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**BONAIRE**

February 13-27, 2009; Volume 16, Issue 4

# The REPORTER

*Helping Bonaire Grow Responsibly*

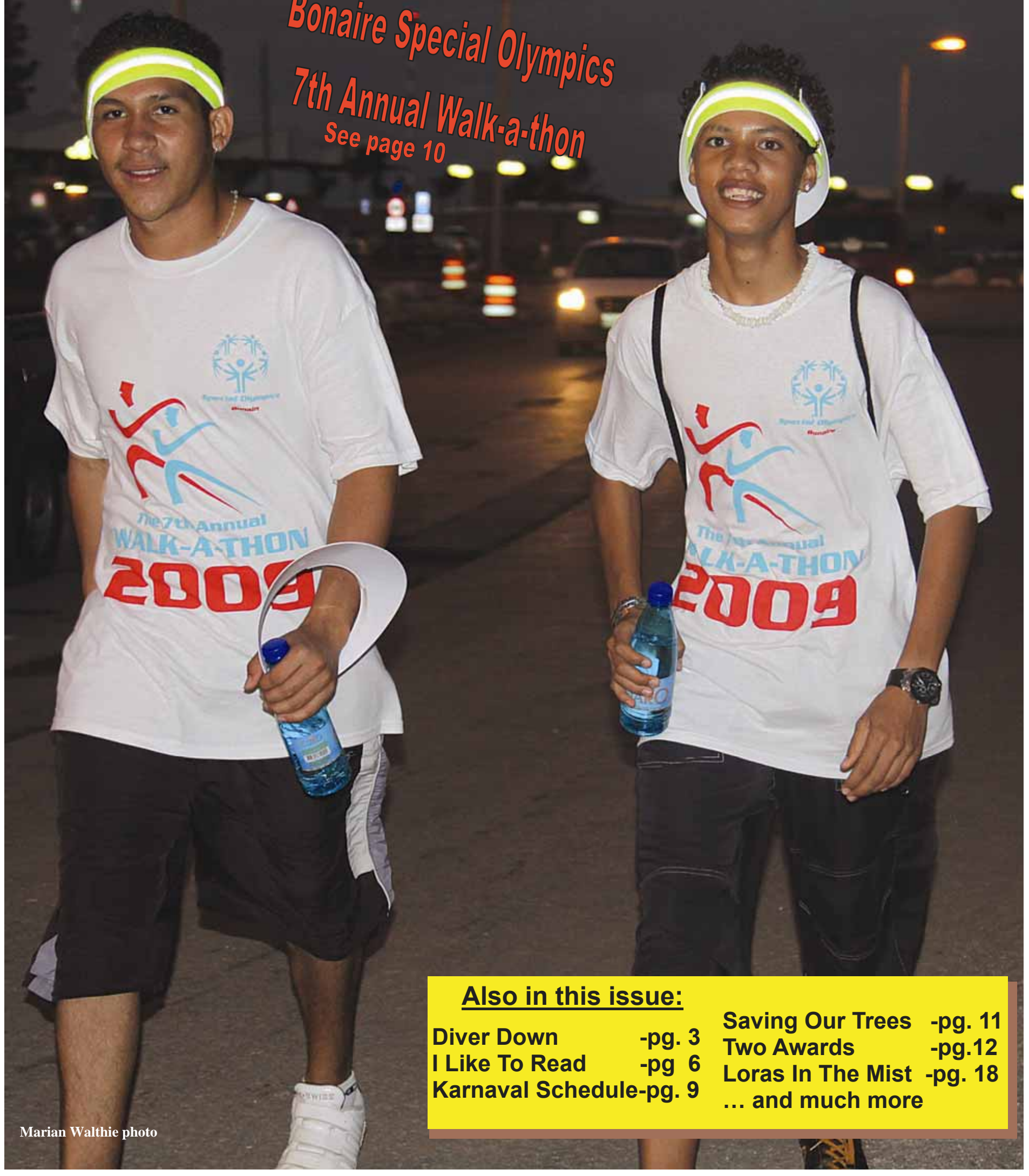
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Since 1994

*Bonaire Special Olympics*

*7th Annual Walk-a-thon*  
*See page 10*



Marian Walthie photo

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**T**he Bonaire Government invites all residents, businessmen, organization members to offer their opinion on the concept and execution of Island Nature Management Ordinance. There are two parts, one for terrestrial environment management and the other for the Marine Park. DROB's Environmental Department has a draft available in their offices and on-line at [http://www.bonairegov.an/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=389&Itemid=248](http://www.bonairegov.an/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=389&Itemid=248)

The ordinance is designed to protect all aspects of Bonaire's environment as well as its flora and fauna.

A public hearing will be held on February 12, at 3 pm in the Sporthall on Kaya Amsterdam for all those interested.

The period for comment is from now until March 15. Comments in writing may be sent to:

Dienst Ruimtelijke Ordening en Beheer (DROB), Sekshon Maneho di Medio Ambiente i Naturalesa, Kaya Amsterdam 23, Bonaire. Or by email to: [inspraaknatuurwetten@bonairegov.com](mailto:inspraaknatuurwetten@bonairegov.com)

► **On February 5 in The Hague, Dutch Minister President Balkenende officiated at the Dutch Postcode Lottery Goed Geld Gala where the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) was named a Postcode Lottery beneficiary.** Becoming a beneficiary of the Postcode Lottery means that DCNA can expect annual financial support from Europe's greenest lottery fund. Kalli De Meyer, who ran the Bonaire Marine Park in its formative years, is the DCNA Director with her headquarters on Bonaire. For more information on DCNA contact her at Tel +599.717.5010 Email: [kdm@telbonet.an](mailto:kdm@telbonet.an); website: [www.DCNAnature.org](http://www.DCNAnature.org)

► Netherlands Minister of Transport and Communication, Camiel Eurlings, said money is being allotted to repair the Flamingo Airport runway for better safety and to meet the standards of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). He said

that if the runway doesn't get fixed now and fast, the airport of Bonaire will soon have to be closed, which is something nobody wants.

Eurlings advocates an "open sky market between the Dutch Caribbean islands and the Amsterdam-Antilles route."



► Larry "Wildside" Baillie's Zodiac Hurricane 920 boat has new owners, Bonairean Roy Celestijn and Gijs Hoogerkamp, who have named their dive operation **Bonaire East Coast Diving** and added a number of new dive sites to their program. Reservations can be made by phone at 717-5211 or at your own dive operator or on their new website: [www.bonaireeastcoastdiving.com](http://www.bonaireeastcoastdiving.com)

► **Schools on the BES islands (Bonaire, Saba and St. Eustatius) need assistance in the broadest sense of the word,** stated Dutch education inspectors in a meeting with the Dutch Second Chamber in The Hague early this month. In their 150-page report they noted that **pupils completing primary school on Bonaire and St. Eustatius run a big risk of ending up with serious educational deficiencies.** The majority of students have a bad command of Dutch as well. These are some of the worrisome conclusions reached by Dutch education inspectors who visited the BES islands that will become part of the Netherlands. Figures show that only Saba scored relatively well.

**The primary schools on Bonaire and St. Eustatius are simply not delivering the basic quality that they should.** According to the quality profile for foundation-based education, the

► **Bonaire police have commissioned a special task force team to focus on the increase in house robberies, auto and scooter theft** which have created a feeling of insecurity in the community. The preparation phase has concluded and the team became operational on February 9. It's composed of members of the Bonaire Police force and Royal Military Police (*Koninklijke Marechaussee*).

They have three primary goals:

- Reduce the number of thefts
- Arrest those responsible
- Return a feeling of security to the people

If you have any information that can help them call the tip line 717-7251 anonymously, or Emergency 911 or Police HQ at 717-8000. If you are a crime victim report it for fast action.



**performance, quality of care, educational materials and counseling at primary schools is below level on Bonaire and St. Eustatius.** Saba fared better.

Inspectors, however, were satisfied with the teaching method and the atmosphere at primary schools on the three islands.

But overall, the inspection rated education at the primary schools on Bonaire and St. Eustatius as "very weak." In the Netherlands, these schools would have been placed under "intensive supervision."

► **Secondary education students are short-changed as well.** Scores were more even among the three islands, but still below level, where it comes to high schools. The supply of educational material is insufficient on Bonaire, Saba and St. Eustatius and so is the differentiation of levels and counseling. Instruction on Bonaire and St. Eustatius was rated as inadequate.

"Based on the available performance figures, it can be concluded that the percentage of students that pass exams on the BES islands is low in comparison to the Netherlands," the inspectors stated in their report. "For a number of subjects, the average scores are well below the lowest limit in the Netherlands. Too many students are faced with delays in their education. Weak students or students with specific problems are too often not noticed and cared for."



► **Netherlands Antilles Olympic sprinter Churandy Martina has to wait until February 25 to learn if he will get into the record books,** but he already has the silver medal for his 19.82 second run in the 200 meters at Beijing. Martina was second behind Usain Bolt of Jamaica, but Martina crossed into another lane during the race. Race officials only saw the infraction when they examined the race record following a protest against US runner Wallace Spearmon, who finished third. He was disqualified for running out of his lane. Afterwards the US team protested Martina's run. Martina was then disqualified.

Shawn Crawford, the American 2004 Olympic gold medalist, ran 19.96 and took second place as the third finisher. Last month Crawford gave his silver to Martina saying, "I'm like, if a guy is 10 meters in front of me, I don't care if he stayed in the middle of his lane, he was going to beat me anyway. He didn't impede in anybody's race."

