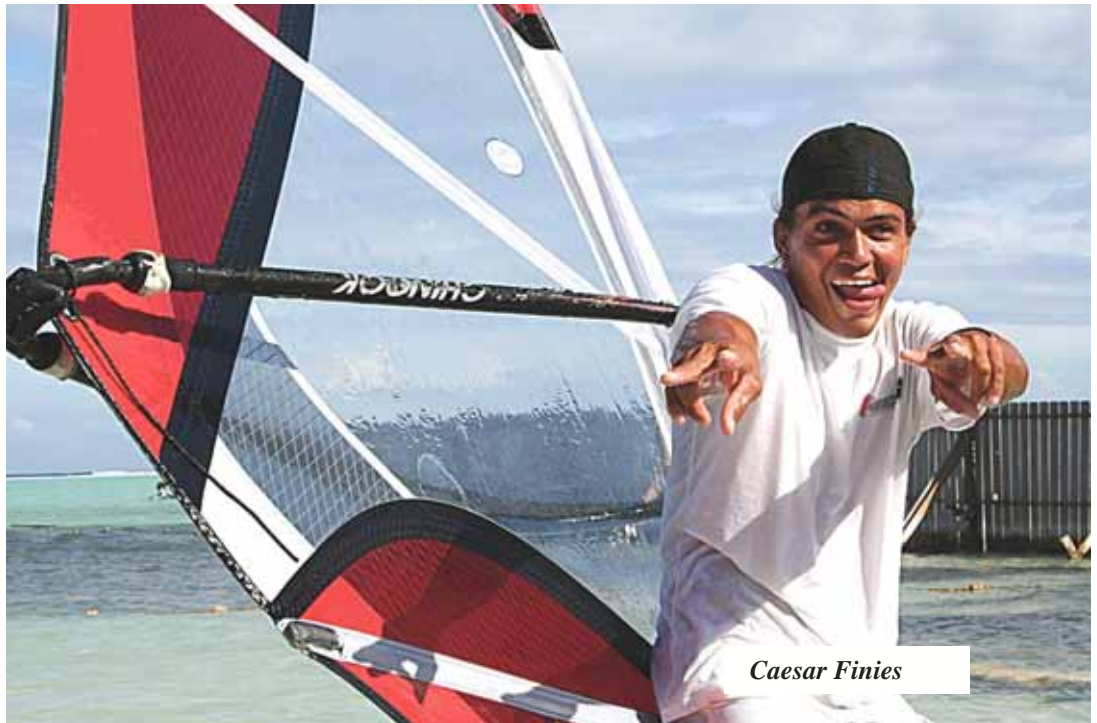
I was born in Rincon. My father, Nerio Finies, is from Bonaire and my mom, Rubia Coffie, is from Curaçao. When I was four my father left and my mom and I went to live in Amboina. When I was five I got a little brother and I also have a sister from my father’s side. They’re both 19 now. I lived for 10 years in Amboina and then we moved to Kaya Hulanda. I had a very good childhood. To me my mother was mother and father at the same time. She worked at the Ontvanger’s office; now she’s working at Fundashon Cas Bonairiano.

At SGB high school I first went to HAVO, but soon enough I found out that truancy was fun! They put me back in MAVO-2 and... I still didn’t want to learn my lessons and so I had to do MAVO-2 again and in MAVO-3 I didn’t pass because I didn’t get along with the chemistry teacher.

So, I went to BVO – basic professional training – where I studied electrical engineering. Then I went to Curaçao, to the Fefeik School where I also studied electrical engineering. But I found out I couldn’t learn anything new there so I tried to get in to Polytechnic School on Curaçao and they accepted me. Because I was getting a scholarship for Fefeik, which was paying for my room and board I had to stay there during the daytime, and in the evenings I would go to Polytechnic School – long days – up at 6:30 am and at 11 pm I’d take the last bus home. I held on for four months and then I came back to Bonaire.

I was 18. I went to work at De Freewieler Scooter and Bike Shop, saved up some money to go to Miami and participated there in windsurf competitions. When I came back I started working at the De Freewieler again; I stayed there for three years in total.

“I would like to see the government establish more activities for youngsters because there isn’t much to do; only Jong Bonaire is doing a lot ...”



Caesar Finies

I started windsurfing when I was 10. It was Elvis Martinus who taught me, but then those sails were way too heavy for me and” he grins, “I wasn’t as strong

as I am now. At 16 I tried windsurfing again. Then it was fun! I’ve always been into sports. When I was eight I started with little league baseball. I did a lot of biking, skate boarding. Every sport you can do on Bonaire – I did it. When I was working at De Freewieler I didn’t do as much windsurfing because I was biking most of the time, but I did participate in windsurf competitions

here on Bonaire. I wasn’t in Tonky’s or Tati’s category – but amongst the other guys I always ended up in the top three.

When I was 21 I started working at The Windsurfing Place at Sorobon. I did it for 18 months and then I didn’t work for a whole year; I was just windsurfing. I just felt like doing things I’d never had had time for before:

(Continued on page 5)

			
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Born on Bonaire
(Continued from page 4)

biking, windsurfing and I went frequently to Jong Bonaire to do roller hockey. Then I went to Holland for six months – it was 2006. I tried to get into the sports academy there, but I was too late. The year had already started.

As long as I can remember I wanted to become a sports teacher or a personal trainer, something to do with sports, but when I realized what life was about in Holland - the rush, the hustle and bustle - I didn't want to be there anymore and I thought, 'I'm going back to Bonaire.' It's okay for vacation, but if you love the water, the sea, I don't advise it! So, I came back and they asked me if I wanted to work at Jibe City as an instructor. And now my hobby is my profession, something I always wanted."

Caesar Finies is a mellow guy and really sweet. He's also a real Bonairean kid. He's one with the sea, the sun and the wind, and he plays with it on his surfboard in complete harmony as if the elements were his toys.

"Over the last three years a lot of construction has been going on here and it shouldn't become too much because it won't be relaxed anymore. I would like to see the government establish more activities for youngsters because there isn't much to do. Only Jong Bonaire is doing a lot for the

children. The government could do so much more: softball fields, a skate board park, keeping up the tennis courts and the soccer fields so the kids can stay out of trouble. Problems with youth is a common thing everywhere around the world, but it could be less here if only there were more activities and better coordination and guidance and more discipline from the parents. Sports are helpful, especially team sports, and there's a lot of talent here – oh yes – many, many kids are really good in sports, but there is no possibility of growing so they get stuck and start hanging out in the streets.

What I want for the future is for my daughter to have a great childhood, just like I had. That's what I wish for her. She - her name is Chansé Liza Finies - was born December 7th 2008, here on Bonaire. The name Chansé means 'luck' in Iraqi, where my girlfriend Fra Aziz, is from. How does it feel to have a child?" *He smiles.* "I don't know... but when I hold her in my arms it feels totally different from anything I've ever felt before. It is new and I do feel responsible for her."

"What's Caesar like?" *I ask Fra, his girlfriend. She looks at him attentively and says,* "He loves to be the center of attention. He's very stubborn and has a strong will and if he wants something he'll go for it and...

he is very sweet and caring."

"I'm the best papa!" *Caesar says, all grins.* "I'm also very quiet and I don't like problems. When there are problems, I leave. I love to meet new people from all over the world, make friends and have a lot of fun, but I don't go out very often. When I am on the water I feel free from everything – the wind on your back – that's it.

