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**BONAIRE** Dec. 21-Jan. 11, 2013 Year 19, Issue 25  
**The REPORTER**



**BES Island News Too**

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**Bonaire  
Sustainability  
Fair**  
See page 13  
**Plus 38 Stories  
and Features**

These young ladies are recycling their toys and donating the proceeds to The Bonaire Animal Shelter: Dana Bol, Merle Marsman and Gianny Elhage.



# Flotsam and Jetsam

## BOINAIRE The REPORTER

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On Thursday December 13, at Utrecht University, there was a discussion about the two years since the revision of the political positions of the five islands of the former Netherlands Antilles. The dialogue was to focus on **what was learned during that time and how to use that experience to work towards needed adjustments.** It has already been agreed that the BES islands status will be formally reviewed after five years. That time is almost half gone. The new political positions were the result of decisions of the populations of the islands in the exercise of self-determination. The main question to be debated is what that self-determination actually means within the Dutch Kingdom. What are the pros and cons of the current situation? The option of independence exists in any case, but what other options would be possible? And can any intervention of the Kingdom Government be regarded as a violation of the right to self-determination? We hope to bring our readers the results when they are published.

► **THE HAGUE—It's cold again in The Netherlands and the time has again come for the number of "official" visits to the BES Islands to increase.** Coming soon, among other visits are:

-Representatives of the **National Ombudsman** of The Netherlands will visit Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba early next year to provide information on their work institute and what the organization means to the people of the islands. They will also be available to take complaints from residents. The representatives will visit the islands either late February or early March.

The Dutch National Ombudsman is authorized to handle complaints about the local governments Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba including the Tax Department, the Public Prosecutor's Office, Police and the Census Office.

The National Ombudsman al-

ready handles complaints about the RCN and the Public Prosecutor's Office in Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba.

-**Dutch Minister of Home Affairs and Kingdom Relations Ronald Plasterk** will pay a working visit to all six islands of the Dutch Caribbean from January 19 to 26 next year.

► **Traveling to, or via, Curaçao just became more expensive.** Curaçao Airport Partners (CAP) increased the Passengers' Facility Charge ("Departure Tax"), as well as landing and parking fees effective December 1, after the Curaçao government approved the proposal. **The new departure tax for passengers travelling from Curaçao to Bonaire is \$10,** to Aruba and St. Maarten \$20 and to all other destinations \$39. The passenger transfer cost is \$5, while the new landing fee per ton of the "Maximum Take Off Weight" (MTOW) is \$6.



► On 1 January 2013, many foods will become exempt from the 8% ABB (Sales) Tax now levied on imports or production on Bonaire. **If the supermarkets calculate this tax reduction in their prices it will lead to a price fall for these foods.**

Volunteers from Bonaire's Consumers' Union, Unkobon, visited markets from November 24 to 26 to record food prices. Thirteen large and small supermarkets were visited, including three in Rincon. The prices were put into a database. A week later, the volunteers checked prices again.

**In the second half of January 2013, the prices will be checked in order to compare them with the prices of November 2012.** The results will be published.

Unkobon thanked the volunteers for the hard work they have done in the interests of all con-



Rincon Children's Choir

Classical Music Board Bonaire will be holding its annual December holiday concert on Saturday 22nd December at 8 pm at the Cacique Hall at the Plaza Resort Bonaire.

Musicians from Bonaire will entertain the people of Bonaire. Please join us and be entertained by: The Rincon Children's Choir, Elgar Verschuur, Gaudy and Pauline Normand, Kien Scherptong, Anne Hoemakers, Max Witten and Grep Linkels.

It promises to be a wonderful evening with a lovely Christmas atmosphere. Elgar Verschuur will entertain us with a beautiful guitar solo and play Ave Maria on the violin. The choir will perform under the musical direction of Flora. Hans Faassen's students Grep and Max will play the piano. Gaudy and Pauline Normand will play their glass harp and then there will be a sing-a-long with the children's choir. Then stay for an after show party. This traditional evening is a highlight of the holiday season. See poster on page 12 for details.

sumers on Bonaire. It should be noted that all visited supermarkets, without exception, have contributed to the price recordings.

► A recent study showed that the value of the Bonaire's **"natural environment" is \$105 million annually.** For that reason alone it makes great economic sense to preserve it as much as possible. An article backing-up this valuation appeared in *Duurzaam Nieuws* (Sustainable News) on the website of Dutch foundation iNSnet. The research is part of the "Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity Netherlands" study.

► **A temporary permit to resume soil mining in the Bakuna area of Bonaire was issued by the Island Government last week.** More inspection and con-



trols were put in place to monitor the work. The extracted rock will be crushed on site and used for construction. The permit was issued to alleviate a critical shortage that threatened the island's economy, according to a statement by government officials. Soil mining is opposed by conservation groups because it weakens Bonaire's defenses against storm waves, destroys the surrounding land and is not necessary because the required materials are readily importable.

► **It's necessary to remodel homes for the elderly and disabled in the BES Islands,** but it's not necessary to do it com-

Continued on page 4

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NEW COLLECTION



*Flotsam and Jetsam* (Continued from page 2) pletely the European Dutch way and force the Dutch Social Support Law (WMO) on the islands, said State Secretary of Health, Wellbeing and Sports, **Martin van Rijn**, in a reply to the Dutch Parliament following the report "Disabled Persons Policy On Bonaire" from Bonaire's Disabled Persons Institute (Mivabo).

In the report, Mivabo requested the Dutch Government to make facilities available for the elderly or to improve them, including housing modifications, taxi transport for the sick and relocation or return to the Caribbean Netherlands.

The State Secretary believes that adopting the entire WMO, which intentionally does not apply in the BES islands, as applicable in The Netherlands is neither advisable nor necessary because of the medical insurance agreements in the Caribbean Netherlands and the fact that several services such as catering meals to elderly living at home were already regulated on Bonaire before January 1, 2010.

► **Downtown Kralendijk is beautifully decorated** for the holidays. And in spite of the high cost of electricity we see many lighted



displays. Private homes also seem to have more lighting than in recent past years. Photo is from the display next to the main government building.

► **In the third quarter of 2012, there were 71 new business incorporations registered at the Chamber of Commerce.** This number is almost equal to the number of registrations in the same period of 2011. There were 41 applications in the third quarter as well. This number is significantly lower compared to the same period in 2011.

Cumulatively over the period January - September 2012, a total of 204 companies registered- an increase of 35% compared to the number of entries of the same period in 2011.

It is anticipated that the year 2012 will be concluded with a growing number of business registrations compared to 2011. This growth continues, however, it is below the level of 2008-2010. Detailed figures are available on request. Please send an email to [patriciarojas@kvkbonaire.com](mailto:patriciarojas@kvkbonaire.com).

► **"Bonaire, Salt And Colonialism" is the title of a new book on the history of the island** written by Cees Luckhardt and Bøi Antoin. The book will be introduced later this month.

"Bonaire, Salt And Colonialism" is the first history book that answers the question of why the Dutch took the island from the Spaniards in 1636, held it in its possession for over 350 years and defended it against foreign attacks, while the Spaniards considered it an "isla inutil" (worthless island).

(Continued on page 6)



December is the month that most embodies the spirit of giving in the Western world. And Bonaire's spirit is strong. Consider the story of Susy Weber.

For years Susy has made a great effort to make many people happy as possible—first with her restaurant, "Swiss Chalet," and later as "The friendly dive hostess" as people have known her for the last years.

Now Susy is going through a rough time. She lost her leg... So it was time for us to give her a helping hand to get her new home adapted for her handicap.

All of Susy's long time friends as well as her many new friends showed up on December 7 at The Hut hotel bar/restaurant for an awesomely successful fundraising event to raise money to "help her get back on her feet."

In support of the event was a massive positive response from Bonaire's big companies, small companies and individuals on the island. Donations included exclusive dive gear, T-shirts, cases of beer, books, excursions and much



more. Guests enjoyed wine, beer, rum, snacks and a fantastic raffle.

This outpouring of generosity shows the real heart and soul of Bonaire. When someone is in need the community rises to the occasion. It makes us proud to be part of this beautiful island.

Thanks to all who donated and brought such a good spirit to the event. Special recognition to Palm Trading and The Hut for organizing the evening. \$9,750 was put in a bank account for Suzy as a result. All proceeds have been processed by PWC Accounting Services. Thanks to all! ■ *Theo Knevel/G.D./L.D.*

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The “Children of the Wind” documentary is an extraordinary product – a character driven, powerful story about three of the world’s finest freestyle windsurfers from Bonaire: Tonky and Taty Frans and Kiri Thodé.

When the documentary was finished in April 2012, producer Robert Schmon and director Daphne Schmon had one question left: “Where do we go from here?” The film really went beyond any sports documentary and they wanted to share the film with as many people as possible.

First they had a private screening in New York in front of an invited audience that included many experienced, award winning film makers whom they knew would be honest in their appraisal. Their response was the first of several very pleasant shocks they would receive in the following months. Of course they had plenty of constructive editing and technical notes, but unanimously they loved it!

Film festivals are the best springboards for documentaries because that’s the place where distributors and buyers go and where unknown films can be picked up for theatrical release and where TV networks are looking for products. They can create buzz and word of mouth also, but there’s one big caveat: You have to have a very good film to be invited and an even better film to create a stir once you’re in. Competition for the big festivals is extremely intense. And... the key is to choose festivals that are a good fit.

Shortly after the New York private screening, the film makers were contacted by the Aruba International Film Festival organizers who had heard of the film and wanted the makers to submit it for consideration. The Schmons felt it would be the perfect festival for the world premiere of their documentary.