(Continued on page 8)

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# DIVER DOWN



*Beardless in rehab... but it's growing back fast*

On Saturday, 10 January 2009, Erwin Muller, a divemaster at Toucan Divers, suffered a massive stroke at the very young age of 48. He was in the hospital here on Bonaire for a day before he was airlifted to Curaçao. Erwin is paralyzed on his left side. Weeks have passed and he is making baby steps in his recovery. It is a lot of very hard work for him and he has a long road ahead. He is finally out of the hospital and in a rehab center.

His many friends, especially Dara Walter, Linda Baker and Benny Robles who have gone above and beyond to help, want to mobilize the island and tourist community who know Erwin to help as



Every island has its legends and Bonaire certainly has its share. But usually 'the legend' is either dead or old. Flying in the face of tradition is Erwin Muller, a Bonaire legend at only 41.

Born and raised on Bonaire, Erwin began laying the groundwork for his career as a teenager when he worked as a beach boy at the old Sunset Beach Hotel and later as a divemaster

much as they can.

Even though Bonaire offers universal medicine care, it cannot provide all Erwin needs. In order for his wife, Ellen and son, Jason to have been able to stay with him 24/7 he had to be get expensive upgraded hospitalization. Since she and Jason were with him they were able to correct many situations that would otherwise have been overlooked.

Because rehabilitation facilities are superior in Curaçao it was deemed that Erwin not yet return to Bonaire. Ellen is

at The Black Durgeon under the direction of Bonaire dive operator Al Catafulmo. A spirit of adventure with the sea has always been a part of Erwin's character. He made a name for himself in the early days of windsurfing when he windsurfed to Curaçao and then on to Venezuela. He was the first person to circumnavigate Bonaire on a windsurfer and set a speed record that stood for many years. However, he was lured away by 'the call of the wild,' so to speak, working for Capt. Don Stewart at Aquaventure.

Those were exciting times for a young divemaster. Back in those early years dive rules were considered suggestions and the bywords of visiting divers when they hit the boats were, "hook us up and head us out."

After being in the dive business for over 15 years, Erwin has seen changes in diving attitudes as well as techniques. Caution and common sense is now the name of the game. But there are still many thrills to be had and Erwin is there to make it happen.

Legend number 1: Dive with the best, dive with Erwin. But wait, I'm getting ahead of my story.

Having created an outstanding reputation for himself in the dive community Erwin was

ready for a change. As his new challenge he chose another slice of Bonairean life. He developed a fishing fleet. With his three boats, *Maya*, *Noel*, and *Imagine Fishing*, he spent many happy and productive years fishing the waters of Bonaire. He and his wife Ellen, a talented photographer, sold fish to local restaurants. His store on Kaya Playa Lechi was known to every island resident as THE place to get fresh fish for dinner.

Legend number 2: Erwin has the best fish. With the slowdown of the fishing industry and the closure of that section of Kaya Playa Lechi, Erwin sold *Maya* and *Noel*. His son, Jason, is carrying on the family fishing tradition with *Imagine Fishing* over on the eastern side of Bonaire, and Erwin is back to his first love, diving. To paraphrase an old movie headline, "Erwin's Back and Plaza has Him!" These days he usually commands the *Sea Aruba*, a big dive boat with red floats at Plaza Resort Bonaire. When you see it, look for a big man with a full beard who's always laughing and having a good time doing what he's known for: diving. ■ Published 3/14/2001 by Dabney Lassiter

currently commuting back and forth but perhaps will need to find a place to stay in Curaçao.

This has been a extremely expensive journey. There have been many who have offered to help and the only way to assist right now is financially. If you want to contribute to Erwin's recovery Ellen's American friend Dara Walter has set up a way to do this in the US. Simply Pay Pal your donation to:

[Erwin2CanDive@gmail.com](mailto:Erwin2CanDive@gmail.com).

I have also set up and account locally at the Maduro & Curiels Bank. The account

number is 400 050 800.

If any of you would like to follow up on his recovery I have created a blog. Go to <http://erwinmuller.blogspot.com/> ■ Linda Baker.

#### Visit or Write to Erwin

Erwin Muller  
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# On The Island Since... 1994 Chun Miao "Michi" Zhen

"I was born in Guandong, China, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1986. In the village where we lived the houses were built close together and they were tall with several floors. All the people in the village had the same family name as they were all somehow related. We -my father, my mother, my sister and I - lived in a house with my grandmother, my aunt and two cousins. We kept chickens, geese, ducks, rabbits and pigs. We also grew vegetables, and every family had their own piece of land to plant rice. All those rice fields were connected, and when the time came to plant the rice, all the women and children would be out in the fields, in the mud. For me as a child it was just a great time. The plants would grow and the fields would become beautifully green, but after we'd harvested the rice we could only keep a little bit for ourselves because the greater part would go to the government.

When I was four, my father left for Venezuela to look for a better future. We stayed in China. After a while my aunt and my cousins left for Curaçao to join my uncle and his brother who'd gone there previously. My mom, my grandmother and my sister and I stayed

behind. I went to elementary school and it was fun. There were a lot of activities and the school system was very advanced in mathematics. Where we lived we spoke Cantonese, but at school I learned Mandarin. Every Monday we had to come in our school uniform, then we would raise the flag and sing the national anthem. On Saturdays we had to wear our uniform again as they would lower the flag, but during the week we would go to school casually dressed.

For two years my father worked as a cook in Venezuela, but he found it dangerous there, so he moved to Bonaire where he started working as a cook for Keeshan Snack in Rincon. He would send us a little bit of money; it was the best he could do. We lived on what we had and my mom worked extra jobs at a clothing factory.

I was eight when I came to Bonaire with my mom and my sister." *She laughs.* "Our first reaction was. 'Oh! What kind of



a place is this!' Every single person looked different than we did and we couldn't speak the language. But we were ever so happy when we saw our dad! When I was still in China, every

time I saw a plane passing over, I thought it was bringing back my dad and I would ask my mom: 'Did Daddy come?'

We went to live on Kaya Korona, in a small apartment on the same land as where the owner had his house. They were very nice people and they had a son my age. The boy would try to teach us Papiamentu and he

taught us baseball and soccer, sports we didn't know about. We arrived in May and stayed at home until the new school year started in August. Before we started school we met some Chinese people, and one of them was related to us. She told us, 'It's better to have a nickname at school because your names are

*(Continued on page 5)*

"I didn't know anything about Dutch or Papiamentu, I didn't even know the alphabet!"

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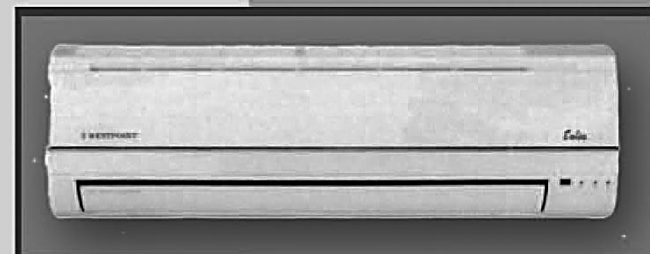
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**Born on Bonaire**  
(Continued from page 4)

very difficult for the people here.' And then she named us Michi and Mimi and we're still happy with those names.

We went to Papa Cornes elementary school and it was very hard. In China I would have gone to third grade and now I was back in first grade. We didn't understand anything and the children pestered us a lot. After a couple of months the teacher put me in second grade because I was so good in mathematics, but I failed to pass that year because I didn't know anything about Dutch or Papiamentu. I didn't even know the alphabet. My dad was working in a restaurant called 'El Tropical' and my mother worked at the laundry, and after school I had to take care of my sister - ('Yeah, right!' Mimi says from behind the computer) - because she didn't know how to cook as she was only six. I also had to wash clothes, bathe myself and my sister and we went to school by ourselves. But," she laughs, "we were and still are so intelligent and independent that we managed. Ha! Ha!

In the second grade my sister came into my class and it went much better. We made friends and we were very good in athletics. In that same year my parents bought a house in Antriol. It got better every year. We made a lot

of friends, and when we were in third grade my grandmother came to live in Bonaire with us, but she also went to Curaçao frequently to visit our family there.

As well as working at her job my mom was growing vegetables to sell, and she was also selling little bags of chips. My sister and I would always help her and during weekends and holidays we would work at Tung Fong Store, bagging up people's shopping. Hardworking children!

When I was in fifth grade we moved to Rincon where my parents had opened a restaurant, 'La Fama Snack.' Then my grandmother got sick and she flew to China to see a doctor, but she got worse during the trip and when she arrived she had to be operated on immediately. She didn't make it. When we got the news we couldn't believe it, and by the time we realized it was really, really true we cried our hearts out. It was very, very hard. My grandmother had 11 grandchildren, but Mimi and I were the closest."

*Michi Zhen is one of the sweetest people I've ever met; she's easy going and extremely warm-hearted with a great sense of humor and responsibility and she's bright and pretty.*

"Well," she continues, "when I finished elementary school I went to SGB Havo. I had lots of friends - Latinos, Dutch, Bonaire-

ans and all the other nationalities - we're still good friends. During my Havo years I also worked at my parents' restaurant, but in my last high school year a cousin from China came over to work with them and then I didn't have to help them so often anymore.