Up until now I'm one of the best in sail tricks – maybe the best! I started practicing when there was nothing to do at the beach and because I can't sit still. I invented different tricks, new tricks, and now I can do things nobody else can. I was invited to go abroad to give demonstrations in different countries. In the beginning of 2007 they made a video of me and put it on the Internet, and the owner of the board builder, Starboard, wanted me to do a promotion in Europe for the Pro Kids event. In May 2008 they organized the Pro Kids promotion tour and we went to Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Estonia and Norway. We stayed away for a month; Elvis, Tati, Kiri, Ruben and I. Fra also came but only to Germany. It was fun, I made lots of friends and for the first time in my life I saw snow! I even went windsurfing on a lake in Finland in the Arctic circle! In February 2008 I went to Peru for 20 days, sponsored by Starboard. I traveled all



Mom Fra Aziz, baby Chansé Liza Finies and Caesar Finies

along the coast giving windsurf demonstrations everywhere, the tricks only I know. Everyone tries them, but nobody can do them the way I can!" *He pulls a funny face and tells the baby,* "Hey mommy, I'm proud of myself! In September 2008 I went to Chile for three weeks. I traveled to the coast and to two lakes, but the biggest difference is the temperature of the water – you have to wear a wetsuit – I felt like a penguin!

The best windsurfing is here, at Sorobon. You fall and 10 seconds later you're back on the board. It's one big, warm, natural pool. I hope Bonaire won't change that much and for myself

– I don't know what I want – life is what you make of it. It can be easy, but it can also be hard and for me, honesty is always the best thing. I live by the day. The most important thing is to have a lot of fun and to share the joy and make the best of today because you never know what's coming tomorrow.

Anything else I'd like to say? I'll see you on the water!" ■

Story & photos by Greta Kooistra



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Dust Devils Bonaire



Research into the health situation of Bonaireans has shown that 42% of the population is suffering from dust in and around the house (The Bonaire Health Study-2002, Grievink, *et al.*). Tourists echo this and family doctors also recognise the problem.

Apart from the negative effects on the health of the population and visitors, dust is influencing the economy of Bonaire as well. One of the most important cornerstones of the economy is dive and snorkel tourism. Dust decreases growth and survival chances of corals.

Dust probably also contributes to the short lifespan of electronic appliances,

computers and cars on Bonaire. In addition, the growth of vegetation is reduced as dust settles on the leaves. Last but not least, a lot of dust settles down in and around houses and hotels, meaning a lot of sweeping and dusting.

The main cause of the dust problem seems to be wind erosion (Nature Policy Plan Bonaire, 1999). As a result of timber felling and grazing of goats and donkeys, the original vegetation of Bonaire has been replaced by (often) thorny bush growth and cacti. In some areas almost all vegetation is gone. This causes the wind to have free play.

Foundation KibraHacha has set up a

project to analyse the causes of the dust problem and the impact of dust on health, environment and economy, as well as to propose solutions. In March 2009 two students from the Wageningen University (Holland) will begin the scientific fieldwork. They will measure the distribution of dust from various sources such as stone crushers, dirt roads, land clearing and agricultural land. Another important part of this research is determining the amount of dust deposition in the town area and at hotels.

This research is part of a bigger project which aims to develop and carry out proposed solutions. One can think of law and regulation for clearing of land, taking on

the goat and donkey problem, and reforestation/natural regeneration.

Three quarters of the finances of this dust analysing project are covered, but we are still looking for donations and sponsors for transportation of the research equipment from Holland to Bonaire and for transportation on Bonaire- NAf4.000. If you are interested in the project and/or in helping to finance it, please contact Foundation KibraHacha, Jan Jaap van Almenkerk, almenkerk@gmail.com, 700-9630 or look at our weblog (in Dutch): <http://stichting-kibrahacha.blogspot.com>. ■
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Island View

Dominica

Before I start I wish everyone a very happy New Year. I hope you live life to the fullest for a whole new year.

So, it was vacation time again. Time to check out Dominica, a beautiful island with mountains, rain forests, sulphur springs and sperm whales. It takes some traveling to get there, but it is worth every minute waiting in a too-cold air-conditioned airport. If you like hiking and nature, don't miss this island.

Dominica is also an island in the Caribbean, so you cannot help but compare it with Bonaire. There are some similarities: warm temperatures at Christmas, loud music, barking dogs, and sometimes this whiff of burning plastic that interrupts your breakfast. And of course the differences are too much to write about in one article.

Here is one difference though that left me a bit flabbergasted when I heard about it. Dominica, although it is bigger than Bonaire (about two and half times), and has more people living on it (about 55,000 according to the Dominicans themselves; about 72,000 according to the official count), has no animal shelter of any kind. When a dog or a cat has to be given shelter, someone has to take it into his or her home. Every attempt of trying to care for the unwanted lies in the hands of a few private individuals. Just try and imagine that: no organized shelter for stray, unwanted or found dogs and cats.

You could argue that the care of the unwanted pets of Bonaire also lies in the hands of a few. But it is the organization that makes the difference. There is a place where you can bring the puppies and kittens or dogs and cats you have found or have no more room for. And you know they will be cared for.

Besides a place for our surplus island pets there is the need for information about sterilization. Because we have a lot of our discarded pets in one place, we see the effects of having non-sterilized pets. You can also go to the animal shelter to make sure your pet is sterilized, for free if you want to.

Talking to some Dominicans we learned that you should not castrate a male dog because he has the right to procreate (he's the man!). On the other hand, we heard that a good reason to spay your female dog is that you don't have to give away any more puppies, which are of course too cute to part with. This was a bit like the world upside down. It is the total opposite of what the animal shelter is trying to accomplish on Bonaire.

The main reason why the animal shelter promotes sterilization for as many pets on this island as possible is overpopulation. If



you leave all your pets "unfixed" we will be up to our eyebrows in dogs and cats within a few years. One female dog, her mate and all of their puppies and their puppies' puppies, if none are ever neutered or spayed, add up to: 1 year: 16; 2 years: 128; 3 years: 512; 4 years: 2,048; 5 years: 12,288; 6 years: **67,000**. Cats are even more successful at reproducing. In seven years, one unspayed female cat and her offspring can theoretically produce **420,000** cats. After six years, every Bonairean, per person (every man, woman and child), will have the questionable company of five dogs, and after seven years an addition of 30 cats. That means that seven years from now, a family of four persons will have at least 20 dogs and 120 cats in their home. There will be no room for any other living animal on this island except for cats and dogs (that should take care of the overpopulation of donkeys quite nicely). If we don't want to have so many dogs or cats, but we still do not spay or neuter, mass murder will be the only other option.

Sterilization is a good alternative for another reason as well. According to Randall Lockwood, Ph.D., there is a much greater incidence of biting in unsterilized animals. "Of the nearly 20 fatalities caused by dog attacks investigated between 1992 and 1994," says Dr. Lockwood, "we have found that none was caused by a spayed or neutered dog."

Dominica is a resplendent island with a lot to offer. But it would be even more beautiful with an animal shelter like the one on Bonaire to fall back on. You don't have to go there every day, but it is very good to have. And let's consider the quote of William Greider (journalist). Animal-rights advocates remind us of this admonition: The ways in which people treat animals will be reflected in how people relate to one another. ■ *Mary Ann Koops*

Mary Ann Koops is Antillean and a biology teacher in the SGB high school.