“The festival was from June 23-25 and it was a red-carpet world premiere,” says Elvis Martinus, mentor of the windsurfers of Bonaire and founder of the Bonaire Aquaspeed Windsurfing Club. “Tonky couldn’t come so Taty, Kiri, Bjorn, Patun and I went, and yes, Aruba is a little island, but it was a very posh festival with a lot of international press. First you feel so

small, but after the film was shown we had to stand there for hours and talk to all the people of the press and we had our pictures taken over and over again... We felt like rock stars! ‘Children of the Wind’ was in the largest theatre, but as the people of Aruba lined up for tickets the organization decided to show the film in two theatres at the same time.

The next day the international press wanted to take action pictures of Kiri, Taty and Patun Saragoza doing their tricks at sea, so the organization hired one big catamaran for all the press people, but it wasn’t enough and they ended up with two catamarans. It was something, very, very big, because I feel, you don’t need to be a surfer – you can be a couch surfer and still love the documentary! It’s not just about windsurfing; it’s a beautiful story about the power of determination and everybody involved has put their soul into it. It’s also an answer to the question how come these guys made it...”

“I am myself,” Kiri says. “I am a 22-year-old international veteran with 17 years of experience. I always wanted a movie made of all the things I’ve been through, but this was like I was a superstar. We were picked up by a long white limousine and it was amazing to be walking through thousands of cameras. It was the most special moment in my life so far. I’ve been on the main stage all over the world, but this was the biggest thing and when we walked through the streets of Aruba people went like ‘Look! There they are! Look!’ And basically everybody stayed till the end, when Marc Anthony’s concert had already started. I had a ticket but I never used it.” He laughs. “And all of a sudden everybody on Aruba had an aunt in Bonaire... hahaha! For me personally I hope that it’s going to open doors and that I might find a sponsor or... maybe I’ll become a movie star. You never know; it gives you so many ideas!”

Elvis says, “Robert Schmon, the producer of the film, was a stage actor and a client coming to windsurf with us for the last 10 years. Then he introduced Peter Robinson, the cameraman. When I heard them talking I said, ‘I always had a dream about making a movie about windsurfing with like Denzel Washington as the leading actor and our guys as stuntmen, doing



Greta Kooistra photo

Patun Saragoza, Kiri Thode, Elvis Martinus and Bjorn Saragoza

the tricks.’ Well, when it started rolling it was decided at the dinner table to make the documentary with the boys as leading characters. You can say we opened a door, this guy went through the door and then the whole thing exploded! After seeing it we are not surprised anymore that every single festival we go to, we win!”

On Aruba the documentary won the “2012 Winner Audience Award,” the main award. In October 2012, at Mount Hood Independent Film Festival, it won “Most Inspirational Documentary” and it was the only feature given an encore screening. In mid-November at X-Dance Film Festival – the largest sports action film festival in the world that used to be part of the Sundance Film Festival in Utah but had to split up because it grew too big - a film festival where they get about a thousand films submitted -there ‘Children of the Wind’ won ‘Best Documentary,’ ‘Best Emerging Filmmaker Daphne Schmon’ and ‘Best Original Score Philip Lober.’ He’s the guy who wrote the music when



Best Original Score Composer- Philip Lober

he was 16. He’s 18 now. And... last but not least – so far – also in November, we won ‘Best Documentary’ at the International Film Festival of Antigua & Barbuda.

The next challenge is going to be the festivals in Holland and as we are a municipality of Holland, it is very important to us to get the natives from the Antilles closer to the other people from the Kingdom and show them that we have something very special on this small island, because many people in Holland don’t know about Bonaire. There is a team behind the scenes who, with their knowledge and networking, are helping to get the film through the festivals. Because,” Elvis laughs, “we know how to milk the cow, but we don’t know how to make the cheese!”

Hopefully it will tickle the taste buds of Holland, Europe and the rest of the world, because it’s a product that came together with a lot of help from volunteers and sponsors, the private and public sector of Bonaire, and then of course it’s made with love, passion and professionals and the beauty of Bonaire. This is a great opportunity for Bonaire – it’s a very big deal and it will be the talk of the town everywhere!” ■ Greta Kooistra





# BONAIRE ON WHEELS

This is the 122<sup>nd</sup> of a series of Bonaire Reporter articles by J@n –wear a helmet- Brouwer, featuring some of Bonaire’s interesting vehicles and persons that are “on wheels.” Up to at least 200 articles!

## A Scottsdale Down South

Bonaire/South of Pink Beach –  
It is one of those hot Bonairean Sundays. Shops and shutters are closed. Dust blows in the wind through the Kaya Grandi of Kralendijk. Streets are empty. Plenty of parking places are available. The perfect time and sphere for a trip on the motorcycle heading for the Fishermen’s Hut area. Donkey Beach is overcrowded with Bonaireans sipping their drinks, controlling the temperature of their barbeque. The trade wind supplies a little relief. I pass Bachelor’s Beach and Pink Beach. Then, out of the corner of my right eye, I notice a classic American truck, parked along the coast, near a tree that supplies a little shadow. I shift down several times and turn the bike. This is the Chevrolet pickup I have been looking for for ages!

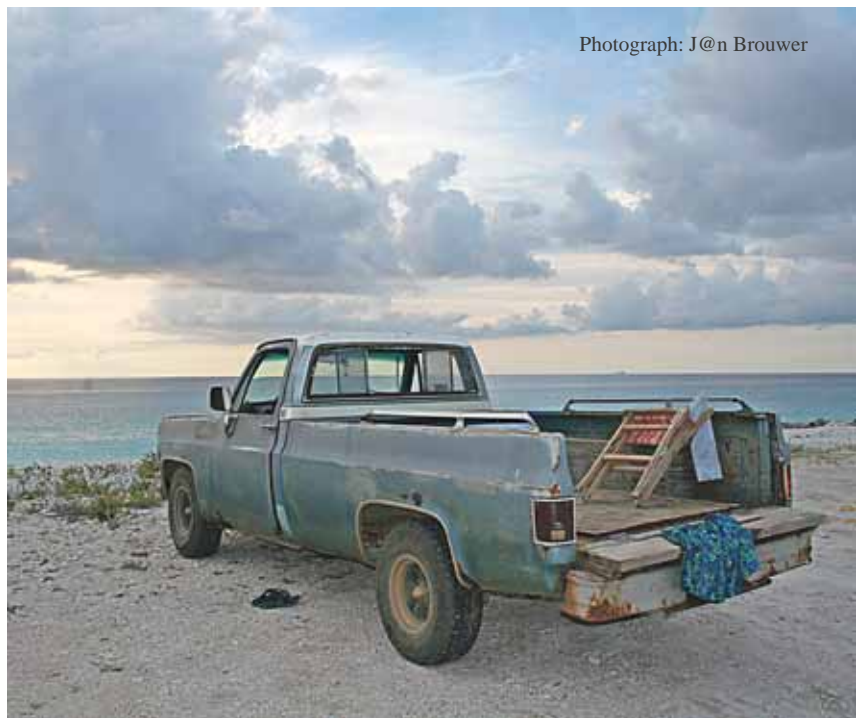
Under the tree I find two German speaking locals. She is busy with the fire and he controls the beer. It looks like a small explosion has taken place. Chairs, used towels, food, drinks, an old table, a man with a hairclip in his hair relaxing on a long chair. Life is good on a Sunday afternoon. The lady said they had just talked about me... I have seen them before and I know they also are the owners of a green 1978 V8 four- wheel drive Ford Bronco. So my question is am I allowed to shoot some pictures of the vehicle and write a little article about it? They are fine with that idea.

I am really impressed by the composition of this blue-ish battered work horse in combina-

tion with the beautiful colors of the sea and the cloudy sky. It is hard to say whether there is a threat in the clouds or if it is just the time of the day and the sun playing with her last rays. The pictures I take of this palette with white, grey and blue are really great and it is a pity that the resolution of a newspaper is so low. However, the pictures are great on the screen of my computer at home.

A completely unrestored Chevrolet Scottsdale, built in 1974, equipped with a huge V-8 engine and automatic transmission. The body of the car is rusty but the chassis is not rotten. Apart from the five- spoke, five-nut special racing rims and the aluminum grab rail mounted on top of the sides of the rear bed, there is no luxury at all to find on this car. The flat bed in the rear is reconstructed with wooden boards and beams. Some essential welding has been done to hold the flat bed in line with the cabin. A rusty and empty green pea can is mounted on the left hand side of the steering wheel to hold a can of beer. This old and rusty car fits in the dry environment of an Arizonan farm near Tucson. A still life on Bonaire, not to be disturbed. My hands start itching. I really would like to soak this car in some extra oil and grease. Treat the vehicle with a brush of oil. On the other hand it is maybe better to leave her unrestored and original. One of the last gas guzzling icons from the American automotive Industries... ■

J@n Brouwer



Photograph: J@n Brouwer

A beautiful and unrestored primitive Chevrolet Scottsdale, portrayed against the blue, white and grey colors of the Bonairean sea and sky on a late Sunday afternoon



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►MADRID--The number of annual tourists crossing international borders will reach 1 billion this week, the United Nations World Tourism Organization said on Wednesday, with Chinese travelers the biggest growth driver.

World Tourism grew between 3.5% and 4% in 2012.

Chinese tourists, whose numbers increased 30% year-on-year, and their Russian counterparts, whose numbers swelled 16%, offer big opportunities for traditional tourist destinations like the Caribbean, but countries must do more to make travelling easier for them, the UN said.