After Havo high school I didn't want to go away to study because my parents are not so good in Papiamentu and I didn't want to leave them behind. I applied for a job at Maduro and Curiel's Bank and became a cashier. I'm three years with the bank now and it's great. I love to interact with people and when the clients get their service from me, they leave the bank in a good mood because I like to make them laugh. My colleagues are fun and very social; we go out for dinner, or they eat at my house or we organize a get-together and have wines. We're always having a good time.

I love to cook - nobody ever taught me - and I don't cook Chinese food, but I like pastas, land and sea, potato dishes and barbecue. International cuisine is what I like. I also like to play tennis and to go to the sea and I really love watching TV; I can watch TV all day long. I don't go out very often, but when I do I go to City Café or Karel's and it's funny because you don't see



**Michi and Mimi**

many Chinese girls hanging out; Mimi and I seem to be the only ones! We are different. Our parents always trusted us completely and we never gave them any reason not to; we are very open with them. I'm still single," she laughs, "waiting for the right person to come along. My mom is quite old fashioned and she wants me - let's put it differently - she 'prefers' me to meet a Chinese man, but here it's multi-cultural and you meet so many different people and it changes you.

In August 2008 I started to study again, a bachelor's in business administration with Curises Foundation. The teachers come over from Curaçao during the weekends and so far it's going

well. I want to get ahead - I feel I have the potential to do better.

I love Bonaire, it's slow and quiet and I like tranquility so much more than all the hassle. I've been to New York and Miami and often to Curaçao, and I should go to China sometime to see my family and my other grandparents there, but every time I am abroad I miss Bonaire. I feel more Bonairean than Chinese. I've got more Antillean friends than Chinese. I feel I belong here - everything I want and everything I need I have here."

■ Story & photos by Greta Kooistra



							
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# “I Like to Read”

As part of their project *Mi Gusta Lesa* (I Like to Read) SEBIKI recently hosted a seminar for children and their parents. The topic was “A mysterious story.”

Thirteen children and eight parents participated. A mysterious story was told to the children, but the story didn't have an end. That was for each child and his or her parent to finish. They talked about mysterious and secret words and showed how to write them.

SEBIKI's aim is to help parents and their children, in innovative ways such as this, realize how important it is to read, and these programs make it fun for both the children and their parents. These photos capture some of the enthusiasm of adults and kids.

The next *Mi Gusta Lesa* session will be on March 20. The program is free to children and their parents. SEBIKI is at Kaya Pedro P. Silië #4, Tel. 717-2436 ■L.D.



# Two New Speciality Shops



In her new shop, Desiree gets ready to cut Chef Egbert's locks.



Eveline in her shop for body, mind and spirit

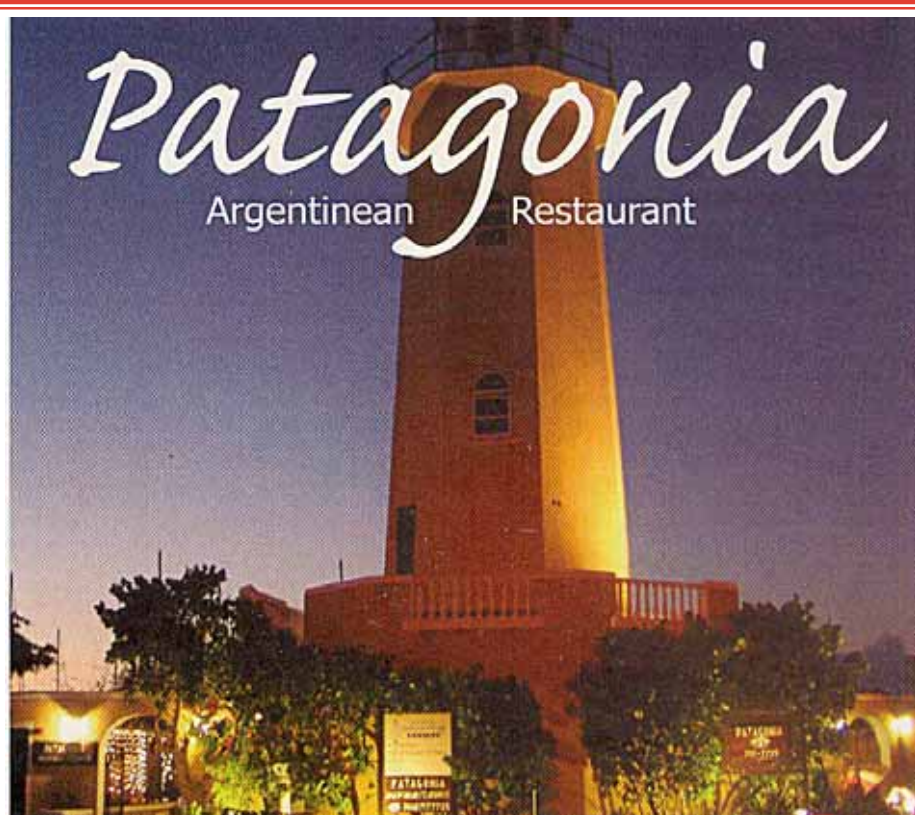
## Just Opened : “Just Haircuts”

Desiree, who ran the successful and popular, “A Place for You” full service salon, has just started a new shop. It's just for haircuts - no shampooing, coloring, manicures or other services. It's called “Just Haircuts” and fits a special niche for people who want a great haircut but don't have the time for other services or are too busy during the week. Desiree has made it easy for those people.

Just Haircuts is open non-stop from Friday to Monday (including Saturday and Sundays) from 10 am to 4 pm. Just Haircuts is in the local art shop of Chat 'n Browse at the traffic circle on the way to Hotel Row. Telephone is 786-6416. There's no appointment necessary. ■ Louise Rood/L.D.

Eveline's shop for body, mind and spirit carries a large choice of organic body and skin care products. The store is part of The Center for Awareness. Eveline, a passionate advocate of organic living, has been using organic products for many years since she became aware of the toxic and harmful ingredients we normally introduce into our bodies by eating and using artificial and hazardous products. “If it's harmful to our bodies and minds it harms the earth itself,” she says. All products are pure and naturally organic, no artificial ingredients, not tested on animals. There are other earth friendly delights such as books to enhance the mind and music to lift the spirit.

Eveline's shop is at Kaya Korona #47 (behind Firgos). Open Tuesday-Friday 10-3, Saturdays 10-1. Tel 788-1058. [www.evelinebodymindspirit.com](http://www.evelinebodymindspirit.com) ■ Louise Rood/L.D.



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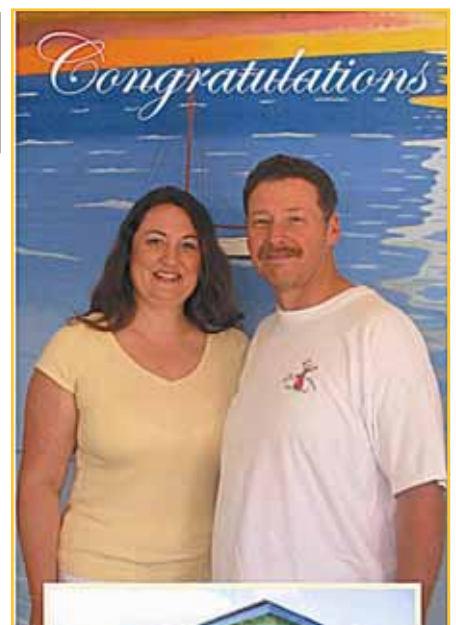
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# Island View

## The F Word

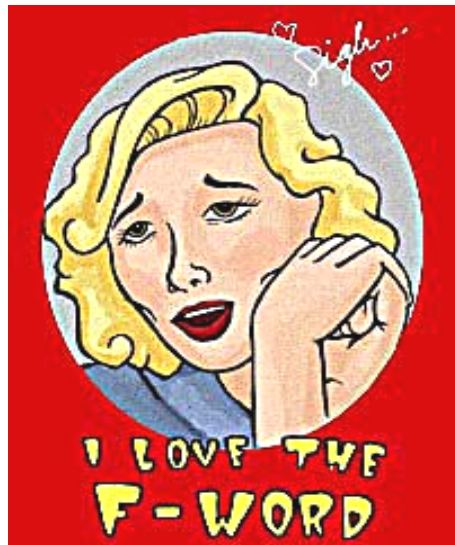
I'd like to talk about the F-word. Some use it as a curse word and will spit it out in disgust, but in fact it is a very normal word. Or maybe they will ask, "Oh, you are one of those?" But as a matter of fact we need more of it on Bonaire. So let's talk about **feminism**.

Feminism: "the advocacy of women's rights on the grounds of sexual equality." In other words, it is the support of women's rights because they are actually human rights. (That means that feminists can, and should be, both males and females). Women have the right to choose their partner and enter into a marriage freely, the right to health care, the right to be safe in their environment, the right to education, and the right to equal opportunities and compensation just as their male counterparts. Nothing out of the ordinary as you can see. But there is still a sort of a taboo to talk about it on Bonaire (and other parts of the world). Some people will either tell you that it is nature: men and women are different and there is nothing you can do about it. Or they will tell you that you are a man hater. But feminists are not trying to say that men and women are the same, they are just saying that women should have the same rights as men, not, *instead of* men.

When you take a closer look at the rights of women on Bonaire you may see some positive points: younger than 18, you *have* to go to school, regardless of sex. A Bonairean woman can choose her partner freely and has the right to vote. Health care is also available here for men and women alike. Luckily for us we do not live in a country such as current-day Iran where girls cannot get the same education as boys, where the parents decide who should marry whom, and women have to go to special hospitals with very limited means that are just for women.