BONAIREAN VOICES

NEW YEAR 2009 PLANNER

"A prosperous 2009!" "Happy New Year!" "Best Wishes for 2009!"

These words were what we commonly heard at the beginning of this year. Some of us might still make the mistake of writing 2008. Well, we must remember that we are in the New Year, 2009. Days are going so fast and we are in the middle of January 2009 already. Without much notice we could be at the end of this year.

An ad in the *èxtra* newspaper caught my attention. Someone decided to write down the goals that they want to achieve for this year. Here is their list:

1. To lose weight, walk 4 times a week;
2. Take Salsa dance classes;
3. Give family more attention;
4. Go on a cruise ship in the Caribbean;
5. Stop smoking;
6. Build the dream house.

Have you made your list already? I asked some people what they wanted to achieve for 2009.

Some school girls and boys said they want to finish their education and to continue their studies in another country or in Bonaire. Some working people said they'd like to have their salary raised, and they're doing after work courses. Sports and social organizations hope to reach their goals by fundraising. Bankers are analyzing their company in order to strengthen it. Differ-

ent people are starting projects which they want to complete this year.

I'm working on my list too; it's almost done.

But one thing I'd like is for everyone - every Bonairean and foreigner who lives on this island - to add to their planner, if we can call it that, to join together to make our Bonaire a better place to be. Unity makes a strong, healthy and more self confident community. We can accomplish a lot, but without a planner it's not always possible to stick to it.

So take a paper and start writing what your goals are for 2009. Don't hesitate to do it because before you realize it this year will end and you won't have accomplished anything. Let's do it, so at the end of the year we can count our blessings. If you agree with me please send your comments to *The Reporter*. ■

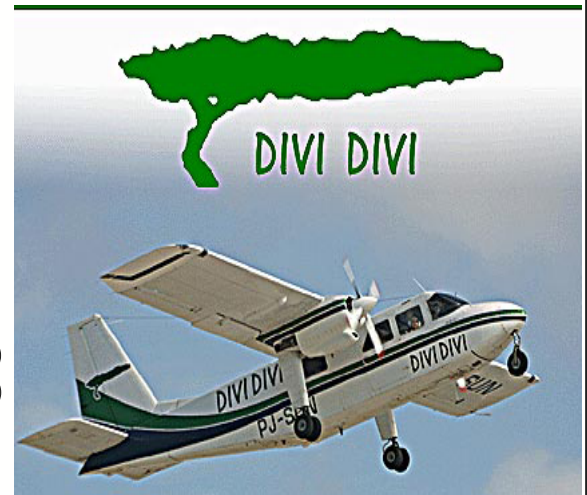
Siomara E. Albertus

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



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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*

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

Flotsam and Jetsam (Continued from page 2)

For further information on the *Oranje Fund* and *Appeltjes van Oranje* go to www.oranjefonds.nl/appeltjes09. You can also call Jonne Boesjes, *Oranje Fund* spokesman, 030 2339 344 or 06 10 552, 484 in Holland.

► **The Natalee Holloway case in Aruba just won't go away.** Aruba's Prosecutor General Rob Pietersz has started an "investigation of the facts" into the statements of Justice Minister Rudy Croes about the early stage of the investigation on the disappearance of Holloway. Croes said in an interview last December that the Aruba police chief at that time, Jan van der Straten (who subsequently served as Bonaire's chief), had seriously obstructed the investigation right after the disappearance of the American teenager in May of 2005. The Minister heard Van der Straten say in a conversation at that time, "I can't do this to my friend, Paul." Paul van der Sloot is the father of the main suspect at that time, Joran van der Sloot.

► **Pianist Gebby Saleh's CD was presented officially to the Governor of Bonaire,** mr. dr. Glenn Thodé, on December 26th. The sponsors of this CD



Norbert Goyla photo



Photo of perigee (left) and apogee (right) moon

► This past weekend's **full moon** appeared larger and more luminous than usual. The weekend's full moon corresponds closely with the orbit's **perigee**, the closer end of that ellipse. (The more distant end of the ellipse is known as **apogee**.) The perigee brings the moon and Earth closer together than they have been at full moon since 1993. That means that the moon appeared 14% larger and 30% brighter than the other 11 full moons this past year. While the size of the moon can be difficult to gauge in the middle of the night sky, its luminosity was readily apparent.

were invited to the gathering and the guests enjoyed a live performance of the band which prompted an exciting dance party.

The musicians on this recording are Sigfried "Fit" Molina, bass; Hubert "Iby" de Palm, guitar; Johan "Joe" Gonesh, ukulele; Ike Jesurun, percussion; and Norbert Goyla, wiri. The general music consultant was the well known musician, Hershel Rosario, who also did the recording. The numbers were composed and arranged by Gebby Saleh. Copies are available at island bookstores. Further information can be obtained from Norbert Goyla, phone 511-4216 or Gebby Saleh 788-4856. ■ *G./L.D.*

Pet of The Week

"I am truly adorable," says "Fabian," this black and white "tuxedo" cat who looks like he is ready to be a member of a wedding. At least he's dressed for it with his snazzy black fur coat and white chest.

Darling Fabian was brought into the Bonaire Animal Shelter along with his brother, "Fred," because the people just couldn't take care of any more cats. So it's lucky for someone that Fabian and Fred are both available for adoption. The two brothers are a little more than five months old. They're healthy as can be, having been examined by the vet and given their shots and worming. They'll be sterilized as soon as they're old enough. Both cats are playful and full of fun. You may see them at the Shelter on the Lagun Road, open Monday through Saturday, 9am to 1pm and 3 to 5pm. Telephone 717-



Fabian

4989. Website: WWW.AnimalShelterBonaire.com.

We should all say a big thank you to our Shelter for acting as headquarters for missing and found dogs during the fireworks season last month. In some cases the pets were reunited with their owners; in other cases there were no owners to be found. The staff is doing a fine job and deserves a hip-hip hooray! ■

L.D.



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Transition2009: Bonaire Links With Holland Status Report

The implementation of the "closer ties with Holland" selected by the majority of voters in the 2004 Referendum is underway.

At the start of 2009, where do Bonaire and the other BES islands stand as regards integration into the Netherlands as "public entities?" Here's the latest status according to the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations in The Hague:

Overview

The new state (*staatkundige*) structure can be effective as soon as the required legislation is passed in Holland. It is currently being prepared. The target date is undefined, but may be concurrent with the dissolution of the Central Government recently set for March 26, 2010.

However, important steps are already being taken to provide some of the benefits the new status will bring. On December 15, 2008, financing was approved to start to begin improving education, health care, security and social matters. Regional service centers (RSC) were opened to help the implementation of these improvements and serve as a point of contact for the population.

Information

Funding is available to keep the public informed on progress. As of now, many of the details about tax rates, social insurance premiums, labor agreements, and supplies are undefined. Decisions on these matters must be clearly presented. The Netherlands, in dialogue with the local governments, will present information on the changes and what the impacts are. The RSCs will also play a role in dissemination of information.

Currency

In November 2008 it was agreed that concurrent with the new status the American dollar will become the official currency. The Dutch Treasury will assist in the details of the transition.