►The population of the European Netherlands grew by 47,000 this year, the national statistics office CBS said last Thursday. That's about three Bonaire's worth of people. The growth is due to a reduction in immigration and the fact more migrants have left the Netherlands partly due to the economic downturn. Immigration from Africa and Asia was also down, there were fewer live births and more deaths, the CBS said.

By 2040 the Dutch population is due to reach 17.8 million, 1.1 million more than its current total, CBS statisticians say.

►A US federal agency has proposed listing 66 species of coral under the Endangered Species Act, which would bolster protections of the animals. A similar move by The Netherlands would be beneficial to Bonaire.

Under the proposal, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) would list seven coral species as endangered and 52 as threatened in the Pacific, with five endangered and two threatened in the Caribbean.

The listing could lead to further protections for areas where these corals live, perhaps earning them designation as "critical habitat." Such a step would restrict commercial activities in the areas, while preventing any trade or harvesting of the corals.

►The U.S. Department of State's Office of English Language Programs announced the launch of the American English website (<http://americanenglish.state.gov/>). The new website is a free resource center for teaching and learning about American English as a Foreign Language (EFL), exploring American culture, and encouraging conversation within the global EFL community.

This website provides a variety of engaging materials and resources for students and for teachers' professional development. Both teachers and students will find new ways to practice English and learn more about the US.

►Last week, during the annual meeting of the Bonaire Sailing School Association Artie de Vries was honored for all the good work that he's done and still does for the sailing school. Club champions for 2012 were also announced.

Keep up the good work, Artie.

The BSSA is always looking for volunteers who want to help with some maintenance on the boats. Please email to: [bssa@gmail.com](mailto:bssa@gmail.com)



►The Heart for Bonaire Foundation is fund raising. This money is needed to train people in the community to apply resuscitation techniques in conventional methods as well as on an AED (Automatic Electrical Defibrillator). An AED is a device that is capable, when used by a trained person, of shocking someone out of cardiac arrest. The foundation has four instructors available. The first courses have been successfully completed. Several companies have purchased one or more AEDs and have provided their employees and customers with a greater chance of survival from a heart attack. The Foundation consists entirely of volunteers and is dependent on donations

►The Vision and Hearing Foundation (Fundashon Kuido pa Bista i Oido) wishes to thank all who made their recent fundraising efforts a success. A total of \$2,264.23 was collected. The Reporter ranks the Foundation at the top for effectiveness and efficiency. Their office is at Kaya Mgr. Niewindt # 3 (next to the clinic of Dr. Dorvil in Tera Cora), and is open for consultations Monday through Friday, 8am to 4 pm. Call 717-5765, or after office hours 782-4263.

►In our last edition we published a story about the laser treatment that can correct near-



or far-sighted vision and some other problems at Dr. Spencer's Curaçao Laser Institute in Curaçao. We'd like to correct two errors in that story. Dr. Spencer has office hours at San Francisco Hospital in Bonaire monthly and not weekly. Also Dr. Spencer is the past president of the Curaçao Medical Society and on the medical staff of the St. Elizabeth Hospital.

►"Over 100 lionfish were speared by Bas Tol during two dives in Washington Park," was the comment published in the last edition of The Reporter, but it doesn't tell the full story of that amazing day. Bas shot 111 lionfish in ONE Dive (with only two fish missed). It's a Caribbean record as far as we know.

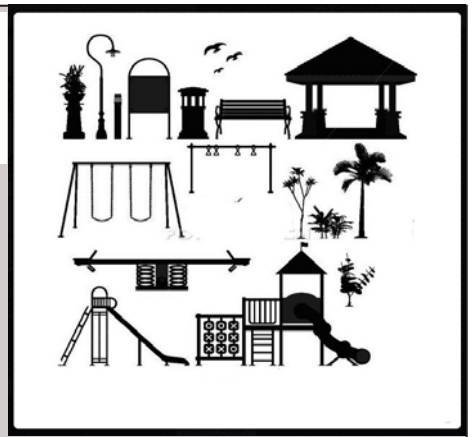
►All of us here at The Reporter wish our readers a very happy holiday time. That's because we don't think December 21, 2012, will be the end of the world as we know it. However, it will be another winter solstice and the hours of sunlight will increase every day for the next six months.

The claims behind the end of the world quickly unravel when pinned down to the 2012 timeline. And even if the world won't end, some think major disasters will occur, like: a "Total Blackout," collision with Nibiru/Planet X/Eris, a magnetic polarity shift, meteor strikes or solar storms.

What is the origin of the prediction that the world will end in 2012? The story started with claims that Nibiru, a supposed planet discovered by the Sumerians, is headed toward Earth. This catastrophe was initially predicted for May 2003, but when nothing happened the doomsday date was moved forward to December 2012 and linked to the end of one of the cycles in the ancient Mayan calendar at the winter solstice in 2012 -- hence the predicted doomsday date of December 21, 2012. Look for The Reporter next on the first Monday of 2013 unless, of course, the planets collide.

■ G./L. D.

## Give Every Child The Right To Play



Bonaire's only purpose-built children's park, "Parke Publiko Boneriano/ We Dare to Care Park" wants government help to keep going. Established by a non-profit foundation 10 years ago the Parke became an important part of the daily life for young children, accommodating over 100 kids a day at its peak. Earlier this year a small admission had to be charged to help defray expenses while financial support was being sought from the government.

But up until now there has been nothing.

The Dutch and /or local government has said more than once that this park is not a priority for them. On 2<sup>nd</sup> December the entrance fees were raised and will be kept until the government recognizes that the park fulfills a basic need and provides the money necessary.

There are over 1,200 signed petitions from the community agreeing that the government should support the Parke. The founders of the Parke, who have been keeping the park open with money from their own pockets, from private and corporate contributions and fundraising, have started a campaign named "Every Child Has A Right To Play."

Its supporters say the Parke should be acknowledged as a key island infrastructure and the responsibility to keep it open be shared by all users including NGOs, like crèches, the private sector and the government. Currently the water and electricity are being paid by a private company. Maintenance costs are being shared by founders James Fines and Davika Bissessar. The expenses they have been asking for seven years from the government are to partly fund the Parke, including wages for a caretaker.

If you believe the Parke should be free and government should help with the Parke's operation contact the Island Council members, the Executive Council members and RCN department leaders and express yourself. ■ Press release/G.D.

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Vereniging van Administratiekantoren & Belastingconsulenten - BES

**REAL ESTATE TAX (VASTGOEDBELASTING OR VGB) THE ASSOCIATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES AND TAX ADVISERS (VVAB) ADVISE ALL BONAIRE PROPERTY OWNERS OF THE FOLLOWING SPECIAL NOTICE:**

On October 31, 2012, decisions were broadcasted with the most recent values assigned to real estate property. These value decisions will be used as the basis for property values for the five year term from 2011 through 2015 in regard to real estate tax (Vastgoedbelasting or VGB).

Property owners are allowed to lodge an objection/dispute against their assigned value decision within two months after October 31, 2012. Specifications as to why the value is disputed must be provided. As of now, many property owners have either not received their value decisions, or many have received them for homes which are their primary residence and thus exempt from real estate tax (VGB). Still others have received their assigned value decisions, but they indicate that the values are very high, given market conditions, and there is no substantiation provided as to how the value decision was determined.

We advise you to take action immediately to protect your rights by contacting the Tax Office (Belastingdienst). There is a standard objection statement available at [www.vvab.net](http://www.vvab.net).

Every property owner's situation may be different, so if there are any doubts as to your particular circumstances, it is advised that you contact your tax advisor immediately.

In general, the following points are applicable:

- If you own your home and reside in it, it is considered your principal residence, and the real estate tax (VGB) is not applicable. However, property tax (Groundbelasting) is still applicable under the laws of the Public Body Bonaire.
- Undeveloped terrain in the hands of a private resident of Bonaire is exempt from real estate tax (VGB).
- For those who own a second dwelling, and thus are subject to real estate tax (VGB), there is an exemption available of up to USD \$50,000.00. If this second dwelling has a number of units (for example, a limited amount of self-contained apartments, defined as a unit with bedroom, kitchen, bathroom, and separate entrance), then the property owner may apply for a USD \$50,000.00 exemption for each unit.



# STCB Thanks Volunteers



Results of a fishing line cleanup

On Friday, 30th November, Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB) held a "Happy Hour" to say a huge thank you to the many core volunteers who have helped STCB meet its research and conservation goals this year. The event was kindly hosted by Leo Hoogenboom and Zsuzsanna Pusztai at their BonPhoto and Flow location and volunteers enjoyed drinks and nibbles whilst watching a photo compilation celebrating the many different activities that STCB has undertaken this year.

During a short speech, STCB manager Mabel Nava outlined the diversity of the help that volunteers provide to the organization; activities which include monitoring, research, advocacy, bookkeeping, computer services, and wood working, to name but a few. Program Assistant Sue Willis then offered some facts and figures about two of the projects that were new this year: Beachkeepers and the Fishing Line Project.

A total of **35 volunteer Beachkeepers** have been trained and have completed patrols on Te Amo beach, Donkey beach, the beaches to the south of Atlantis (kite surf beach), Lighthouse Point and Andreas beach. Beachkeepers found 23 sea turtle nests with a further three reported by the public, including one at J. Abraham Boulevard, and two at Plaza Resort, giving a total of **26 nests in the south/west** of Bonaire this season. As the average number of re-

corded nests from 2004-2011 was 10, and the previous maximum was in 2007 when 17 nests were found, it really shows what a difference the Beachkeepers' daily patrols have made.