But, there are also areas where people can still raise their banners and start to protest. That would be the area of equal opportunities and compensation. Just because the girls are able to get an education does not mean that this automatically translates into better jobs for women in the workforce. Currently, the top positions are still held mostly by men. The people in the government and the CEOs of companies on Bonaire are generally male. Also, to this day there is a difference in pay between men and women, where women are paid less for the same kind of work.

One of the reasons that women have other positions in the workforce than men is because of the children. It is still considered the main responsibility of women to care for and raise the children. It is the main responsibility of women, but that should also be the case for men. On Bonaire it is not unusual for men to have children with women and then not care for the children, either financially or emotionally. That will leave the so-called "strong" women with the care, the time and effort and the bills of raising those children. They are of course strong for being able to pull that off without the help from the men, but it is not equal. This will set



them back financially and in available time they can spend making their lives (and those of their children!) better. If more men would care for their offspring that would not only mean that the women, but also the children would be better off, even if it is only financial care.

By the way, did you know that more girls than boys are attending the high school of Bonaire? This is a bit strange because it should be the other way around, as on average more boys are born than girls. So, where are the boys? So far the only answer I could find would be that more boys leave the school unfinished than girls. There is certainly a trend in the Netherlands that more girls than boys are leaving the schools with their diplomas in their pockets. It is not only a trend in the high schools, but you can also find it in the colleges and universities.

Now we have a generation where more and more girls are perfectly qualified for the jobs, but unfortunately fewer and fewer boys. This could result in more women in higher positions. However, at the same time the girls are catching up, the boys are lagging behind. Then you may get the unhealthy situation that even though more women are qualified, still men, traditionally, will get the top positions.

Firstly we need to realize that something is still not right in this community and then we can take assertive action to correct the situation. It should be a goal that the people in the government are 50% female and 50% male, and that the group of CEOs consists of as many women as men on Bonaire. Secondly we need to find out what is happening to the boys in school. An equal society consists of girls and boys, women and men. For an equal society we need the girls **and** the boys to succeed. ■ *Mary Ann Koops*

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



## BONAIREAN VOICES

### FISHING PART II

This is a continuation of last issue's subject of fishing on Bonaire. Our ancestors fished in the waters around Bonaire for centuries. This week I'd like to continue with the interviews of two very experienced fishermen.

The first one, **Francisco Ronald "Nachi" Nicolaas (65)**, started in the fishing business when he was 15 years old.

Nachi explains. "In the past you had to have a lot of discipline; you had to get up very early in the morning to look for fresh bait at the pier in Playa; and all this was happening with no motor boat. We used a wooden paddle to steer the boat in the direction we wanted to go. The fish that we usually caught were groupers, grunts and snappers. We had to check the sun because we didn't have any watches, and we had to be back on the shore before 10 in the morning. There were three women at the fish market (the building in front of City Café which today is used as a fruit market) to sell the fish for you. After some time we got motor boats and we could catch other types of fish like wahoo, mahi-mahi tuna and others. You had to sell all your fish because back then we didn't have freezers. And if you didn't sell all the fish you salted them, let them dry and then you got salt fish.

Nowadays fishing is very easy, but we don't catch as many of those fish as we used to. Fish are moving in another direction today and you don't know where they are, especially the tuna. Even whales we used to see in the past but no more. One of the reasons that's causing all these problems is that we have sophisticated fishing boats from other parts of the world that are using long lines and they catch all kinds of fish. One thing I hope is that there will be someone to protect the Bonairean fishermen, stand up for us and believe in what we are doing concerning fishing."



Another concerned fisherman is **Erwin "Eddy" Melaan (57)**. Since he was eight years old he began to learn everything about the sea.

As he describes it, "I learned from my uncles, my mother and my father who was a navigator. My mother's family is from Margarita, Venezuela, and they were navigators. And my father's family are farmers and fishermen. Fishing was my hobby and then it became my second job. Whatever the sea gives you it helps to cover some of my and my family expenses.

In the past using small boats with gasoline motors you had to spend more money on gasoline and you couldn't go far from the coast. The fish you could catch were only small fish. But now with a diesel motor you can go farther and even stay on the sea for two days if you want. I remember that in December you could catch a lot of white and red *balau* (blue marlin and sailfish). We'd prepare it for special dinners for Christmas and New Years. But today they're hard to find. There are big boats on the east coast and north coast that are fishing in our waters. They throw buckets of bait in the water to catch the fish with their long lines. What is left in our area we catch them. The different ways people use today to fish plays a big role. In fishing you must

*(Continued on page 9)*

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

*Flotsam and Jetsam (Continued from page 2)*

The Netherlands Antilles appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport, arguing that under rules set by the International Association of Athletics Federations the protest was filed too late. The CAS had been expected to rule on the appeal by the end of January. But CAS announced Monday that the ruling would be delayed until the end of February.

If the 24-year-old Martina wins the appeal, his effort would become a new national record and would also be just the Netherlands Antilles' second Olympic medal ever, following a silver medal for Jan Boersma in sailing at the Seoul Games two decades ago.

► KLM spokesperson Nanke Kramer said last Wednesday that KLM's flight from St. Maarten to Amsterdam will be making a **stop-over in Bonaire on Fridays and Sundays** instead of Aruba, effective the end of next month. KLM has been flying to Aruba four times per week, twice via St. Maarten and twice via Bonaire. KLM is ceasing flights to and from Aruba from March 29. KLM's daughter company, Martinair will take over the Aruba flights.

Bonaire will keep its seven KLM flights per week. Five flights will go directly to Bonaire from Schiphol and after a stopover at Flamingo Airport will continue to Ecuador. The other two flights to Bonaire will go via St. Maarten. Curaçao will remain unchanged with daily direct service.

Aruba is not happy with KLM's decision to scrap it from their itinerary. Aruba's Reina Beatrix Airport will lose an estimated NAf 2.8 million annually because of KLM's decision.

KLM has cited financial reasons for its decision. The worldwide financial crisis which has led to fewer tickets being sold and the addi-

tional €45 tax –which soon may be repealed— at Schiphol Airport have put pressure on the Aruba route. We wonder if it might also be because of the excellent performance of the Bonaire KLM agent.

► On his multi-week visit to the Windward Islands, Antilles Queen's Commissioner **Henk Kamp started his task to integrate the BES-islands into Dutch municipalities.** Kamp considers the three islands as three separate communities. He said, "The islands are separate communities with their own history, future and culture... The individual character of the islands must be respected. For this reason each island has its own regional service center. We will not create a single artificial link but offer a tailor-made job, island by island. In some areas there will be close cooperation, as for the police force for example."

► **The five Dutch Waden Sea islands of Texel, Vlieland, Terschelling, Ameland and Schiermonnikoog want the same unique municipality status** as Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba. Moreover the islands want to closely cooperate with the BES islands. By joining strengths Mayor Swart of Schiermonnikoog hopes the islands can get more governmental things done faster. The mayors of Texel and Vlieland made a goodwill visit to Bonaire in February 2007.

► **If you are traveling to Aruba you now need a passport.** The Government of Aruba has banned the use of identification cards or *sedulas* as valid travel documents for residents of the Netherlands Antilles.

Until February 25, Antilleans travelling to Aruba will still be allowed to enter the island with ID cards or driver's licenses. After that a

## Pet of The Week

Here's lucky "Leo" being given special attention by volunteer Corky Halberg. During her nine-week vacation in Bonaire this year Corky volunteers at the Bonaire Animal Shelter. What a nice thing to do and how appreciative are the animals she spends time with. This is especially a fine deal for those people who come to the island and miss their pets!



"Leo" with volunteer Corky Halberg

Leo is only a year old, but he's considered a "special needs" pup. Other dogs consider him the lowest of the pack and have treated him harshly.

This must have happened to him on the street too because he wandered into a real estate office, seeking asylum, possibly with one of their clients buying a house and who needed a dog to go with it? Leo is such a darling, with his funny face and always has one ear up and one down. He just needs the right owner who can give him attention. Of course, as are all the other adoptees, he's in excellent health, has had his shots and tests and is ready to go.

Thank you for posing for me, Leo and Corky.

The Shelter on the Lagoen Road is open Monday through Saturday, 9 am to 1 pm, 3 pm to 5 pm. Telephone 717-4989. Website: [www.BonaireAnimalShelter.com](http://www.BonaireAnimalShelter.com)

It's more than a shelter these days. There's a real pet shop with toys, leads, harnesses, pet treats and a multitude of things for your dog or cat. Also see the fun signs on wood made by artist Germaine Nijdam: "Dogs at Work," "Beware of the Dog," and some for cats too. Prices are low because the items are donated by the generous people from Bonaire Talk. ■ L.D.



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### Papiamentu-English Dictionary by Betty Ratzlaff

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



Jong Bonaire



# Karnaval Schedule February 2009

			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 in Rincon 3-6 pm Karnaval party Kross Fyah 21:00- 03:00
15 Children's Karnaval parade, Playa, 3 to 6 pm	16	17 Jump-up K.K.B.W 18:00-20:00	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 Ariba Peru Activity 22:00-01:00

## CONCERT / AUCTION TO BENEFIT THE CHILDREN OF HAITI



Good things will be happening this **Sunday, February 15, beginning at 2 pm at The Hangout at Jibe City.** It will be an afternoon of delicious food, entertaining music, and caring people gathering together to raise money to help the people of Haiti who have suffered from storms and hurricanes the last two years. Aside from the devastation suffered from the weather, Haiti is also the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere with 80% of the people living in absolute poverty.