The Economy/Work Permits

The issue of work permits will be addressed by the RSC. The policy for that will come about in association with the local governments. The Netherlands plans to stimulate the local economy. For example the socio-economic initiative (SEI) made extra money available. Over the next three years 19.5 million guilders will be spent in Bonaire and 13 million guilders for Saba and Sint Eustatius to improve the quality of life. This money is to be invested in, among other things, projects in the labor market, government finances and economic development, in order to contribute to sustainable socio-economic development. NGO financing will not change much and will continue through AMFO with

some local level changes.

Tax Enforcement

The Netherlands will continue to help with collection of back taxes and the payment of tax refunds as it has in the past.

Customs

Because the BES Islands are not part of the European Customs Authority, import duties from the US, Holland and the EU will continue to be applied as before.

Social Programs/Retirement

Retirement pensions and premiums (AOW) are to conform as much as possible to Dutch norms. However, the amounts remain to be defined because of the complexity and difference in the economic situation between the Netherlands and the BES islands.

Emphasis has been and will continue to be put on improving the lot of the poor and people with social problems: € million has been allocated for this. Standards will be developed to define a better social safety net that meets Dutch standards.

It's not been decided if the Antillean retirement age of 60 will be maintained and how pension payments and premiums will be modified. New AOV (retirement) regulations are expected to be defined.

Education

There is no plan to replace the Papiamentu instruction in Bonaire and the English instruction on the other islands with Dutch exclusively. However, the intention is to make significant improvements in the schools.

Health Insurance

It is the intention to introduce a new health care insurance system for the inhabitants of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba. In 2009, the RSC will work on this with the intention that by January 1, 2011, it will be in place.

The Netherlands has begun to make extra investments in the field of public health to guarantee a higher quality care. In the short period there will be purchases of equipment and renovating accommodations. Disaster relief, drug rehabilitation services, women's relief, supplies and care

for the elderly, disabled and mentally ill will be augmented.

Labor/Preferences

Island civil servants will retain their jobs. Within the framework of the political process agreements have been made concerning the organization of the Police force, the Public Prosecution Service and the common Court of Justice. Good law enforcement must be guaranteed.

During BES week in November 2008, it was agreed that, given equal aptitude, island children have preference in principle above European Dutch at fulfilling functions in the government.

Voting

Legal residents of five years or more will be able to vote in local elections but must have a Dutch nationality to hold office.

Infrastructure

Except for improving Bonaire's airport security and water supply emphasis on infrastructure improvements will have to await formalization of the new state structure and take a back seat to the security, social, health and education priorities.

The future of the public utilities (telecom, energy, etc.) is cloudy until arrangements for the dismantling of the country Netherlands Antilles is defined. The Central Government has financial interest in the government companies that operate them.

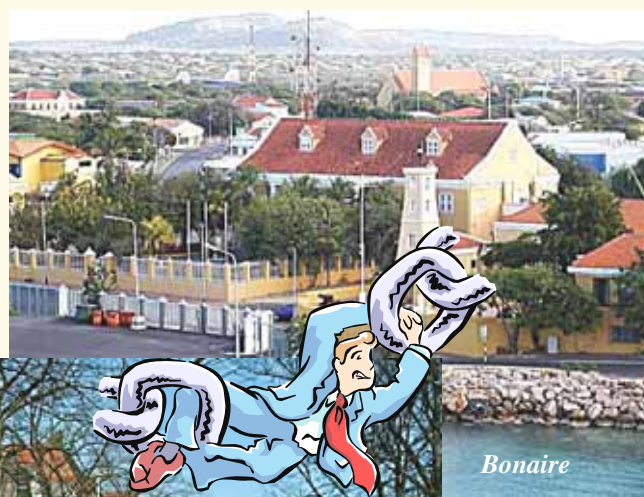
Development

In Bonaire a freeze on new construction and development is in place.

Laws

It is not the intention to have all Dutch laws and rules apply in the BES Islands. Certain Dutch laws

will, however, be introduced, because this is necessary for the is-



Bonaire



Holland

trol. A new police station will be built on Sint Eustatius; the police station on Bonaire is to be expanded.

Cultural Impact

The Netherlands has no intention of modifying the culture on the islands.

It's desired that the impact of the presence of more European Dutch people on the islands, regardless of whether they are new residents, civil servants or technical advisors, be limited. It is not the intention to import a lot of civil servants or advisors from the Netherlands to the islands to become a permanent part of the administrative apparatus. ■

G.D.

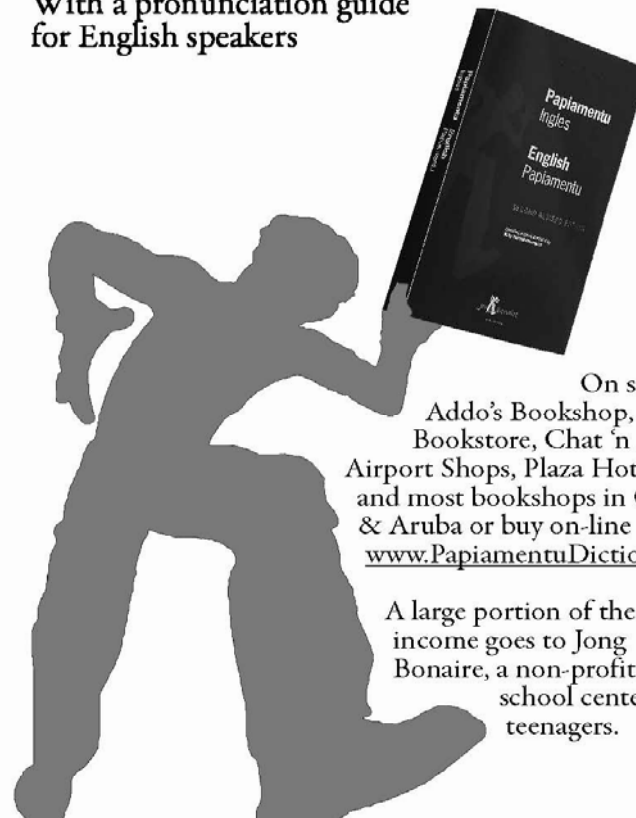
SOLUTION TO DO YOU SUDOKU?

Puzzle on page 7

387 694 215
594 182 637
126 375 948
675 438 192
941 527 863
832 961 754
259 813 476
763 249 581
418 756 329

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

Seru Grandi and Angola Educational and Historical Walk

This Sunday January 18, Top Health Fitness Center is organizing an early morning nature and historical walk in the Seru Grandi-Angola area, led by historian and journalist Bòi Antoin. Antoin is an intrepid walker and knows the island intimately. He's an archive of information and stories about the island and a delight to be with. He's led walks on Klein Bonaire, on Seru LARGU, at Lagun and Washikemba and to the islands in Lac Bai among other places on the island.

In past years Top Health Fitness Center began organizing these walks called Educational Walks, not only for the physical health aspects but to give information about the areas where the walks take place.

As the sun comes up to the west of Lagun Hill the walk will commence in a northerly direction, then to the west towards Seru Grandi. On this walk we'll pay particular attention to the area to the east of Seru Grandi where the trail to the top begins. Aside from this route there is not much easy access to the summit.



Guide Bòi Antoin at Lagun

Learn the secret of history... this old well was discovered on a previous walk.



If you have binoculars please bring them because from the southern tip of Seru Grandi there is a beautiful view of a large part of Bonaire.

If you love Bonaire and want to find out more about it don't miss this opportunity.