In total **502 patrols** were carried out by Beachkeepers plus **24 weekly patrols** by Beachkeeper Coordinators with STCB staff. Trash collected totals **128 bags** from Te Amo/Donkey beaches, 101 bags from southern beaches and three bags/three car tires from Lighthouse Point. **Therefore 232 bags of trash in total were removed** from Bonaire's beaches by Beachkeepers in 2012!

Additionally STCB, in partnership with the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance, launched the **Fishing Line Project** in January 2012. **157 volunteers have signed up** and have been taking part in dives, snorkels or coastal walks, removing discarded fishing lines. Volunteer divers have carried out eight monthly clean up dives at Town Pier and two at the Fuel Pier and have helped to install 19 TAngler bins around the island. In total, volunteers have removed **seven full Kliko® bins** of line from Bonaire's reefs so far this year! (Also see letter to the editor.)

The celebration was a worthy end to a very successful year for STCB. Anyone wishing to volunteer for this organization in the future can visit STCB's website at <http://www.bonaireturtles.org/> or phone 717-2225 to find out more details. ■ Sue Willis

## TAX CONSULTANTS ADVISE URGENT ATTENTION TO REAL ESTATE TAX (VASTGOEDBELASTING OR VGB)

The Association of Administrative Offices and Tax Consultants (VVAB) wishes to express its concern regarding the state of affairs in the implementation of the Real Estate Tax (Vastgoedbelasting or VGB) on Bonaire.

The basis for the real estate tax (VGB) is the assessed value of the property by a value decision, which should have been communicated in writing to the property owner. Most decisions should have been sent as of October 31, 2012, however, it appears that approximately 10-15% of the decisions have not been provided to the property owners. An owner may only lodge an objection/dispute against the assessed value decision within two months after the value decision has been rendered. After this period expires, the assessed value will be utilized for all real estate tax (VGB) purposes for a period of five years, from 2011 through 2015.

There is great uncertainty among the general population of Bonaire, as many property owners are under the misconception that this real estate tax (VGB) also applies to those who own their home and reside in it as their principle residence, in which case, the real estate tax (VGB) does not apply. There are also situations where undeveloped terrain may be exempt as well, if the terrain is owned by a private individual, officially residing on Bonaire.

The assessed value decisions are retroactive to January 1, 2011. This means that if you purchased a property after this date, then the value decision will be sent to the prior owner. Additionally, the value decision of your property purchased after January 1, 2011 will be used for your own value decision for tax years 2012 through 2015. An entity who purchased property after January 1, 2011 must be especially vigilant to insure that the original owner communicates the value decision to the new owner, or contact the Tax Office (Belastingdienst) to receive the value decision in time to assess its validity and if necessary lodge an objection/dispute prior to the expiration of the objection period.

If any property is owned by several individuals or entities, the value decision is only sent to one recipient and it is incumbent upon that one person to advise all other current or subsequent property owners.

The VVAB advises anyone with real estate on Bonaire to be proactive in these matters by establishing a dialog/contact with the proper tax authorities. On the VVAB web site ([www.vvab.net](http://www.vvab.net)), there is a standard objection available for those who have not yet received their assessed value decisions.

In summary, VVAB also advises all property owners on Bonaire who received a value decision, but who own and reside in their own home, that they must notify the Tax Office (Belastingdienst), preferably in writing with a stamped copy as receipt, informing them that the property in question is a principal residence, and thus exempt from Real Estate Tax (VGB). These property owners who do reside in their principal residences are still subject to property tax (Groundbelasting) under the laws of the Public Body Bonaire. If a property owner subject to property tax (Groundbelasting) wishes to disagree with the value decision made by the Public Body Bonaire, then the objection/dispute must be filed with that particular department (Public Body Bonaire) after receipt of the land tax assessment for property tax (Groundbelasting). ■ Press release



## Got Gas?

### THE LOWDOWN ON THE PROPANE TANK AVAILABILITY ON BONAIRE

Despite the promise made by Curoil (Curacao) during a press conference held in Bonaire several months ago that the propane shortage would be alleviated by November 1, the situation has not improved, but has gone from bad to worse. Here is what I have just experienced...

Last week **Friday** I sat out front of the Curoil office in Hato from 06:30 till 08:30 am, to get two small gas tanks, one for me and one for my mom. Three cars had been patiently waiting for two hours when the office finally opened and we were told that there was no gas that day, to come back Wednesday. On the following **Wednesday**, my mom offered to come along to keep me company and I returned at 6:30am again, prepared for another two hour wait. Being the first one there, I was the first to enter the office only to be asked what it was I came to do? Duhhhh! When I said I had two small

tanks to replace, I was told there was no gas.... "Come back tomorrow"... Well!!!! How simple is it to put a sign out on the fence that there is no gas instead of letting us sit there day after day for nothing? We felt sorry for an elderly man who was upset about lugging his tank around for days with the same run-around.

**Thursday:** same time same station and mom comes along again to keep me company. As people start to line up out front, a paper was posted on the closed door announcing that only one tank per person would be issued. I thanked my lucky stars that mom had come along so I would be able to get the two 20 lb. tanks we needed.

There were already five cars ahead of us when we arrived. It was chilly and a drizzling rain had begun. More and more people kept arriving until a long line led out to the street where more people and parked cars were piling up and blocking the road. At 8 am the door opened, and we were told that the container had not yet arrived from the dock! Great grumbling was heard and we waited another 20 minutes or so for the truck to ar-



rive and crawl through the crowds to enter the Curoil property. A few minutes more and we began to enter two by two to pay and get our receipt. By then it had started to rain down hard. Few people had umbrellas, and everyone stayed huddled where they were, getting soaked to the skin.... fearful of losing their place in line if they sought shelter in their car.

I understand that this situation is not going to change, as it was announced on the radio that Curoil cannot find a solution for Bonaire as they have complications in Curacao as well. In which case we would ask:

Could shelters be placed out front for the clients waiting, come rain or shine?

Why can't there be one or two company men out front to keep order and assist women and the elderly with the tanks that are too heavy for them?

How is it possible that such a need for gas cannot be solved? It is un-thinkable that people have had to resort to BBQs, konfo's and Dutch ovens for five months in order to simply eat. This is now an emergency and a serious threat to the public health and welfare.

It was rumored that this was the last container to come from Curaçao with propane for Bonaire until well into January, and that the large tanks would not be available until next APRIL! ■ Story & photo by Christie Dovale



# On The Island Since...1995 – Monique Begina



*Monique and Brandon*

**“I** am from Curaçao where I stayed until I was 17. Then I left for Holland to continue my studies. First I went to fashion school for three years. Nowadays I look very different from when I was a teenager,” *she laughs*, “but at the time I was a *fashionista*; always busy with fashion and make up. My hair was long and so were my legs and I was young and beautiful and frequently invited to walk the catwalk, and of course I was terribly stuck up and arrogant!” *She smiles*. “Comes a time when you get over it and you think ‘what was that all about?’ and then you’re done with it. That’s when you become more of an adult.”

Well, not long after I went to Holland, my mom got very sick and I went back to Curaçao where I stayed with her until the end. She was only 44 when she passed away.

**“Yes, it’s a pity it changed and that everything has become so expensive and that you don’t see everybody at the happy hours any more, that there are different people now who can afford it while others can’t any more...”**

I went back to Holland and finished fashion school and then I started training to become a health care assistant. Hahaha. People will say ‘That girl jumped from one subject to another!’ But I graduated and then I went on a bus trip through France. In the south of France, close to Lyon, the bus had an accident. Five people died and I was badly injured and hospitalized in Lyon. After a week they flew me back to Holland where it took me a long time to recover. One of the consequences of the accident was that I could never be a nurse again because it would be too hard on me physically.

In the meantime, my father who was a customs officer on Curaçao, was asked if he was interested in becoming head of Customs on Bonaire. He accepted and came to live here. Shortly after I came with my partner to visit my dad, and believe it or not, it was the first time I’d set foot on Bonaire. Both of us were immediately sold; the tranquility, the ambiance,

the intimacy of a small island, the friendly people. You see, I am a jolly person myself and I love to laugh, and in Holland in the big cities you don’t find such a thing, so... we sold everything in Holland and moved to Bonaire.

I started working at the airport where I did the handling of all airlines: KLM, ALM, Air Aruba and Air Jamaica and many more. I did that for 14 years – great job, but the shifts took a toll on me. And if they appreciated you, you didn’t see it in your salary. It was a poorly paid job. During that time, when I was 32, I gave birth on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2000, to a beautiful baby boy, my son Brandon. The pregnancy was difficult because I’d been sick a lot, but the delivery was super. I never felt any pain and it was over and done with in 13 minutes!

I always wanted a child. At home we were five kids: two boys, three girls. One of the girls my parents had taken in. We come from a very large family because both my grandmas had 13 children. Now and then I do miss my family, but it also feels good to live a little further away, and when I miss them I fly over to Curaçao.

So, I had become a mother and I was a serious mom, but I didn’t forget to enjoy life. I love to party, to flirt, I love carnival and happy hours but I never drank a drop of alcohol and I don’t smoke. The partying is a part of me, it’s inside me. I don’t need any stimulants to get started or to rock and roll! Of course all that has changed a little over time, I am 44 now and I’ve slowed down quite a bit. Most of the time I don’t feel the need to stay out late.

When Brandon was still little, my partner and I broke up after 14 years, and that was the end of my career at the airport as

well. Because of my son I couldn’t do the nightshifts anymore. After trying out several jobs I began to work for a hotel and I worked there for five years.