The sponsoring group, The Haiti Project, was organized by Bonaire volunteers led by Marugia Janga, who collected and boxed up almost 900 kilos of clothes, shoes, and bedding for the desperately needy men, women, and children of Haiti. In Haiti these boxes will be distributed by trusted people who will ensure that the contents of the boxes go where they are most needed. The people of this island are in desperate need of life's basic necessities and The Haiti Project is making a contribution to them on behalf of the people of Bonaire.

The Jibe City event is going to be a fun afternoon for a good cause and needs the participation and support of everyone. Here are some of the 'happenings' that will take place.

Well known singer and guitarist **Becky Alter** will be performing songs from her newest CD. Becky has done several international tours and she and her music are well known in the Netherlands Antilles and in Europe. As a songwriter as well as a performer she has become a favorite among the lovers of folk music. **Bonaire's own Stingrays** will be performing during the afternoon much to the delight of their many fans. In between these performances local **DJs from Mega FM** will be playing music and providing entertainment. Sean Peyton, Forum Antilles commentator on Mega, had the idea for this event.

In addition, there will be raffles every hour of very cool prizes, **face painting**, and **hair braiding**. And for the enjoyment of



## BonQuiz

Did you know that the red and white barked gum trees seen on the road to Seru Largu from Tras di Montanja and elsewhere on Bonaire's back roads were once fence posts? The *Palu Sia* drops its leaves in the dry season. This is also the period when it blooms.

**Question: Do you have any idea what else was made from the trunk of this tree? Find the answer on page 13.**

BonQuiz appears regularly in *The Reporter*. It's prepared by Christie Dovale of Christie Dovale Island Tours, Phone 717-4435 or 795-3456 to contact her or email: christiedovale@hotmail.com  
Comments and suggestion are welcome. ■  
Christie Dovale

### Test your knowledge



everyone a **windsurfing competition** will be held to see which of our famous Bonaire windsurfers can do the most consecutive turns on their boards.

The highlight of the afternoon will be the **auctioning of a painting donated by well-known artist Henk Roozendaal** with the proceeds going to The Haiti Project. A percentage of the sale of food and drinks will also go to this fundraising effort and any other donations will be happily accepted. Entrance is free.

Please join this afternoon of fun and good deeds! We on Bonaire have so much to be thankful for, let's share our good fortune with our brothers and sisters in Haiti. ■ *Dabney Lassiter*



*Bonairean Voices (Continued from page 7)* know what you are doing. The way some fishermen anchor their boat can harm a lot of coral, sponges and shrimps that serve as source of food for the red snapper. Some foreigners really don't know what to use to fish in our waters. They do it as a hobby. They use inadequate thin fishing line and artificial bait. The line can be broken easily and with this they scare the fish away, with the consequences that the fish flee with a piece of the fishing line in their stomachs. Another problem is when you come in the area to fish all the fish have moved to another place.

We have to make a law to give the Bonairean fishermen first preference to fish as this is their daily work to support their family. The Bonairean fishermen must have a way, like an office, where they can go to defend their rights, and who can listen to us. Establish some kind of organization or foundation the fishermen can be members of— people who really care, help and protect the sea 20 miles from the coast only for the Bonairean."

As you can see there are a lot of complaints among our Bonairean fishermen. And these were just the few I interviewed; there are more fishermen in Bonaire. But now we must start looking for the solution and let's see what we can do about it. ■ *Siomara E. Albertus*

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



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# Special Olympics Walk-a-thon-2009

It was a gorgeous morning even before the sun came up for all the participants of the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Special Olympics Walk-a-Thon this last Sunday. No buckets of rain as in previous years – just blue skies and sun with temperatures making it comfortable to walk or bike. According to National Director Special Olympics Bonaire, Claire Sealy, this year's ticket sales, at NAF 25 each, beat last year's 556. Some unusual participants this year included Popo, the dog (see below), and a baby palm tree pushed in a wheelbarrow by the staff of Green Label Nursery. There were family groups and people of all ages and abilities who participated.

The 30-k route for the walkers this year remained the same, but the bikers were expected to take a longer one, 42 k. Sealy estimates that the bikers and walkers ratio was 60% to 40%. The walkers' route had five main stops for water, juice and fruit, manned by volunteers who had to get up before the chickens! One of the most popular libation stops is that run every year by the Bonaire Bikers at Karpata which offers thirsty participants even more than that. One bike rider admitted that it was the Bikers' rum and coke that helped him manage the rest of the route.

The finishers were greeted with a meal and a drink. A very tasty hot soup was donated by the Lions Club. The funds from this event help our Special Olympics Team Bonaire to participate in future games. Curaçao and Aruba are on the horizon, then the 2012 Games in Greece. Thanks to everyone who participated, who volunteered and the generous sponsors.

This event couldn't take place without the help of the sponsors. Main sponsors were MCB Bank- Bonaire, Ennia Insurance, Digicel and All The Water Stations. Other sponsors were: Bonaire Accounting Office, Installatie Bedrijf Oleana, FKPD, Jong Bonaire, All The Water Stations, Cultimara, Total Car Rental, Bonaco, Hertz Car Rental, The Island Supplier (TIS), Warehouse Bonaire, Rode Kruis/Ambulance, Linkels, Sedebo, Nagico, Flamingo Casino, Bonaire Cycling, It Rains Fishes, Tropical Flamingo, Achi Tours, Obersi Electronics, Kooijman, Bonaire Party Rental, Goddard Catering, Playa Trading, More For Less, Balfran, UTS Chippie, J.C. Herrera, Gas Express, Chat 'n Browse, Caribbean Laundry, Giro Bank, Telbo, Akkermans, Fatum Insurance, Special Security Services, FIRGOS, RBTT, Rocargo, Island Finance, Martines Imports, Don Andres, City Café/Hotel Rochaline, Rusel Insurance, Bonaire Bikers, Lions Club, Napa, Flamingo Communications, Perla Di Bonaireano, WEB, Hites, Flamingo TV, Zeezicht/Pirate House, Ady's Production, SVB, Dew Point, Endpoint Visualization Studio, Balentina Blokken Fabriek. ■L.D.



*Bicyclers Henk, Tom Noel and Ernst.*



*Aura Engelhart and her two-year-old granddaughter, Rose-Shandely*



*The first palm tree to complete the Walk-A-Thon was escorted by the team from the Green Label Garden Center. Here they are passing the airport, still in the dark.*

Photo by Marian Walthie



*Some of the board :Claire Sealy, Egon Augusta, Aura Engelhart, Earon Rosarion, Ruth Williams, Daya Martis And Elske Lucia*



*As always, the Bonaire Bikers offered more than just water at their station at Karpata. Here are Boeli Evertz, Norman Evertz, Jack Chalk and Jim Madden.*

Photo by Lee Scruggs

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Photo by Marian Walthie



Photo by Marian Walthie

# Saving Our Trees

On Sunday January 25th, the first phase of a **BONAI Tree Research** project was begun at Rincon, involving the BONAI high school students, Dr. Jay Haviser and Hubert Vis of BONAI, and assisted by George 'Cultura' Thode and Christie Dovale.

The goal of this project is to scientifically document the largest and oldest trees on Bonaire so that information can be compiled for the proper recording of these historical trees. The procedure used by the BONAI students is to locate a large tree, take a GPS location coordinate read-

ing, take a photograph of the tree, then take measurements of the trunk's diameter and circumference, height and width, and also record the overall health of the tree and nearby historical or natural features such as old structures, wells, *roois* and other large trees. In Rincon we documented 25 historical trees in the village center and along the Rooi Dada and Rooi Burru. Most of these large trees were Watapana (Dividivi) trees.

The long-term goal of this project is to create a digital database of the largest and oldest trees on Bonaire, and then to submit that database to the DROB office so that hopefully these trees can be protected. We are also working in cooperation with STINAPA for this nature documentation project, which combines nature and heritage research.

**These large trees are actually the oldest living things on Bonaire**, and for that they deserve the respect and recognition as part of Bonaire's history. The BONAI Tree project will continue with fieldwork in other barrios on Bonaire with Dr. Haviser and the students, and then also later under the lead of Hubert Vis and Jackie Bernabela of BONAI. ■

*Dr. Jay B. Haviser*



*Recording the GPS position and other vital information*



*Hubert Vis, Dr. Jay Haviser and George 'Cultura' Thode with the BONAI group measuring a tree*



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**BONAIRE ON WHEELS**

**Land Sailing Bonaire Wins Award**

*The 41<sup>st</sup> of a series of Bonaire Reporter articles by J@n Brouwer, featuring some of Bonaire's interesting vehicles that are "on wheels."*



*Friendly competition at Land Sailing Bonaire*



*Nelson Croft and Naomi Slotema,*

*Bonaire/ Tras di Montaña/Piedra Cruz*  
Last week Nelson Croft and Naomi Slotema, proud owners of Land Sailing Bonaire, received the highly appreciated Princess C.R.U.I.S.E. Award 2008 during a ceremony onboard the *Emerald Princess*.

Each year, Princess Cruises gives awards to shore excursion companies that surpass passenger expectations and provide excellent service.

This 10th annual award honors Land Sailing Bonaire as the passenger choice for the best tour and activity operator of the season.