Meet at Lagun Hill at 6:30 am on Sunday, January 18. The cost is NAf 10 and includes fruit and a homemade soup at the end. Although water will be available at certain times it's recommended that you bring your own as well. To reserve call 567-1055 or 796-3109. ■

L.D.

First Baby of 2009 Nishantely Niyelhi Angila is the First Born in 2009



Maduro & Curiel's Bank Bonaire celebrated the arrival of the first baby of the year, Nishantely Niyelhi Angila. She was born at 8:40 am on January 1 and weighed 3420 grams. Her mom is Nataly and her father is Tony Angila who works in the Electronic Service of the MCB Bank.

The MCB mascot and friend to all children, Lito the Lion, and Panchito the Bee visited her and her parents at home, bringing her a book from Lito and other gifts. She also got gifts from her father's departmental colleagues at the bank.

Maduro & Curiel's Bank (Bonaire) N.V. together with its personnel, staff and manager wish her and her family many congratulations and best wishes. ■

Press Release/L.D.



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Karnaval Schedule January/February 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
25 	26	27	28	29	30	31 Sign up for Tumba Festival 2009
1	2 	3	4	5 First evening of the Tumba Festival (Asombo), 8 pm to 1 am, Telbo "Garden"	6 Jump-in Kolegio Papa Cornes elementary school	7 Karnaval Activities at SEBIKI for children, 10 am to 1 pm. Final Tumba Festival, 8 pm to 2 am, Telbo "Garden"
8 Children's Tumba Festival (Asombo), 2 to 8 pm, Telbo "Garden"	9 Kabo Jump-up, 8 pm to midnight	10	11 Election of Children's Queen, Prince and Pancho, 7 to 10 pm	12 "Loko Loko" (Crazy) Festival, Rincon Stadium, 7:30 pm to midnight	13 SEBIKI Balloon Parade, 5:30 to 7:30 pm Election of adult Queen, Prince and Pancho 7:30 pm to mid-	14 Children's Karnaval Parade, Rincon, 3 to 6 pm Karnaval Warm-up Party, 10 pm to 4 am
15 Children's Karnaval parade, Playa, 3 to 6 pm	16	17	18	19 Bikers' Karnaval Parade, 7 pm to midnight	20 School Parade, 8 am to noon. Tourist Jump-in, 1:30 to 4 pm, parking lot by TCB FUKABO Jump-up, Rincon, 3 to 6 pm	21 Adult Karnaval Parade, Rincon, 3 to 6 pm
22 Adult Karnaval Parade, Playa 2 to 6 pm.	23 Children's Farewell Parade, Playa, 5 to 8 pm. Masquerade Party, 8 pm to Midnight	24 Adults' Farewell Parade, Playa, 7 pm to Midnight. Burning of Momo	25 Ash Wednesday	26 	27	28 Temporary Closure of Karnaval 2009, 7:30 pm to midnight



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20 Years of Policing



The staff and management of Special Security Services surprised their director, **Benito Dirksz**, with a photo taken 20 years before in December 1988, the day when Dirksz took an oath as a Special Agent of the Police of the territory of Bonaire. The director always met his obligations as an extraordinary police agent: brave, hard working, often finding himself in dangerous situations on the street.



The Staff and management of SSS extended congratulations to their director and asked God to bless Mr. Dirksz for many more years as a special agent to fulfill his indefatigable tasks in the interest of the Bonairean community. ■ *Emely Provence*

Picture Yourself With The Reporter In... Geneva, New York



Bud and Nancy Dox sent us this photo from snowbound New York and said, "We just wanted to send you this Happy New Year's photo from your chilly friends in upstate New York, USA... Be glad you have sun and surf cause you could be stuck with this. Happy Holidays to all our good friends!" ■

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For sale: Yellow sports car, cabrio-



let, two-seater, very nice, NAf 7.000. For more information call 796-5591

Marcel Leurs 1967-2009



It is with a heavy heart that we report the death of our reporter, Marcel Leurs. It is sad to know he's gone from our lives. His personality enriched Bonaire. The stories he wrote in his "What's Coming Our Way" column in *The Bonaire Reporter* were a readers' favorite.

He was very busy in different tourism related projects on the island, but he managed to write 16 stories for *The Reporter* in the past year. He let the readers know what was coming their way in Bonaire's rapidly changing year of 2008. He

wrote about many topics: new housing developments, the marina, Earthships, airport parking and many more, long before most people knew about them.

A memorial service was held on the seaside on Wednesday, January 7th, a time concurrent with his burial in Holland. About 100 people said goodbye along with a pod of dolphins that appeared at the start and stayed until the end.

Our condolences to his wife Siet-ske and children Isa and Jippie, ■ G.D.

KRALENDIJK TIDES (Heights in feet, FT)

1-16	0:14	1.0FT.	7:21	1.6FT.	14:09	1.2FT.	17:38	1.3FT.	71
1-17	0:04	1.1FT.	7:50	1.7FT.	15:53	1.1FT.	19:08	1.2FT.	58
1-18	8:19	1.8FT.	16:57	1.0FT.					47
1-19	8:51	1.9FT.	17:59	0.9FT.					40
1-20	9:27	2.0FT.	18:41	0.8FT.					39
1-21	9:58	2.0FT.	19:27	0.8FT.					43
1-22	10:28	2.1FT.	20:06	0.8FT.					50
1-23	11:01	2.1FT.	20:37	0.8FT.					58
1-24	11:34	2.0FT.	21:13	0.8FT.					65
1-25	12:02	2.0FT.	21:48	0.8FT.					71
1-26	12:32	1.9FT.	22:17	0.9FT.					76
1-27	13:07	1.8FT.	22:39	0.9FT.					80
1-28	13:36	1.7FT.	22:53	1.0FT.					82
1-29	14:00	1.5FT.	22:47	1.1FT.					81
1-30	6:12	1.4FT.	11:24	1.4FT.	14:04	1.4FT.	22:09	1.1FT.	78
1-31	6:13	1.5FT.	21:33	1.1FT.					73

Who's Who on The Bonaire Reporter

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Letters to the Editor



REACTION TO DUSTING SPONGES STORY BY DEE SCARR THAT AP- PEARED IN THE LAST EDITION OF *THE REPORTER*

Dear Editor,

Sponges are simple animals with a few types of specialized cells. Please see the image at right. The external walls are built by mostly inert cells making up the pinacoderm surface. Porocytes (figure) are the other type of cells. They are scattered throughout the wall and make the pores. Often they are simply individual doughnut-shaped cells, like in this image. These cells control the shape and size of the pores. They can shrink or inflate as needed increasing or decreasing the pore openings. This cleans the pores of sand particles.

When one waves hands in front of the sponges, one moves around only sand that settled on the inert pinacoderm surface. This does no good to sponges. Unfortunately, one also moves particles of this harmless sand to the pores and shuts them off, again. This causes the porocytes to do the work again to clean the pores. Probably, not a big deal, but why to create another little hurricane after the sponge just recovered from a big one?

This activity is useless at least, but considering all other dangers and mistakes explained in the Sponge Dusting article, it is rather harmful.