Two years ago I started making arrangements to build my own house. A long time ago I’d applied for leased land and when I got the lot everything went smoothly. Being a single woman with a child you would think it would be difficult for me to get a mortgage with Fundashon Cas Boneriano. But it was easy in spite of the fact that I only worked four days a week and didn’t make a

lot of money. You see, the key factor was that I had no debts whatsoever. January 2012 Brandon and I moved into our sweet little home and if anybody has ever been proud of herself it was me! I did it all alone, no family on Bonaire. I had to paint everything, did the garden and all that came with it, but when it was ready I collapsed and even ended up at the cardiologist.

I think sometimes that things happen for a reason, because I’ve built that little house and got the mortgage on the salary I earned then, and now I can save up for the trips I want to make with Brandon. I want to go places with him; I want to take him to Disneyland and travel through Europe so he’ll see more than Bonaire. I’ve got a new job with RCN and I like it a lot and it works well for me and my son.

I am tranquil, it’s all working out. This has been my year. I am not a deeply religious person, but I do believe in God and I pray and say thanks every night and day and I am very grateful, I’ve always been. In 2012 I got my house and I met someone who became my partner for a while and although it ended we had a good time. I have my car and a new job and my health is back on track and my child is happy and healthy. What more could a person want? I’ve got some real good girlfriends here as well and I can count on them and they can count on me. Also, I am never bored, I am very good at keeping myself entertained and I love to be home. Before I know it, the day is done and the fact that Brandon is getting older makes it all much easier too.

I wouldn’t want to live anywhere else than on Bonaire. Of course it has changed; it used to be a cozy and clean little island with warm, friendly and helpful people. Still, to me Bonaire is a lovely quiet place with clean air where you can go wherever you want to without having to look over your shoulder all the time.



*Former fashion model Monique*

Yes, it’s a pity it changed and that everything has become so expensive and that you don’t see everybody at the happy hours any more, that there are different people now who can afford it while others can’t anymore. And it strikes me that there are so many Dutch people and that the local people are not showing their warmth so much anymore because life is hard and they have a lot of worries and they are less happy.

However, personally, my happiness lies in myself and I am content with my life. Of course it would be great to have a partner but it’s not the most urgent thing. I’ve been through a lot and it made me more conscious of people and of what I am looking for in my life. To me health is number one because I am afraid to die. My mom was 44 and that’s what I am now and I have a son and I don’t want to leave him behind as young as he is. So far, I’ve got everything I hoped for and I also made it up to my mom’s age. Now I want to enjoy life a bit; spend time with my friends, barbecue at the beach and go out camping. In two months carnival is coming up and I’m with the Oleana’s Deseo di Pueblo – a fun group of people with beautiful costumes and excellent ideas. I also play tennis, but gardening is my real hobby...

Wow! This is getting boring! Someone who reads this will think eh... isn’t there some juicy stuff to talk about? And all the things I’ve said... oh my! This isn’t me at all!” *She roars with laughter*: ‘It’s not even a bite out of my life. I am absolutely not a boring bitch! I am positive and active and I am loads of fun and if you want to know more I would like some female reactions! Ha!’”

*Story & photos by Greta Kooistra*





# The Mystery Gourmet Returns



The Mystery Gourmet



**Dutch Kibbling, the local version of fish and chips at Kon Tiki**

The Mystery Gourmet and his equally mysterious wife, after a period of absence from the island, have returned. They share a certain connection with some of the local restaurants in that during their years living on the island they have seen some of them come and go but some stay. After all, the two financial endeavors most vulnerable to failure during the first three years of operation are restaurants and small upscale gift shops.

Thus, in that the Gourmet and spouse were among the first customers of Kon Tiki, the charming indoor and outdoor restaurant in Sorobon at the far south of the island. The friendly, brave Dutch couple who established the business were recently from Holland and were living their dream. Happily, over the years, the endeavor survived. We watched their children grow when we returned from time to time to enjoy the food and ambience.

The drive south is a pleasant one, the roadway being one of the nicer highways on Bonaire.

The menu presents appetizers, salads, sandwiches and seafood, fish and beef entrees and much more. The bar can serve almost anything one would wish. The ambiance is simply terrific, the indoor area having many local artistic works displayed, the outdoor area being breezy, with a view of the beach and sea to the south.

Although the mysterious pair have enjoyed the sandwiches and salads for lunch, by far our favorite dish is the Dutch Kibbling, the local version of fish and chips. There seems always to be fresh catch of the day available and whenever Wahoo is offered, we choose that along with ice cold Amstel Bright beers.

We have always found the service to be friendly, prompt and attentive, though the outdoor area is so pleasant one would not notice should there be any delay.

As shown above, the meal consists of several generous portions of beautiful white fish, well breaded and seasoned and deep fried. A bed of nicely prepared French fries is offered, a small, delicious salad and both Tartar and a sweet-sour sauce are served.

The primary objective of a really good restaurant, that being no one goes home hungry, is well accomplished.

Another advantage of the location is that one has the choice of returning by the way they came, or a drive through the eastern side of the island where views of mangrove, flamingo, goats and rarely donkeys are available or along the seashore to the west where the rolling sea can be thrilling to observe.

The Mystery Gourmet and his ever mysterious spouse highly recommend Kon Tiki. ■ *The Mystery Gourmet*

# The Pet Project 2012 Benefits Animal Shelter and Your Pet

Our New Year's celebration will be festive when we ring in the year with fireworks but our pets react with confusion due to the unusual noise. The New Year period sees the loss of pets that run away from these loud noises. Fortunately, help is available in an inexpensive, non-toxic form. It has helped many people effectively for a variety of stresses. It is named "Rescue Remedy."

Rescue Remedy is a natural medicine made from flowers. It was invented in England by a physician named Dr. Edward Bach, who intended to relieve psychological suffering of people. That was in 1935. Since those years, people have used Bach remedies and shared it with pets.

This year Rescue Remedy will be available for pet owners to help their animal companions through the New Year 2012, thanks to The Pet Project.

Follow the simple instruction on the label. The cost of \$3 benefits the Bonaire Animal Shelter.

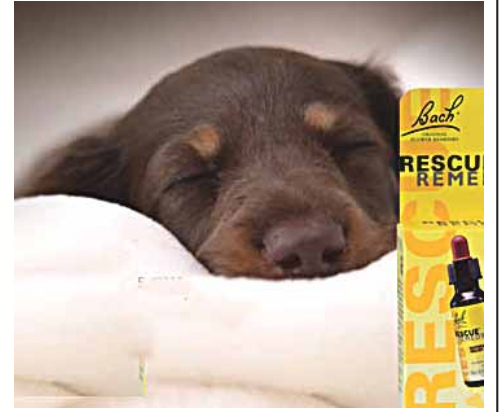
You may pick up Rescue Remedy at the Animal Shelter on Kaminda Lagoen.

Florence is in need of small plastic bottles for the remedy. If anyone has access to these containers, not sold in Bonaire, please let her know at the email address below.

If you have more questions about Rescue Remedy, email to:

[fhummingbird@yahoo.com](mailto:fhummingbird@yahoo.com). ■ Florence Ditlow

Florence Ditlow is a Registered Nurse, an herbalist certified in the use of Bach Remedies through the Bach Center.



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Basiskennis loonadministratie	MBO-3	15 maanden	Aanbetaling \$ 200 + 12 x \$ 100
Medewerker Personeelszaken	MBO-3	15 maanden	Aanbetaling \$ 200 + 12 x \$ 100
Financieel administratief medewerker	MBO-3	15 maanden	Aanbetaling \$ 200 + 12 x \$ 100
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Praktijkdiploma Directiesecretaresse	MBO-4	18 maanden	Aanbetaling \$ 200 + 15 x \$ 100
Praktijkdiploma Loonadministratie	MBO +	18 maanden	Aanbetaling \$ 200 + 15 x \$ 100
NEMAS Middenmanagement	MBO +	18 maanden	Aanbetaling \$ 200 + 15 x \$ 100
Juridisch Medewerker Bedrijfsrecht	MBO+	18 maanden	Aanbetaling \$ 200 + 15 x \$ 100
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**MONTHLY**  
**Goatcheese recipe**  
Fresh and healthy



**Fusili salad with Chevre**  
**Ingredients:**

Fusili pasta	400 gr
Goatcheese Semper Kontentu	250 gr
Cherry tomatoes	50 gr
Olives (Green)	75 gr
Olive oil extra virgin	100 ml
Balsamic vinegar	50 ml
Mayonaise	1 spoon
Bell pepper	1
Rocket salad (Rucola)	50 gr

**How to prepare:**

Boil water and cook pasta. When your pasta is 'al dente' rinse with cold water. Dice 250 grams of Semper Kontentu Goatcheese into one inch cubes. Halve your cherry tomatoes and dice your bell pepper. Mix pasta, vegetables and olives in a mixing bowl with the balsamic vinegar, mayonaise and olive oil. Add cheese, rocket salad and a pinch of salt and pepper. Enjoy your meal and taste the love and care of Aleta's Semper Kontentu Goatcheese.