Nelson and Naomi are very proud of the important award given to them. "We're aiming to provide the best possible experience for our customers," says Nelson, "and to get recognized for that by one of the largest cruise lines in the world makes us very happy!"

Since 2005 it is possible to race blookart landsailers on Bonaire: to sail on wheels on the surface of the island instead of the Caribbean Sea.

Along the road from Kralendijk to Rincon, a 10-minute drive from downtown

Kralendijk, near Tras di Montaña and Piedra Cruz, a special track was created by Land Sailing Bonaire. It is the largest purpose built land sailing track in the world, paved with environmentally-neutral calcium sulphate, which was donated by Cargill Bonaire.

Blokarting or land sailing is a fairly new eco-adventure/eco-sport. It is a kind of mixture between karting and sailing, using the free energy of the always present trade winds. Blokart land sailing is currently the fastest growing sailing sport in the world.

Nelson and Naomi have both lived on the island of Bonaire for years now and they are the distributor for blokart in the Caribbean.

The blookarts are high-tech, three-wheeled land sailers made of stainless steel, carbon and high-strength steel. They are equipped with fiberglass masts and modern cut sails in different sizes to cope with the power of the wind and adjust for the weight and experience of the sailors.

**"Blookart land sailing is currently the fastest growing sailing sport in the world."**

"Blookarting is easy to learn and you don't need any sailing experience," Naomi says.

"Anyone can do it. Our oldest student was 87

years old and the youngest sailor was only four! There are double seat blookarts available for kids who would rather sail with one of their parents. This eco-sport is safe, easy and great fun!"

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*Story & photos by Jan Brouwer*



**BONHATA 12th Annual Award Recipients**

BONHATA celebrated its 12th Annual Awards Event at the Calabas Restaurant on Saturday evening, January 31. The theme of the evening was "Black & White"; this being the dress code and also the basis of the Interactive Photo Collage that was created throughout the evening. The Guest Speaker was the Lt. Governor, Mr. Glenn Thode, who gave a stirring address on how the people of Bonaire make the genuine experiences our guests have whilst visiting our island. It is how they are treated that lets them leave feeling richer than when they arrived.



*Bonhata photo*

To select who is to receive an award, the members of BONHATA are asked to nominate a company or an individual whom they believe deserves recognition for the contribution they have made to the Tourism Industry of Bonaire. The recipients for the year 2008 were (in alphabetical order):

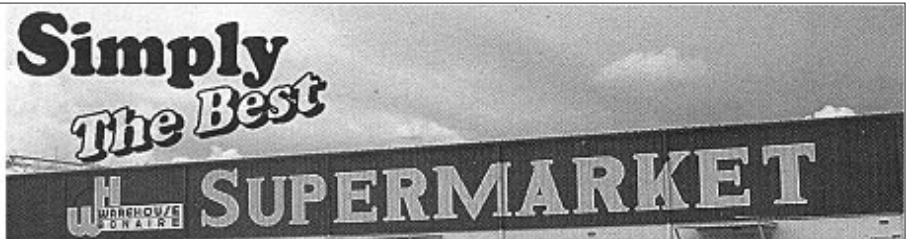
Addo's Bookstore Bonaire N.V., Asecom Business Support N.V., Bonaire Tours & Vacations N.V., Budget Rent A Car Bonaire, Divi Flamingo Beach Resort & Casino, Kiteboarding Bonaire N.V., La Pura Vista, Larry Baillie, Miriam & Martin van Bekkum, Samur Sailing Charters, Sunbelt Reality, and Wannadive

The evening was also a fund raising event and proceeds from this year's

raffle are to go 50% to the local chapter of the Princess Wilhelmina Fonds (cancer patient hospice) and 50% to the Palu di Luz Security Project. A total of NAf 3,200 was raised, so NAf 1,600 to each foundation.

BONHATA would like to sincerely thank all of the raffle sponsors:

Divi Flamingo Beach Resort, DAE, KLM, La Pura Vista, Delta Airlines, Plaza Hotel Curaçao & Casino, Budget Rent A Car, Plaza Resort Bonaire, Academy Hotel Curaçao, Divi Dive, The Island Supplier, It Rains Fishes Restaurant, Littman's Jewelers, Rorcargo, Antillean Wine Company, Kontiki Beach Bonaire, Rum Runners Restaurant, The Touch Spa, Golden Reef Inn and Phillip's Cooking & Organizing and the Jong Bonaire Folkloric Dance Group for their wonderfully colorful dance routines. ■ *Marion Wilson*



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**BonQuiz  
Answer** Question on Pg. 9

Donkey saddles (because of the wood's lightness), a flu-fighting tea was steeped from the bark and a variety of match sticks, toothpicks and sandals were also made from this very light wood. ■



**Picture Yourself With The Reporter In... New York City**



Frequent Bonaire visitors Joan and Alan Zale of Hartsdale, NY, and owner of a two bedroom condo at Sand Dollar Condominium Resort, hold a copy of the *Bonaire Reporter* in front of the Wall Street Bull in Bowling Green Park which is located in the heart of Manhattan's financial district on Thursday June 5, 2008. It was a big day for Joan as she just turned in her papers to retire from 28 years of teaching in the New York City Public School system. The sculpture, one of New York most photographed artworks, depicts a bull, the symbol of aggressive financial optimism and prosperity, leaning back on its haunches and with its head lowered as if ready to charge.

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**KRALENDIJK TIDES (Heights in feet, FT)**

DATE	Time	Ht.	Time	Ht.	Time	Ht.	Time	Ht.	COEF
2-13	5:09	1.6FT.	12:38	1.2FT.	16:34	1.3FT.	21:49	1.2FT.	83
2-14	6:01	1.7FT.	14:28	1.1FT.					72
2-15	6:46	1.8FT.	15:46	1.0FT.					59
2-16	7:34	1.9FT.	16:33	0.9FT.					47
2-17	8:11	1.9FT.	17:19	0.8FT.					38
2-18	8:48	2.0FT.	17:58	0.8FT.					33
2-19	9:27	2.0FT.	18:27	0.8FT.					36
2-20	9:59	2.0FT.	18:58	0.8FT.					42
2-21	10:30	1.9FT.	19:30	0.9FT.					50
2-22	11:08	1.9FT.	19:53	0.9FT.					59
2-23	11:41	1.8FT.	20:11	1.0FT.					68
2-24	1:40	1.2FT.	3:58	1.2FT.	12:13	1.7FT.	20:24	1.0FT.	76
2-25	1:55	1.3FT.	5:29	1.2FT.	12:52	1.6FT.	20:21	1.1FT.	82
2-26	2:22	1.4FT.	7:04	1.2FT.	13:35	1.5FT.	19:58	1.2FT.	86
2-26	2:22	1.4FT.	7:04	1.2FT.	13:35	1.5FT.	19:58	1.2FT.	86
2-27	3:01	1.5FT.	9:57	1.3FT.	14:19	1.3FT.	19:27	1.2FT.	88
2-28	3:49	1.6FT.	13:13	1.1FT.	16:00	1.2FT.	18:41	1.1FT.	86
3-01	4:40	1.7FT.	14:29	1.0FT.					81
3-02	5:41	1.8FT.	15:23	0.9FT.					73
3-03	6:33	1.9FT.	16:04	0.8FT.					65
3-04	7:32	2.0FT.	16:39	0.8FT.					58
3-05	8:21	2.0FT.	17:20	0.8FT.					55
3-06	9:16	2.0FT.	17:54	0.8FT.					59

**Who's Who on The Bonaire Reporter**

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# Letters to the Editor



Internet photo

500,000 water bottles of which each one contains 0.25 liter – this water also stays on Bonaire and, cruise ship tourists are visiting the restaurants and their facilities, they consume something and that means that glasses and dishes

## BOTTLED WATER POLLUTION

Dear Editor:

I would like to bring the following issues to your attention.

As you might have heard on the radio, the tourist office is broadcasting (in Dutch) that every year one million plastic water bottles are ending up at the landfill. I think the tourist office should first put the blame on itself before they put this burden on us, the residents of Bonaire. According to the numbers of the tourist office, this year 250,000 cruise boat tourists are visiting Bonaire. Assuming that each tourist will take two ¼ l. water bottles from the ship to consume on the island and assuming that they will leave them behind empty, implies that 500,000 plastic water bottles – half of the million – will end up on our landfill. So, who is the greatest polluter? Not the cruise ship tourist, but the tourist office that's bringing the ships to the island.

One of many solutions could be to hand to each tourist by arrival an environmental friendly dissolvable water bottle with tap water. The tourist office could advertise on the bottle that it's for free and can be taken as a souvenir, this preferably in English. The project could be paid for by charging the cruise ship tourists more tourist tax than they're paying now.

Another issue I would like to point out is that everybody is aware of the fact that we have to protect Bonaire's reef by draining as little wastewater into the sea as possible – this is also one of the issues the tourist office is dedicating itself to.

Alas, a number of facts are ignored; let's go back to my previous issue –

need to be cleaned also. If we assume that every cruise ship tourist leaves behind 10 liters of dirty water, this means that in total 2,500 cubic meters of water is left behind.

A solution could be to diminish the amount of cruise ship tourists; the island doesn't need this as the number of tourists that are visiting Bonaire for a longer period of time and leave a lot of money behind on the island is growing and more flights are coming in and everyone can profit by this.

Ronald Simonis.