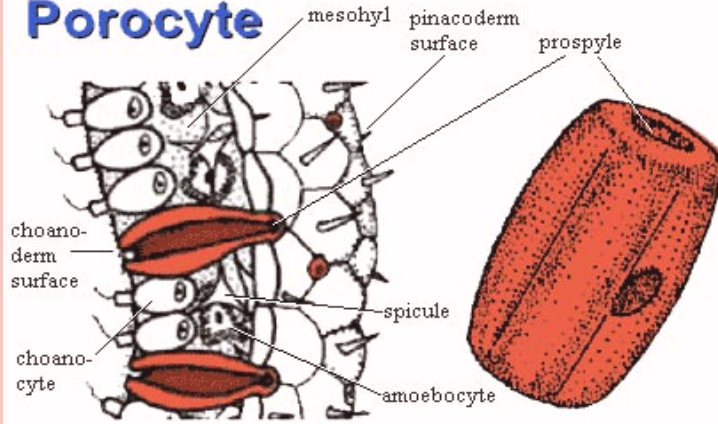
Genady Filkovsky

DEE SCARR REPLIES

As a member of my college's debate team and as a debate coach myself for a few years, I certainly understand the argumentative compulsion with which you greet the information and suggestions in *Bonaire Reporter* articles!

My instinctive response is to argue

Porocyte



against your arguments, but in fact, that's a waste of my time, and of your time.

I prefer to spend my time helping people better understand the incredible reefs of Bonaire, how the ecosystem works, and how we as divers can help the animals of the reef. In the sponge dusting article, you state that moving the dust around (which is not what I suggested, by the way) doesn't help the sponges.

Moving the silt around is not particularly advantageous, I agree, which is why I suggest fanning the silt entirely off the sponge. But even if that didn't help the sponges, a few of the remaining benefits to the divers fanning silt off sponges are:

- People getting a better sense of how all the animals around a reef function together.
- Divers better understanding that sponges are living animals rather than the plants or "corals" that some people perceive when they see sponges.
- Divers learning that there are things they can do to help the natural world, rather than solely being passive observers.

Did you ever have the chance to read *The Little Prince* (by Antoine de Saint Exupery)? It was written in 1943 (before even I was born) and I first

read it in high school, but its insight into human nature is equally true today. Here's what the little prince learned from the fox: "What is essential is invisible to the eye ... It is the time you have wasted for

your rose that makes your rose so important ... You become responsible, forever, for what you have tamed ... You are responsible for your rose." Earlier, the fox defines "tame" as "an act too often neglected, it means to establish ties."

Perhaps not from the bare quotations above, but certainly from the entire work – and later, from life experience -- I learned that human beings *do* establish special ties with the animals (or people) they take active care of. The physical act of fanning the water near a sponge, of the diver taking care of the sponge, evolves into a broader feeling within the diver, of responsibility for the sponge. Such feelings result in a better future for the oceans. In fact, the time I've spent answering your comments on my articles has even engendered in me a feeling of responsibility for *you*. So I ask you, first, how do you help the divers you work with understand the reef ecosystem? And, second, why don't you direct your energies to some writing of your own?

My feeling of responsibility for you was a tiny one, Genady, and it ends with those two questions. Delighted as I am that you read my work so closely, one of my 2009 resolutions was no longer to allocate time responding to your comments.

Dee Scarr

Fireworks Aftermath



Clogged drain



Clean drain

Dear Editor:

Fireworks can be exciting and quite beautiful. They can also be just disturbingly loud and quite dirty, leaving mounds of red paper strewn up and down a street.

As an example, Boulevard J.A. Abraham, which was recently renovated with excellent drainage, now has many of these drains nearly blocked by paper. Selibon said they would only clean up if the company who set off these fireworks paid to have it done. It is interesting to note that if someone were to empty all their office trash on a street they would be fined yet it is OK to clog a street with firework leftovers and pay nothing.

Perhaps it is time that anyone who buys these large rolls of fireworks pays a cleanup deposit directly to Selibon before they can pick up the fireworks. This makes much more sense than paying Selibon if you want to have it cleaned up but if not just leave the paper everywhere.

The many residents of Boulevard J.A. Abraham

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Environmental Police Fining Illegal Dumpers



The photos are from SELIBON and show garbage that has been dumped in the countryside recently.



Since the scales (and payment required for dumping garbage) were introduced at the landfill at Kaminda Lagoon, SELIBON's *Polis Ambiental* (Environmental Police) have been rigorously patrolling the countryside of Bonaire.

Recently there have been various sites discovered where garbage has been dumped illegally. The *Polis Ambiental* are investigating to find who has dumped the trash. Some of the illegally dumped garbage in the mondi already has been identified and traced back to the people who dumped it. As it is against the law those persons will be given a summons.

There is a maximum fine of NAf 5.000 for dumping garbage illegally.

SELIBON is continuing to make the maximum effort to maintain the cleanliness of our island, but the responsibility of each one of us is needed for success.

On the second and fourth Saturday of each month house garbage may be dumped free of charge at the Landfill. On other days there will be a charge of NAf 8 for each 500 kilos or less brought in by each vehicle.

For more details call SELIBON at 717-8159, Fax 717-7339 or email PRSelibon@selibon.an, ■ *Press Release/L.D.*

Do you see anything wrong with this downtown Kralendijk sign? Look carefully. ■ Submitted by Marlis S.



Bubbles from the Biologist

Did You Know.....

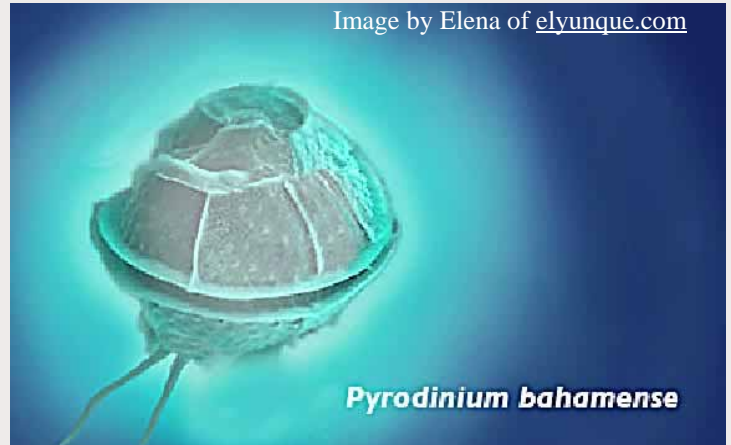
that small organisms create "sparks" in the ocean? These incredible creatures, called **dinoflagellates**, are single celled organisms that give off a burst of light when disturbed which appears as a spark in the water for a short half a second. This can only be observed at night, not only because it would be very hard to see in the daylight but because they actually turn off their light emission, or bioluminescence, during the day.

You may ask yourself why these creatures spend their precious energy letting off light for no apparent reason. Bioluminescent dinoflagellates fluoresce only when disturbed by a possible threat. The light is meant to confuse their predator momentarily and attract another animal likely to make prey of the impending predator. In other words, this beautiful sight is a cry of distress in hopes that they won't be eaten.

So next time you get a chance, head out to the ocean at night, wave your hand through the water and observe these little creatures doing their best to not become your next snack. ■ *Christopher Savage*

Savage is a junior at George Fox University in Newberg, Oregon, where he majors in Biology with a focus on ecology and field studies. He's studying at CIEE Research Station Bonaire this semester. He enjoys random overnights in the wilderness, long strolls underwater and caring for his anemone, Franklin.