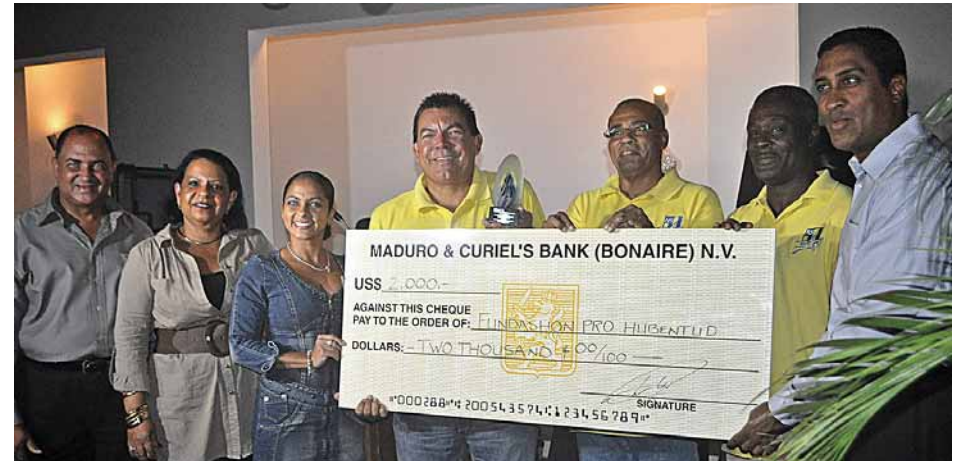
Recipe by Rik de Hek, food design student and former chef at Salsa Restaurant.

Available at Warehouse Bonaire



Tel: 786-6950

# MCB Award



MCB Bonaire personel flank the three Fundashon Pro Hubentud board members

MCB Bank Bonaire presented its annual award to a worthy community organization last week: to the *Fundashon Pro Hubentud* (Foundation For Youth) during a press party at the newly-opened Spice Restaurant. The Foundation, based in North Saliinja, operates an extensive soccer program for area youngsters up to age 21. Around 250 children and teens take part in the various leagues, some even traveling to other islands for championships. The Foundation receives no government support, depending on the support of its members and private contributions. ■ G.D.



Representatives from just about every Bonaire media outlet were on hand for the event.



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Location : Eden Beach Resort, Spice Beach Club  
Date : Saturday December 29th, 2012  
Time : 7:30 pm  
Entertainment : DJ Shrek  
Dress code : Glitter and Glamour  
Price : US\$ 95,- including food and beverages

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# Bonaire Coral Puzzle 8: Reef Sand and Kralendijk History

The “Left vs. Right” puzzle in the previous issue of *The Bonaire Reporter* describes a curious observation. On the inshore mooring blocks there are significantly more vertical faces with predominant coral growth on their right halves than those with predominant growth on their left halves. The numbers of left and right dominant faces on the offshore mooring blocks are about equal.

Before discussing possible solutions for this puzzle, let’s take another look at the other puzzle, “A Shore Effect?” that was discussed in earlier issues of *The Bonaire Reporter* (starting with the issue of August 31 - September 14, 2012). It is about the observation that there is significantly more coral on the inshore mooring blocks than on the offshore ones. I have suggested an explanation of how these patterns resulted from the detrimental effect on corals by plumes of polluted sediments stirred up in port and drifted along the reef (see *The Bonaire Reporter* of November 23 – December 7, 2012).

I have received many positive responses on this explanation. However, no answer in science is final and each explanation is a subject of scientific scrutiny. A reader from The Netherlands wrote that “there can be many different explanations” and pointed out, “For example the amount of sand around each block may prevent coral recruitment by scouring the surface of the block...”

Does the amount of sand around the moorings provide for an alternative explanation? Is the real culprit polluted

plumes from port or rather innocent sand around moorings?

The inshore moorings are located in the middle of the sand-flat and surrounded by



Photo A. Inshore boat mooring blocks surrounded by sand



Photo B. Offshore boat mooring blocks surrounded by mix of sand with hard coral rubble

sand, like in Photo A. The offshore moorings are located near the reef and surrounded by a mix of sand with hard coral rubble, small patches of live corals, sponges, and gorgonians, like in Photo B. There is more sand around the inshore mooring blocks than around the offshore ones. If the amount of sand were preventing coral recruitment, then there would be less coral on the inshore moorings than on the offshore ones. This would be exactly opposite to the actual pattern. So the sand around the moorings does not explain the puzzling observation. But plumes of pollution stirred up in port do!

Let’s look now at the “Left vs. Right” puzzle. Can the amount of sand around the inshore moorings cause the prevalence of right-dominant faces among the inshore mooring blocks? Would the sand scour left halves of the faces more than their right halves? How could that happen?

I have also received a suggestion that the observed pattern of coral coverage on the mooring blocks “indicates different durations of coral growth.” In other words, the moorings with more corals simply are in water longer.

I have interviewed Edwin “Din” Domacassé, Chief Ranger of the Bonaire National Marine Park who was responsible for the moorings installation. Here is what I have

learned. The moorings in front of Kralendijk were installed between the summer of 1994 and summer of 1996: first, the offshore moorings from Karel’s Bar almost to Harbour Village Marina; then, the inshore moorings from Karel’s Bar to Kas di Regatta; and then, a couple more offshore moorings near Harbour Village Marina. This order of moorings installation does not correspond to the amounts of coral growth on them. For example, the offshore moorings near Karel’s Bar were installed before all others – and have the least amount of corals. Thus the different durations do not explain the peculiar coral growth patterns. But plumes of pollution stirred up in port do.

Let’s look at the “Left vs. Right” puzzle again. How can we explain the prevalence of right-dominant faces on the inshore mooring blocks? It is quite obvious that left and right halves of each mooring block face were in the water exactly the same time. Thus the puzzling left-right asymmetry cannot be explained by different durations either. This puzzle still awaits your solution. ■ Story & photos by Genady Filkovsky

If you are interested in discussing these puzzles, their solutions, or to get more information, write to Genady Filkovsky, e-mail: lagoen-hill20@yahoo.com.



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# Green Fingers



“MI MES HÒFITU” -  
MY LITTLE GARDEN

Would you like to live a long and healthy life and live until you are 100? If so take a leaf out of the book of the members of the *Mi Mes Hòfito* club in Rincon.

Eight years ago five retired ladies got together and asked the question of how to make that happen. They decided to start growing their own fruit, vegetables and herbs. With the help of Rocky Emers from LVV they set up *Mi Mes Hòfito*. The group is going strong today with 70 members and looking to expand its membership especially amongst the younger generation.

Hidden away in Rincon off the beaten track I visited the founder members of *Mi Mes Hòfito*. They grow their own produce, are extremely passionate about their endeavors and are very hospitable



Members: Mi Mes Hòfito

and keen to share their knowledge and experience. What they grow is on the whole for their own consumption or to be exchanged with other members, and if there is anything to spare it is sold at the Farmers' Market at Kriabon every first Saturday of the month. Each member has his or her own shade house which were donated by a charity from Curaçao and for which they had to make their own small contribution. They recycle where possible and each garden has a large water storage container to make good use of any rain that does fall.

Instead of buying plastic cultivating pots members fold up old newspapers into small pots for the seedlings to germinate. The “pot” and plant can easily be replaced. Another good idea I saw was the use of three old car tires stacked on top of each other to make a container in which to grow sweet potatoes. A

variety of containers are used for growing crops. Amsoy or mustard green, a type of cabbage native to Suriname and China which tastes a little bitter and spicy, was being grown in a disused wheel barrow.

In the last eight years the membership has grown and members are rightly so very proud of their efforts which are paying off as many of the members I visited looked many years younger than their actual age. One of the group's goals is to encourage the youth to join them and to encourage them into a healthier way of life by growing their own produce. Gardening on Bonaire is difficult but there are ways to overcome the problems. Members of the club are always happy to give advice and share plants with others. There is a Facebook group called “*Tuinieren op Bonaire*” where members share their experience and offer support



Carla Hay photo

Perfect use for old tires: growing sweet potatoes



Carla Hay photo

Make pots from newspapers

as well as an exchange of plants or seeds.

Cats, dogs, metal sheeting and shade houses do seem to be the best way to deter lizards and iguanas. I even saw two wild pigs running around Rincon.

A method of the past to ensure that enough produce was left for the family was to grow much more than was needed and to allow the lizards and iguanas to have their fill and trust nature to find a balance. There is a balance in all things and happy must those be who manage to find it.

The mispel tree is a favourite in Rincon. The trees are not widely grown today the world over and seemed to have fallen out of favor around 1840 in Europe, yet Rincon is passionate about the mispel fruit. The fruits which are the size of an apple with brownish coloured rough skin taste sweet and are

therefore a favorite of the Lora. Fortunately there are not too many Loras in Rincon as they seem to have returned to their natural habitat of the national park.

The message from *Mi Mes Hòfito* is clear: Grow your own, eat a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables, move your body and you will stand a better chance of living a long and healthy life. I certainly felt a lot healthier after just having spent time with the ladies of *Mi Mes Hòfito*.

Please contact Maria Koeks on [rinconcity@gmail.com](mailto:rinconcity@gmail.com) if you wish to have a guided tour of Rincon or learn about how to grow your own. She is a most delightful, knowledgeable and inspiring person. ■

Carla Hay



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# Sustainability Fair Success

“B oneiru Duradero,” the second exhibition on environmental sustainability this month, was a tremendous success with a large turnout and interesting exhibits. It was held last Saturday, December 15, at Jong Bonaire. There were more than 27 stands where visitors got information and could buy sustainable products, several workshops and interactive presentations. There was an entrance ticket raffle with several prizes, a coloring contest and other activities for children.

The event opened with the especially composed *Boneiru Duradero* theme song. There were speeches from Evert Piar from the Chamber of Commerce, Deputy of Economic Affairs Burney El Hage, Karel Drijver from the World Wildlife Fund for Nature and Hayo Haanstra from the Ministry of Economic Affairs.

The opening speeches had the common theme of stressing the need for living, working and producing sustainably. We, individuals, governments and businesses have the world on loan for our children and need to be responsible for its and their continued existence. Bonaire aims to be a leader for sustainability in the Caribbean and the other islands can learn much from Bonaire as much as Bonaire can learn from the other islands.