## AMERICAN EAGLE-SAN JUAN THEFT

Dear Editor:

Here is my sad story. Yes, I am in beautiful, tropical and warm Bonaire; however, the beginning of my trip has not been so beautiful.

I arrived one week ago tonight on the American Eagle. I had one carry on suitcase that I had to check on the tarmac in San Juan because the plane was too small (in the overhead compartment) for it. I had locked it with my TSA lock. I had my jewelry, medicine, etc. in it. I have done this many times before. No one told me there was a high rate of crime at the airport. I opened my suitcase on Wednesday morning, everything was there except for my jewelry. It had been stolen. I have since learned that American Airlines **does not** cover jewelry, computers or cameras!

Here is a youtube video of how it was done. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=nmfYuUPcgHg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nmfYuUPcgHg). I found this quite scary, so I thought I would pass it along to everyone. **BEWARE.**

L.S

# Guest Editorial

The opinions in this column are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the editorial opinion of this newspaper.

## Preserving Bonaire's Environment and the Direct Link

As agreed between the Netherlands and the BES islands, the education, health services, personal security and infrastructure on Bonaire will be considerably improved after the direct link is established. It is crucial in this connection that the Dutch convince the government of Bonaire that the development of the island does not mean to build new, large hotels and more high condos, replacing demolished historical buildings in Kralendijk. The development which Bonaire needs is, the training of local young people to be able to execute work for which currently foreign labor must be imported. There has already been enough written about the detrimental effect of the influx of foreign labor on the island's living conditions.

As we all know, because of lack of local labor force, foreign workers have to be imported for all new hotel construction and operation. Already now, practically all economic activities on the island, not only in the field of construction, hotel operation and tourism, depend on imported labor, particularly from Latin American countries. The new hotels' construction will bring only very limited benefits, if any, to the people of Bonaire, particularly if the government makes the mistake of giving tax holidays to the hotel developers.

It is a sad fact that the Pourier Report, an important study on the development of the island, made in 1992 by Miguel Pourier, a native of Bonaire and a former Prime Minister of the Netherlands Antilles, has been ignored by the current government and the tourist authority. This report, unanimously approved by the Island Council in 1993, has served also as a basis for the Environment Policy Plan for Bonaire 2003-2007 which was also approved by the Island Council. In his study Pourier recommends keeping Bonaire as a unique, clean and pristine island. All efforts of the government must be done to preserve the reef, the main asset of the island. Bonaire has no stunning beaches like Aruba and other popular Caribbean destinations, and when the reef is seriously damaged or destroyed by development along the coast (like it happened on Grand Cayman after hotels had been built at the famous Six Mile Beach), it will practically mean the end of tourism on our island.

No boundaries were established in the Pourier Report to which point the tourist development can grow but a number of 100,000 visitors per year is, according to Pourier, the absolute limit. While in 2007, 74,000 tourists visited Bonaire and in the

first half of 2008, more than 40,000 visitors arrived, for the full year 2009 a record number of 80,000 has been projected by the TCB. According to the mentioned Environment Policy Plan, the carrying capacity of the environment has been estimated at 1,600 overnight units on the entire island. One of the recommendations of the plan is that, according to the two studies made by renowned consulting firms for the World Bank back in 1993 and 1994, the tourism product of Bonaire must urgently be diversified because the number of divers and snorkelers has already almost reached the maximum sustainable capacity of the Bonaire National Marine Park. Further increase of human presence on the reef could result in irreversible damage to the marine environment.

In 2007, Bonaire resident Rene Hakkenberg asked in an open letter to the political parties on Bonaire if they were aware of the Pourier Report and if so, what was their opinion on the report's vision on the future and in particular if any part of the report should be made into law. No clear answer was given to this question. Local politicians often emphasize that they are for development while preserving our environment. The problem is that this development, in their eyes, is construction of large hotels, which is harmful to the environment.

Fortunately, the Queen's Commissioner, Henk Kamp, in his former position as the Dutch VROM Minister ("M" is for "Milieu", "environment" in Dutch) has studied the main environmental reports for different parts of the kingdom and among them the Pourier Report. It can be expected that his detailed knowledge of this report will help to convince the government of Bonaire of the necessity of implementation of the report's recommendations.

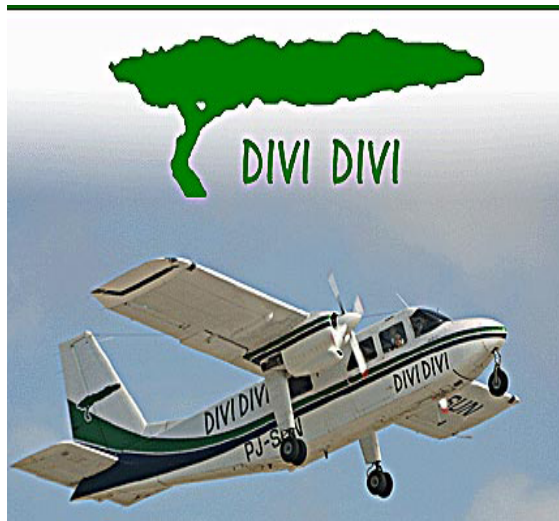
Very important for the preservation of the reef is also to take action as soon as possible to limit substantially the current emptying of sewage water into the sea. We cannot wait to 2014 when the project of collection and treatment of this water is planned to be completed. ■ *Jiri Lausman*

*Jiri Lausman is a retired civil engineer, born in Prague, living as a Dutchman the last almost 40 years, 18 of them in Aruba. Before his retirement, he worked as the manager in Latin America and the Caribbean for a large Dutch construction company. He has a home on Bonaire.*



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# Bubbles from the Biologist

## Did You Know...

**Tardigrades** can sleep for over 100 years! Think bears hibernating all winter is a long time to sleep? Tardigrades are microscopic animals also called water bears, and with four pairs of legs and four to eight claws they really do look like little bears. They live all over the place! Over 900 species have been identified and they're found everywhere from the deep sea to the high mountain tops in both tropical rainforests and the tundra of Antarctica. Although most species identified are freshwater residents, there are about 150 species that live in salt water. These little guys are capable of surviving some of the harshest extremes our planet has to offer (including radiation, noxious chemicals and temperatures as low as -200° C) and they survive by using a process called cryptobiosis. Cryptobiosis is when bodily and metabolic functions slow to a reversible standstill. There are many ways to use cryptobiosis but tardigrades typically go into their sleeping state by losing water. When the environment gets dry, tardigrades curl up into a little ball and stay that way until water is added. Recently, scientists found out that not only can tardigrades stand up to pretty much anything the Earth can deal out but they can also venture into space! ■ *Lauren Van Thiel*



Van Thiel is a fourth-year student of marine science and biology at the University of South Carolina. She's currently studying at the CIEE Research Center in Bonaire.



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# WHAT'S HAPPENING

## HAPPENING SOON

\*\*\*\*\*  
**KARNAVAL SCHEDULE—See Page 9**

**Artist Henk Roozendaal's exhibition** at Kas di Arte until the end of February, open by appointment. Art lovers may call him at 717-6938. Henk's websites: [www.henkroozendaal.com](http://www.henkroozendaal.com) and [www.henkroozendaal.extoCuraçao.com](http://www.henkroozendaal.extoCuraçao.com)

**Thursday, February 12—Public Hearing** on the Nature Management Ordinance. Sporthall, 3 pm. (More on page 2)

**Saturday, February 14—Happy Valentine's Day**

**Sunday, February 15—Fund-raiser** for Haiti, Hangout Bar at Jibe City. Auction of a Henk Roozendaal painting, music and entertainment for adults and children. Entertainer Becky Alter, deejays [info@forumantilles.com](mailto:info@forumantilles.com). (More on page 9)

**Wednesday, February 18—Lecture** at CIEE, "A New Approach to Sustainability," by J. Tedrowe Bonner, 7 pm. Wine tasting at 6:30. Kaya Gob. Debrot 26.

**Sunday, 1 March—Jong Bonaire Fun Walk/Ride** Starting at 6 am at Jong Bonaire 20k walk, 37 km bike. More details in the next issue

## CRUISE SHIP SCHEDULE

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

Fri., Feb. 13—*Enchantment of the Seas*

Tues., Feb. 17—*Sea Princess*

Wed., Feb. 18—*Summit*

Thurs., Feb. 19—*Ocean Village*

Fri., Feb. 20—*Enchantment of the Seas*

Mon., Feb. 23—*Aida Aura*

Tues., Feb. 24—*Emerald Princess*

Wed., Feb. 25—*Caribbean Princess*

Fri., Feb. 27—*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](http://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 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, 7pm—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 7pm.

## BONAIRE'S TRADITIONS

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## 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 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 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 Salina**, 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

Send event info to:

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**Bonaire Partners**—Rental and Property management specialists. If you have a place to rent call them

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

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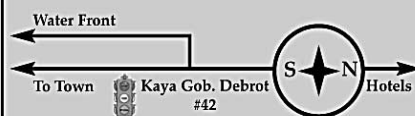
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# Loras In The Mist Loras In The Mist

## The 2009 Lora Count



Fundashon Salba Nos Lora photograph

Some of the participants in the 2009 lora count at Washington Park

The participants in this year's Bonaire's annual Lora (Bonaire parrot) count had to detect the Loras lifting from their roosts through sheets of rain. Nevertheless, this year more Loras were officially counted than in 2008, up from 425 to 475.