Image by Elena of elyunque.com



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WHAT'S HAPPENING

HAPPENING SOON

KARNAVAL SCHEDULE— See Page 11

Sunday, January 18—Seru Grandi-Angola Walk organized by Top Health Fitness Center. Led by Bòi Antoin. Meet at 6:30 am at Lagun Hill. NAf 10. Reservations: 567-1055 or 796-3109. More on page 10.

Artist Henk Roozendaal's exhibition at Kas di Arte will continue until the end of February, but will be open only by appointment. Art lovers may call him at 717-6938. Henk's websites: www.henkroozendaal.com and www.henkroozendaal.extoCuracao.com

Friday-Sunday-January 23-25 The XXI (21st) Bonaire International & Local Fishing Tournament, HQ at Club Nautico, see story on page 2.

Saturday January 31- Bonaire Wellness Connexions first Mountain Bike Tour of 2009 open to Riders of All Levels of Experience: Courses are from 15-30 km. 4:05 pm. Register beginning at 3:45 at BWC's headquarters, Les Galleries Shopping Mall (downtown). NAf 15 per person (includes drink + fruits) Pre-Registration at BWC everyday Mon. thru Sat. from 9am-5 pm.

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

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 Seas

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. NAf10 per selling table. (NAf 5.00 - goes to up-keep the park). NGOs can have a free table. More information and reservations for a spot call **Vicky Bissessar - 786 1592.**

- **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

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

Monday-Dee Scarr's Touch the Sea Slide Presentation, Capt. Don's Habitat, 8:30 pm. 717-8529

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 Cruxita 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 meeting 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

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Aliens Invade Caribbean

Some time in the 1900s a pair of brown tree snakes, or maybe just a pregnant female brown tree snake, found its way to the island of Guam, which had never had brown tree snakes before.

No animal on Guam preyed on the brown tree snake, and no birds in Guam had evolved a way to avoid brown tree snakes. Consequently, only a relatively few years later considering the life of our planet, there are almost no birds left on Guam, because the sea snakes ate the eggs and the baby birds. Pretty much all of them.

Sometime in the 1980s, a pair of lionfish – native to the tropical Pacific – somehow ended up in the sea off Florida. These lionfish managed to stay close enough to each other to spawn. The fertilized eggs which escaped predation hatched into larval lionfish, who settled out of the plankton onto reefs off South Florida.

Now, only about 25 years later, lionfish have been found as far north as Massachusetts, as far south as the Caribbean, as deep as 500' (seen from a submarine) in Bermuda. I was flabbergasted to learn how quickly the population is spreading. Looking at the USGS website section on non-indigenous species, I learned that the first report of lionfish from St. Croix, in the USVI, came in September of 2008. The first report from Haiti came a month later, and from Puerto Rico last month. There's just been a report from Belize, too, which means lionfish have arrived in Central America.

"What's the problem with lionfish?" someone asked me. "They're really beautiful; won't they add a nice dimension to Caribbean reefs?"

Oh, they'll add a dimension all right, but they'll take away more.

Lionfish are predators of smaller fish and crustaceans, which they suck down whole. A



*These lionfish are of the species Pterois volitans/miles, which means "flying with wing/**". In their native range, their maximum size is about 14". They've already been measured in the Bahamas at 16".*

full-grown lionfish can eat fish up to 6" long. I was reading a 2002 online article about the lionfish invasion, which said the lionfish were not expected to be too significant a problem. Six years later, there are areas in the Bahamas with a few lionfish -- and very few other fish.

One part of the reason that lionfish are doing so well is that, being natives of the tropical Pacific, they have no natural predators in the Southeastern Atlantic/Caribbean area. In fact, they don't have a lot of predators in their home environment, either. Sharks eat a few, and people eat a few, but no one ever really considered why lionfish didn't take over.

And, boy, do we need that information now!

Because, in addition to having no noteworthy predators in the Caribbean, lionfish adapted pretty much instantly to preying on Caribbean creatures. Little fish who didn't recognize lionfish as predators soon found themselves becoming lionfish prey. Lionfish

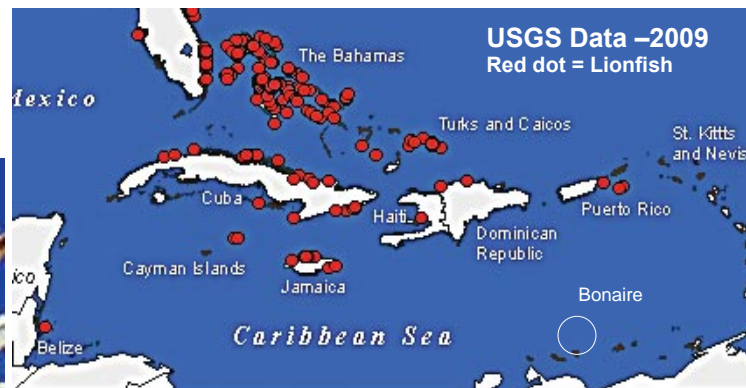
hover in the water, displaying expert skills at achieving neutral buoyancy. They could gobble down our chromis, wrasses, and other small fishes with ease. If just hovering in the cloud of fishes didn't work, they could use their large, fanlike fins to herd little fishes into a crevice, then gobble them down. In Florida and the Bahamas, lionfish are causing noticeable drops in populations of all small fishes, including juveniles, and of shrimp and crabs.



A lionfish in its native environment, Million Dollar Point off Vanuatu, is appreciated by diver Allan Apter.

One observer watched a lionfish come to a cleaner station, eat the cleaners, and then stick around and eat the clients.

From an email from Paul Hoetjes, Netherlands Antilles biolo-



gist: "Research in the Bahamas has shown that a single lionfish transplanted onto small patch reefs reduces recruitment of native fishes by nearly 80%!"

They spawn monthly, all year. Each female deposits around 30,000 eggs in each spawning, in the form of an egg raft. The raft floats for a week or so, then the fertilized eggs hatch, the larval lionfish drift for probably two to six weeks, then look for a hospitable reef. This spawning and drifting is the main reason that lionfish populations are growing so swiftly through the Caribbean. Every current, every hurricane now distributes lionfish eggs and larva throughout the Caribbean.

Ramon DeLeon, Manager of the Bonaire National Marine Park, told me that the lionfish invasion is definitely being discussed and action is being planned -- but the plans are not yet ready to be announced. Happily, we don't need to push him on this because lionfish have not been sighted (or at least, not been reported) in the ABC Islands. Yet.

Until then, Ramon reminds me to remind you that lionfish have venomous spines. If you see one (or more), record the location by site and depth as accurately as you can, along with any other location or behavior information "Angel City, north of the yellow stone entry, first reef, 50' deep, under a multi-tubed purple tube sponge," for example. If you're with a divemaster, make sure the divemaster sees the lionfish for backup on your identification and location.

Then report that lionfish location identification to the BNMP at 717-8444.

If you're a member of REEF, you'll of course report any lionfish sighting in your fish survey. If you're not a member, find out more at www.reef.org, where there is more information about the lionfish invasion and links to the USGS Non-indigenous Aquatic Species web pages. There are also lionfish videos on YouTube.

Some of the species of sharks that eat lionfish in the Pacific are also present at shark feeds in the Bahamas, but the Bahamian sharks seem uninterested in the numbers of lionfish now hanging around. Personnel from REEF and Stuart Cove's tried offering whole dead lionfish to sharks -- the sharks would take the food, then spit it out.