The process of sustainable living is a gradual one and all should aim to become aware of their impact on the planet.

The exhibits consisted of amongst others:

- Eco friendly office products
- Homemade Christmas cakes, jams, pies and sweets.
- Freshly squeezed guyaba juice
- Plants grown on Bonaire
- Second hand goods
- Eco friendly home solutions
- Recycling of household products
- Bonairean honey
- Environmentally friendly products. ■ Carla Hay



**BON RECYLING**, located in Santa Clara, past Mikey's Snack is the effort of Edison Rijna and Herbert De Jongh. They process cartons, plastic bottles, aluminum cans. The public may deposit aluminum cans and plastic bottles in two bins- on Kaya Italia, near Bon Appetite Restaurant.

Recycling is a part of a plan that will allow eliminating the present landfill within three years using a combination of recycling, composting and off-island disposal.



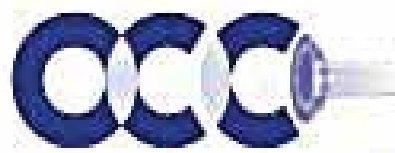
Oliver Larsen and Paul Mahlitz from the Technical University of Berlin; Bonaire Landfill Supervisor Randy Leonara; Sylvester Agoh from UNESCO Institute for Hydrological Engineering, Delft, Holland; and SELIBON head Rudsel Lieta



Jacqueline and Bart Landheer showed safety goggles for those watching and setting off fireworks. On Tuesday at 7pm at Jong Bonaire there will be a demonstration by the fire brigade on how to safely set up and light fireworks.



Suzel Baraton's new product for Bonaire - recycled cardboard made into beautiful hand painted boxes



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# Buena Vista Optics

Kralendijk –  
**O**n Thursday December 7 the official opening of Buena Vista Optics took place from six o'clock in the afternoon until after nine. The reception was held in the brand new shop of Buena Vista Optics and the cozy garden in front of the shop. Buena Vista Optics is located at Kaya Grandi 32b, down a bit in the little alley in between Best Pearls and Gio's Ice Parlour.

Buena Vista Optics is owned by the Madlener family. The Madleners live on the island of Bonaire since 2009, July 4. Nick Madlener, the man with the red quad, is an official optometrist and his wife Els is an optician. They both have some 35 years of experience and long time ago they met at the same training. Although they were studying for optometrist and optician and their vision was of a good quality it was not love at first sight. It took Nick and Els a few years to take notice of each other. Then they fell in love received two lovely daughters and stayed together until the present day.

Every day Nick and Els Madlener are present in their shop in between Best Pearls and Gio's Gelateria. They are assisted by Wilma Jenniskens. All three are very proud of their work and their new shop. Els and Wilma show me their collection of spectacle frames. They inform me about brands like Ray Ban, Oakley,



Nick Madlener (optometrist) and his wife Els (optician). On the left: their assistant:

Lacoste and Chanel. Classics and the latest fashion, they have got it all in stock: some 500 frames and over 3000 lenses. And of course there are the soft and hard lenses and sunglasses. Then Nick shows me the top of the line installed workshop where you can find him every day. Nick: "We are so happy with our own shop. It feels so good to be independent and to be able to present top quality product and produce top service! We are connected to the RCN (Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland) which feels great.

Nick, Els and Wilma are happy and enthusiastic persons. They know what they are talking about and they are proud of their job. Buena Vista Optics: a nice contribution to the Bonairean community!  
 ■ J@nBrouwer

# Transform Your Mind: Wear A Helmet



This is the 11th of a series of Bonaire Reporter short articles by J@n Brouwer, about helmets and helmet awareness.

Bonaire/Playa/Antriol –  
**S**o last week I was waiting at the cash register of one of our supermarkets to pay for my apples and milk. My gloves and my helmet were on the counter but I still looked like a converter\* with my leather working boots with steel soles and noses, with my knee and elbow protectors. Then the gentleman who was in front of me said hello. He is the owner of a tire shop opposite to Botika Korona and his son had just finished his job reconditioning a moped. The Spanish speaking man pointed at my flashy helmet and asked whether I had a helmet for sale. I informed him that this helmet came from the Old World and that I had several helmets at home to obtain, just for free. So I gave him my business card and that same day the tire mechanic showed up. I invited him in my house and showed the cupboard with all the helmets. Finally the decision was made: a black jet helmet, originally meant for off road bicycle use. Not as safe as a real motorcycle helmet but at least something to start with.

From Sandro Joosten, the guy with the red Honda Dax I learned it is possible to order helmets out of a catalogue at Macho's in Kralendijk. So I went to Macho's to get informed. The owner had only a few helmets in stock but within a few weeks he hopes to open a new shop. Then he will be able to sell helmets from the shelf. Let's keep in touch. To be honest: It takes a lot of money to buy a proper helmet but it is still cheaper than one day at the doctor's or in the hospital!

\*As I get older, probably also because of wearing helmets for more than forty years, I every now and then forget some words. So Marianske as always said: "You really look like a @#!\*&! in that outfit, wearing that helmet!" And then the word just doesn't want to pop up. So I leave my laptop and my desk and run along the street to find a younger person. A guy is unloading shoes for Benetton and I inform him about me, writing an article, unable to find the word for a "car you can convert in a robot and a robot you can rebuild into a car". The youngster immediately replies: "A Transformer!" ■ J@n Brouwer



By Elizabeth de Groot

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CONDOLANCES

We would like to extend our deepest sympathy to Marion's family and friends.

She will be missed by all of us at Bonaire Nights magazine.

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### TYRE PROBLEM CAUSE?

Dear Editor:

I applaud Selibon on the good work they do in keeping our streets clean. I regularly see workers collecting carelessly discarded rubbish along the roads and in town. Furthermore their refuse vehicle employees

are always friendly and appear happy in their work. Selibon's glass recycling efforts seem to also be improving. Well done, Selibon.

So to the tyre problem. Why would we have to pay yet another fee/tax to deal with the problem? Are people here not taxed enough? Perhaps Selibon could put some pressure on the government to improve the condition of the roads as I am sure that poor road surfaces have a huge impact on the number of tyres used. Not only would improved roads reduce tyre use and thus help keep Bonaire green but it would also provide work and be a good use in part of the money we pay in road tax.

Nothing to do with Selibon but only a short time after the new road by BFG was laid it was already being dug up. Why could they not have done that work prior to creating such a lovely smooth road? *Carla Hay*

### TIRE IDEAS FROM CANADA

Dear Editor:

I read the article about the tire problem in Bonaire. I can certainly understand the issue as my partner and myself have been involved in some island clean ups over our last visits to the island and will be back to Bonaire for vacation in the near future. We have seen old tires that have been discarded or washed up onto the reefs by surges etc. My suggestion is that the recycling equipment is purchased and set up on the island for the tires. I realize that this would not be cheap, however, it is quite possible that the recycling process could be turned into an small industry on the island employing some people. If a recycling plant is not presently located near the island then other islands, countries could send the old tires to the island and the recycled product could in turn be sold. There are many products that can be made from the recycling process. *Ken Peer*



### FISHING LINE AND TURTLES DON'T MIX

Dear Editor:

My first dive under Bonaire's Old (aka North and Town) Pier was in 1981; so far I've logged more than 2000 dives there.

Until recently, the marvels of the lush habitat beneath the Pier were always counterbalanced by fishing line, with tangles of discarded line becoming increasingly intertwined with coral and sponges, and line draped from piling to piling or around pilings in a bizarre imitation of decoration. The line was more than unsightly: it was harmful to the growth on the pilings, and dangerous to creatures such as turtles

To counter this, for more than two decades my clients and I dedicated time on each dive to collecting line beneath the Pier. When the annual Bonaire Dive Fest began in the early 1990's, line removal beneath the Pier was a regular event, with as many as 30 divers participating. For the last ten years or so, groups from Barry University's Sports Management degree program have dedicated one dive on each yearly trip to removing fishing line at the Pier.

In every single case, divers could proudly display a huge pile of removed fishing line. In every single case -- because there was so much line there -- the Pier looked just as line-covered after the dive as it had before the dive.

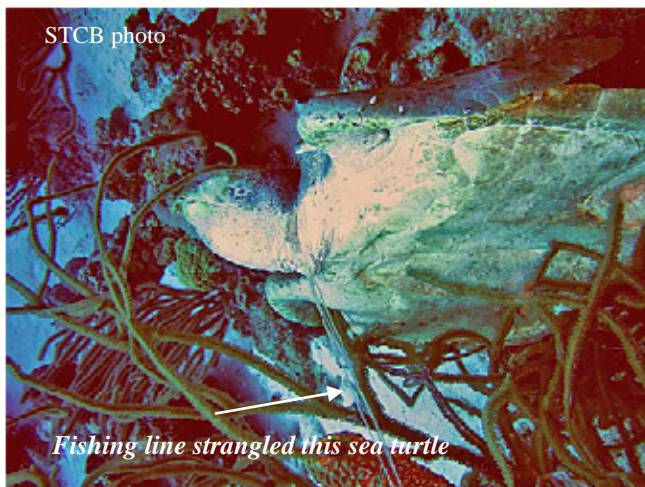
Then, in 2011, Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire inaugurated their Fishing Line Project. They educated us about the vulnerability of turtles to fishing line, and soon fishermen, volunteer divers, and dive operators -- especially Dive Friends/Yellow Submarine -- actively supported the Project.

Recently I dived the Pier on an STCB/Yellow Submarine dive as part of that Project. I wondered why all the divers were on the reef slope, since most of the fishing line has always been on the pilings. Then I realized I wasn't seeing any fishing line on the pilings. It had all been removed.