Prior to 2008 more loras were counted, approximately 650. Probably there are now not fewer Loras, but the long rainy seasons of the past two years has them roosting over a wider area and they are not getting counted. As it was last year there has been a lot of rain prior to the count and it may well be that there is an abundance of food. This certainly seems to be the case and it is likely that the birds simply do not need to flock together as a result. It may be that they can forage just as effectively in smaller numbers. Several of the counters reported hearing distant Loras and this would support the idea. So we don't think it is an actual drop in Lora numbers but rather a change in Lora behavior that has influenced the count result.

Lora counts have been done since 1980, organized by the *Fundashon Salba Nos Lora* in association with STINAPA and the Department of Environments and Nature Policy of DROB. The counts are important to gather information on the rare Bonairean parrot.

During the count on Saturday morning, 31 January, dozens of volunteers were active simultaneously in 20 different spots, half them in Washington Slagbaai Park. The volunteers were from all walks of life on Bonaire. STINAPA provided a breakfast snack for everyone when they reported

their observations at the Washington Slagbaai Park entrance.

Since 2002 the Lora have been protected actively on Bonaire. At that time all Loras in captivity had a ring placed on their legs by the government and registered, more than 620 of them. Loras in captivity without a ring are therefore illegal. Catching and selling loras from the wild incurs a fine of NAf 1.000 per bird. ■

Peter Montanus/Sam Williams

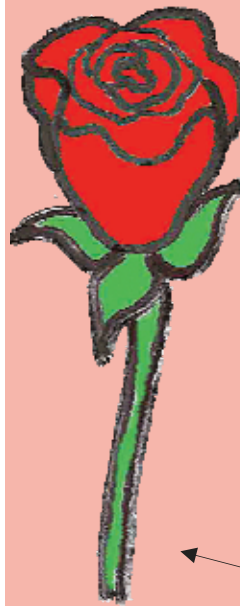


Lora in flight- Rowan Martin photo

## ART FOR FUN

### Rosebuds for your Valentine

Drawing Roses can be easy and fun. Follow these few steps for beautiful rosebuds.



1. Start with a small oblong circle. Draw two more swirling curves around it.



2. Draw two more curving lines around this middle section



Add another two rings around those petals.

4. Draw the base of the flower. Think of it as just another oblong shape with gentle curves



5. Add the leaves and stem.

6. Color your rose with bright red colors with green leaves and stem.

7. If you want to do a full rose in bloom, just keep adding petals around



and around to make it fuller.

With a little practice you can make a whole bouquet for your Valentine. The key to beautiful roses is to keep the curves flowing smoothly. Happy Valentines - I hope you day comes up full of roses! ■ JanArt—

Janice Huckaby Baillie



This article is part of a series by Janice Huckaby of JanArt. Call 599 717-5246 or 791-5246 for information on art lessons or to view her artworks



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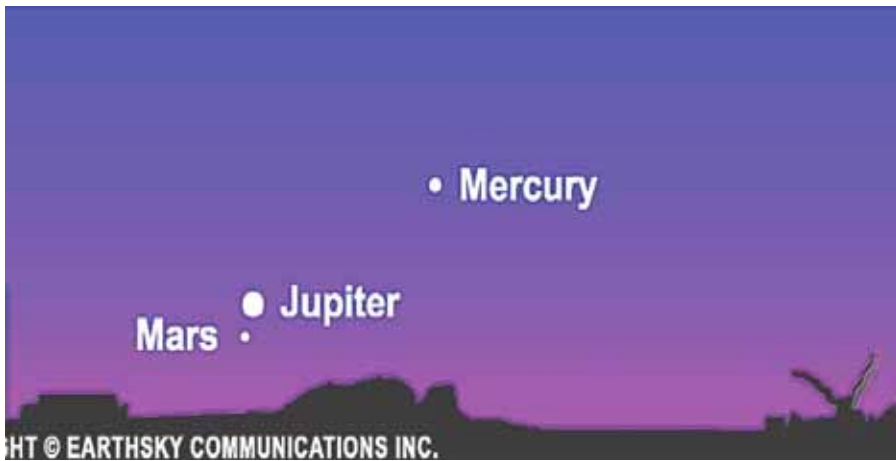
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# BONAIRE SKY PARK\*

\*to find it... just look up

## Next Week's 'Triple Planet And Moon' Sky Show For The Early Birds



Greetings, Sky Park visitors. Please mark every day beginning Monday, February 16th, through Sunday the 22nd, in the mornings. Make it a point to look eastward 30 minutes before sunrise for a celestial ballet of three planets and a crescent Moon. All of which will occur just as it's getting light out on these early February mornings.

Around dawn on Monday, February 16th, face east southeast and if you have a very clear and very flat unobstructed horizon you will see three planets very close to the horizon. Two of them will be side by side and only 9/10th of one degree apart, which means that slightly less than two full Moons could fit between them because one full Moon is half a degree wide. The brightest of the two is the king of them all, 88,000-mile-wide Jupiter, a planet so huge we could line up 11 of our 8,000-mile-wide Earths across its middle.

Just to its right and half the size as our planet Earth is rouge-gold Mars, the second smallest planet, only 4,000 miles wide, which means we could line up 22 Mars side by side across Jupiter's middle. Then to complete our trio, look above them and to their right for the tiniest planet of them all, 3,000-mile-wide Mercury, which means it would take almost 30 Mercurys lined up to reach across Jupiter's middle. Think of it: the two smallest planets, Mercury and Mars, and the biggest planet, Jupiter, all huddled together in a very small space, Jupiter and Mars not quite two full Moons apart and Mercury about 14 full Moons away.

But the planet show is just beginning because if you go out each successive day you'll notice them change their positions. In fact on Tuesday February 17th Jupiter and Mars will be even closer to each other, less than one half a degree or one full Moon apart. Wow! But then things really change dramatically as Jupiter and Mercury move toward each other and Mars moves away: Wednesday the 18th, Thursday the 19th, Friday the 20th. Then on Saturday February 21st they will form an exquisite trio and be joined by a beautiful waning crescent Moon. But if I had to pick one day I'd pick Sunday the 22nd because then an even closer and skinnier crescent Moon and the three planets will be lined up almost in a straight row in a breathtaking sight. Of course they will all be much easier to see and look much brighter if you use a pair of binoculars, which is my favorite viewing device.

Once again, beginning Monday February 16th Jupiter and Mars are close and Mercury is up to the right. On Tuesday the 17th Jupiter and Mars are at their closest only one full Moon apart, then each day Jupiter and Mercury race toward each other and leave poor old Mars in the dust. On Saturday February 21st they are joined by a crescent Moon but my favorite day is Sunday the 22nd when the four of them will line up and knock your socks off! Mark your calendar and get out your binoculars. ■ Jack Horkheimer



## THE STARS HAVE IT

By Astrologer Michael Thiessen  
For February 2008

**ARIES** (Mar. 21- April 20) Don't try to get even without having all the facts. Your emotional state could leave you vulnerable and confused. Take care of yourself or you can expect to suffer from minor illness. Try to be considerate in your personal obligations. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Monday.

**TAURUS** (Apr. 21- May 21) Sudden changes at home will affect family members more than you anticipated. Don't evade important issues; you may find yourself backed into a corner. Don't let jealous friends put you down, making you insecure about your capabilities. You should catch up on correspondence. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

**GEMINI** (May 22-June 21) Uncertain changes regarding your personal life are evident. Travel could include delays and other minor problems. Entertainment could be pleasing if it is of an energetic nature. You can't always have your own way. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

**CANCER** (June 22-July 22) You may need to make a choice. You need to get down to basics with regard to yourself. Don't get involved in secret affairs or underhanded involvements. If you put your energy into physical outlets you will avoid confrontations. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug 22) You will be able to get to the bottom of things this month. Courses dealing with psychology or health care will be of interest. Read between the lines before you sign your name. Don't blame everything on your mate. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23 -Sept. 23) Promotions will be yours if you have acted professionally in times of crisis. You should try to elaborate on an idea you have regarding a product or service for the home. You need to do more things that you enjoy. Deception is apparent. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 24 -Oct. 23) Sudden trips may take you by surprise; try to include your mate, mixing business with

pleasure. Consider a conservative investment that will stay solid when everything else goes sour. You can offer your mate a commitment or promise that will help stabilize your personal life. You must take care not to over exert yourself if involved in sports. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22) You can continue to make gains if you call a few people who can help you close an important deal. You can have a great time if you go out with the one you love. Your ability to work with detail could help you achieve your goals. Make plans to do something special with the one you love. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 23 -Dec. 21) Your home environment may be hectic, which could result in emotional upset if you aren't well organized. You can win points if you present your ideas this month. Travel for pleasure will be enticing. Your lover may cost you financially. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Thursday.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec 22.- Jan. 20) Lovers will be demanding. You are best to sign your partner up for activities that will be tiring. Don't let your lover put demands on you. Put your energy into your work or moneymaking ventures rather than into your emotional life this month. Dig deep to find out how costly a new venture will be before you sign on the dotted line. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Thursday.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 21 -Feb. 19) Trips will be enjoyable, and communication with your lover will clear up any misconceptions. Hard work will bring rewards. You need activity. Reciprocate by offering helpful hints. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Monday.

**PISCES** (Feb. 20-Mar. 20) Make plans to do something special with the one you love. Be sure to get involved with those who can introduce you to unusual forms of entertainment. Don't let your partner goad you into wearing your heart on your sleeve. You may find it impossible to get the rest you require. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday. ■



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