On the other hand, humans find lionfish to be very tasty. So right now there's an item appearing on the menu in the Bahamas, Bermuda, and other Caribbean locations that has never been offered before: "Local Lionfish."

Maybe Guam needs to experiment with snake recipes... ■

Story and photo 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 Resort Mondays at 8:30 pm.



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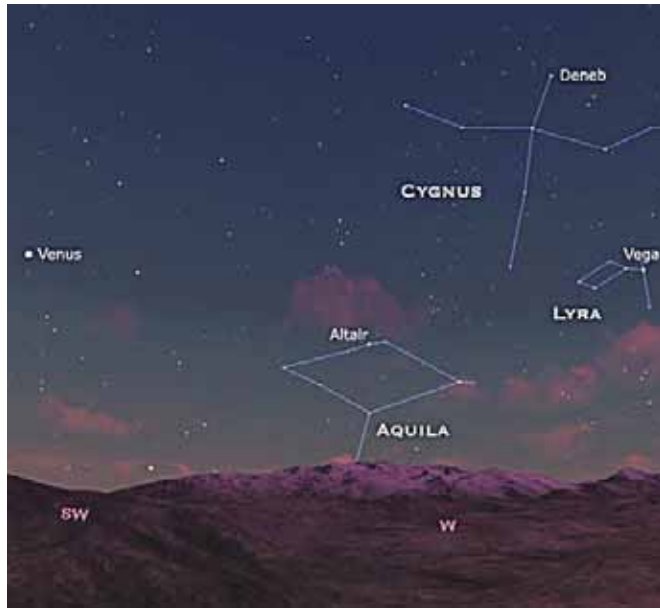
And as you regular Sky Park visitors know each season on planet Earth has its counterpart in the heavens. And this week and next we'll have a wonderful opportunity to see the most famous constellations of summer, autumn and winter all at the same time, right after sunset.

Next week, between 6:30 and 8 pm face west where the brightest thing you'll see will be our nearest planetary neighbor, same size as planet Earth, 8,000-mile-wide Venus. But if you look below and off to the side of Venus toward the northwest horizon you'll see three bright stars which, if we draw lines between them, make up the **great Summer Triangle**. The brightest star, **Vega**, belongs to the constellation, **Lyra, the harp**. The second brightest, **Altair**, belongs to the constellation, **Aquila, the eagle**. And the third brightest, **Deneb**, marks the tail of **Cygnus, the swan**.

And if you recall, a few months ago at the beginning of summer this great triangle was just rising in the northeast, announcing the beginning of its appearance in early evening skies for several months. But this week and next it's letting us know that summer is for sure no longer with us and that it is probably the last bit of summer most of us in the northern hemisphere will see. Next, if you look due north you'll see the **North Star** directly above the horizon and directly above it five stars which, if we connect with lines, trace out the squashed out capital letter "M." It is one of autumn's brightest constellations and is named for the legendary queen of Ethiopia, **Cassiopeia**.

But directly above her and slightly off to the side you'll see four much dimmer stars which mark the **Great Square of Pegasus**, the winged horse, which is perhaps autumn's most famous constellation. Finally, face east and you'll see what is many peoples' favorite constellation, **Orion the hunter**, just rising and announcing that winter has just begun. He's easy to find because three equally spaced stars lined up in a row mark his belt, two very bright stars mark his shoulders and two very bright stars, his knees. And although there are other winter constellations nearby we'll update you on them as we get a little deeper into winter.

So for now simply go outside this week and next between the hours of 7 and 8 pm, face west northwest for the three brilliant stars which mark the corners of the Summer Triangle depicted by a wonderful lyre, a magnificent eagle and a graceful swan. Then face north and directly above the North Star you will see the five bright stars, which marks autumn's queen, Cassiopeia, riding on her throne in a most precarious position. And just above her autumn's magnificent square which marks Pegasus, the horse. Finally, if you face east you'll see, just rising, the super bright Orion, the hunter, who will be with us all winter long. So you'd better get used to him now. Three seasons for the price of one. ■ *Jack Horkheimer*



StarPower

By Jenny Lynch

January-2009 (end)

ARIES: *March 20th - April 20th* Ruler Mars at the top of your chart reminds you that it's not who you are, but what you do. You win respect from others by demonstrating your skills or showing you care. The solar eclipse requires you go over some ground rules at home to keep the peace.

TAURUS: *April 20th - May 21st* This month's solar eclipse places unpredictable Uranus close to your ruler, providing unusual experiences and some extraordinary opportunities. As a result you may spin off in new directions, be attracted to off beat subjects or find simply feel more alive.

GEMINI: *May 21st - June 21st* A combination of the full Moon and Mercury retrograde effecting your money houses could cause stress or concerns over finances. Luckily Saturn in good aspect to your ruler provides a solution to your current problem. An exciting new romance could develop at work.

CANCER: *June 21st - July 22nd* A solar eclipse in your power house gives you access to other's secrets and resources. These kinds of benefits will greatly enhance your sense of security and stimulate your generous side. Doing things for others feels good now. Romance with someone who has something to teach you is promising.

LEO: *July 22nd - August 23rd* A full Moon in your house of well being helps you focus on your health. A solar eclipse in your house of partners marks a wonderful time to find a workout buddy or even begin a new relationship. Feed back from others brings the reassurance you need now.

VIRGO: *August 23rd - September 22nd* A fortunate solar eclipse helps clean the slate at work, which not only improves your situation, but also relieves you of stress. Ruler Mercury retrograde in your creative sector means it's finally time to begin a hobby or develop a talent. Relationships bring pleasure and fun. If single, you'll enjoy dating now.

LIBRA: *September 23rd - October 23rd* A rare eclipse in your house of pleasure makes it easy to relax and enjoy loved ones. Sharing a creative project or being in nature can bring you closer together. If you're looking for romance, you simply have to let others know that you're available. With your ruler Venus, in perfect harmony to Mars, new relationships get off fast start.

SCORPIO: *October 23rd - November 22nd* Mercury and Mars review your current situation and offer a fresh perspective. This new insight inspires you and provides a solid basis for your natural next step. Your romance life is looking up, with Venus in your fun department you're bound to find plenty of it now!

SAGITTARIUS: *November 22nd - December 21st* This month's solar eclipse could work wonders for you if you keep an open mind. Important information or solutions will surface from your everyday experiences or when you least expect it. Also, you could discover new ways to grow your money while Mercury retrogrades your finance sector. Your home life brings pleasure now.

CAPRICORN: *December 21st - January 20th* Having Mars in your sign gives you extra energy and makes you more forceful. This could be a good thing as long as you don't push too hard. The combination of Uranus opposite your ruler and Mercury retrograde in your sign urges you to exert your charm instead of muscle. Romantic opportunities can be found close to home, in your neighborhood.

AQUARIUS: *January 20th - February 19th* Jupiter entering your sign marks the beginning of a great new year. However your success depends greatly on making decisive changes. Once you determine what's out of your life, it will be easier to bring new things in. These could be people, places or things.

PISCES: *February 19th - March 20th* Life may feel like a revolving door as new people enter while the old leave. Because you're less willing to put up with things, you may outgrow some friendships or situations. If so, no worries as you thrive on the excitement of new developments. With Venus in your sign, others find you exciting; you're attracting people who are good for you now! ■



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