For more than twenty years, removing the miles of fishing line from marine life beneath Bonaire's Old Pier had seemed to be an impossible task. **In less than one year, Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire, its dedicated volunteers, and Bonaire's fishermen and dive operators -- by working together -- are making our reefs much safer for turtles and other marine animals.**

Great job!

*Dee Scarr, Touch the Sea, Bonaire*



Times of Malta photo



For the first time skin cancer has been found in fish. Melanosis and melanoma (skin cancer) have been increasing in humans due to increasing intensities of UV light exposure but have never been seen in wild fish, until now. Coral trout is a commercially important reef fish and is the first wild fish to be recorded with skin cancer. It is thought that the cause of the cancer is environmental exposure to UV radiation. UV radiation is increasing due to the loss of the ozone layer in the atmosphere and this may be contributing to melanoma in coral trout. It has been predicted that with changing ocean conditions, such as a rise in temperature, the

effects of the melanoma may be expedited, causing losses in fish populations. Findings of cancer in fish populations opens the door for new research on skin cancer in humans and the increasing intensity of UV light. ■ *Story by Erin Jaco*

*Jaco studies marine biology at Oregon State University in Oregon. She is spending her junior fall term studying at the CIEE Research Station.*



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<b>Sat 22</b>		02:16 -0.05 ft	08:58 0.98 ft	17:09 0.06 ft	20:57 0.25 ft	6:52	18:17
<b>Sun 23</b>		02:36 0.01 ft	09:34 1.00 ft	18:15 0.01 ft	22:05 0.17 ft	6:52	18:17
<b>Mon 24</b>		02:49 0.06 ft	10:10 1.01 ft	19:18 -0.03 ft	23:31 0.11 ft	6:53	18:18
<b>Tue 25</b>		02:45 0.09 ft	10:45 1.00 ft	20:17 -0.07 ft		6:53	18:18
<b>Wed 26</b>	11:20 0.99 ft	21:10 -0.10 ft				6:54	18:19
<b>Thu 27</b>	11:56 0.97 ft	21:54 -0.12 ft				6:54	18:19
<b>Fri 28</b>	12:32 0.94 ft	22:30 -0.14 ft			<b>Full Moon</b>	6:55	18:20
<b>Sat 29</b>	13:09 0.90 ft	22:58 -0.14 ft				6:55	18:20
<b>Sun 30</b>	13:47 0.85 ft	23:19 -0.13 ft				6:55	18:21
<b>Mon 31 January</b>	14:27 0.78 ft	23:37 -0.11 ft				6:56	18:21
<b>Tue 01</b>	06:42 0.39 ft	09:12 0.39 ft	15:15 0.70 ft	23:51 -0.10 ft		6:56	18:22
<b>Wed 02</b>	06:21 0.48 ft	11:18 0.37 ft	16:02 0.61 ft			6:57	18:23
<b>Thu 03</b>		00:05 -0.10 ft	06:31 0.61 ft	12:46 0.31 ft	16:51 0.51 ft	6:57	18:23
<b>Fri 04</b>	<b>L Quar- ter Moon</b>	00:23 -0.10 ft	06:54 0.74 ft	14:00 0.22 ft	17:44 0.41 ft	6:57	18:24

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# SHOPPING and SERVICE GUIDE

## AIRLINES

**Divi Divi Air**- Bonaire's "on time airline" with 16 flights a day between Bonaire and Curaçao. Your first choice for inter-island travel. Now flying to Aruba.

## APPLIANCES /TV/ ELECTRONICS/ COMPUTERS

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



## APPLIANCE REPAIR

**Tavarez Refri Parts** can repair all your home's appliances. Long established, technically proficient and reputable. Call **701-3801 or 786-3801**

## BANK

**ORCO Bank** offers one-on-one attention, personal banking. Each client is a person, not a number.

Office in the historic building at Kaya Grandi 48.

## BARS

**Zazu Bar at the Harbour Village Marina** is all you expect in a great bar. Super bartender, quality drinks and friendly service. Plus Bonaire's only Rum Bar- over 50!

## BEAUTY PARLOR

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

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## ON and IN the WATER

**Budget Marine** has what anyone with a boat needs, and if its not in stock they can order it quickly. You can also find special hardware for general use and components for solar and wind electric systems.

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**ScubaVision** - Pro video of your Bonaire vacation, above and/or below the water with a custom DVD by Bonaire's top videographer, Hendrik Wuyts.

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## HOME CARE

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## PHOTOGRAPHER

**Bonaire's creative video and still photographer for the wedding or other important events in your life.** ScubaVision, Kaya Grandi 6, See website scubavision.info or ScubaVision on YouTube

## REAL ESTATE /RENTAL AGENTS

**Sunbelt Realty** offers full real estate, rental, and insurance services. If you want a home or to invest in Bonaire, stop in and visit.



## RESTAURANTS

**Bistro de Paris**— is back at a new location at the H.V. Marina. Superb menu, genuine French dishes in a waterfront ambiance.

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**Bona Dea** is Bonaire's newest Caribbean life style shop featuring gifts, apparel, shoes, accessories and home décor

## SECURITY

**Special Security Services** will provide that extra measure of protection when you need it. Always reliable.

## STORAGE

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**Semper Kontentu goat cheese.** Ask for it at restaurants and look in the markets. Lovingly handmade. Mugs available.

## VARIETY STORE

**The Tung Fong Store** is a great asset to everyone on Bonaire because it stocks so many thing we want: clothes, hardware, food, auto and bike supplies. If you don't see it... ask for it. They probably have it.

## WATER TAXI

**Get to Klein Bonaire by Ferry.** Ride the *Kantika di Amor*. Hotel or downtown pickup The only water taxi to Klein Bonaire with an easy on/off built-in ramp at Bonaire Nautico (It Rains Fishes Restaurant)

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# WHAT'S HAPPENING

## Upcoming Cruise Ships— Source: Harbormaster's Office

Day	Date	Ship Name	Time in Port	# of pass.	Cruise Line
Friday	21-Dec-12	<i>Emerald Princess</i>	0700-1400	3100	Princess Cruises
Saturday	22-Dec-12	<i>Noordam</i>	0800-1700	1920	HAL
Monday	24-Dec-12	<i>Seaborn Quest</i>	0800-1800	450	HAL
Wednesday	26-Dec-12	<i>Grandeur of the Seas</i>	0800-1800	2446	Celebrity/RCCL
Sunday	30-Dec-12	<i>Maasdam</i>	0800-1700	1258	HAL
Monday	31-Dec-12	<i>Alexander von Humboldt</i>	0700-1800	510	
Tuesday	1-Jan-13	<i>Aida Luna</i>	1000-1800	2194	Aida Cruises
Wednesday	2-Jan-13	<i>Grandeur of the Seas</i>	0800-1800	2446	Celebrity/RCCL

## CLOSE-IN EVENTS

**Saturday, December 22—Christmas Concert at 8pm, Cacique Hall, Plaza Resort Bonaire. See pages 2 & 12 for details**

**Tuesday, December 25—Christmas Day -Holiday**

**Wednesday, December 26—Boxing Day. Banks and most shops closed**

**Saturday, December 29—"Glitter & Glamour" Rotary Fundraising Auction and Dinner to benefit youth & elderly projects at Eden Beach, 7:30 pm. More on page 10**

**Monday, December 31—Fireworks shows on the streets and in the sky.**

**Tuesday, January 1, 2013—Maskarada—mysterious, silent, masked people accompanied by musicians dance and do skits beginning at Lt. Gov. house, then at other sites on the island. A Bonairean tradition.**

## REGULAR EVENTS

- **Rooi Lamoenchi Kunuku Park Tours** \$21 (includes tax). Discounts for residents and local people. Tel. 717-8489, 540-9800.
- **We Dare to Care Park children's playground** open hrs 1 - 7 pm, entrance fee \$1 per child & \$1.50 per adult. Saturdays open for free. Closed on Sundays.

## Saturdays

- **We Dare To Care Playground Bazaar.** Flea market tables are \$10 except first Saturday of the month when they are free. Open 9 am - 2 pm. - Call Marissa - 701 1103. Everything for sale, old & new: household items, plants, baby things, clothes & shoes. Food riot, BBQ. All funds go toward maintaining the Park.
- **Open House at Semper Kontentu milk goat farm. Second Saturday of the month** 8 am to 12 noon.
- **Marshe di Kunukeru (Farmers' Market) 1st Saturday of the month,** at Kriabon, Kaminda Jatu Baco #55, next to Aquamarin School, 8 am to 12 noon.
- **Bonaire Animal Shelter's "Garage Sale" Pakus di Pruga—every Saturday,** 8am-5pm. At Kaminda Liberador Simon Bolivar, across from Brandaris Café. Tel. 717-4989
- **Wine Tasting at Antillean Wine Company's warehouse on Kaya Industria, Second Saturday of the month,** 7-9 pm. (Always call to make sure it's on: Tel. 560-7539.) Snacks and tasting of six wines for \$10 per person.
- **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 Koecks for more information—796-7870.
- **Petanque- Jeu de Boules,** Saturdays 2:30 pm Tera Cora ranch. info: 786-0150

## Sundays

- **Kunuku Arawak - Music, drinks, local food, dancing,** 10 am—6 pm. Live music starts at 4 pm. Tel.786-7210

## Mondays

- **Soldachi Tours of Rincon, the heart of Bonaire, 9 am-noon. \$20-Call Maria, 717-6435-best island tour value**
- **Meet the Captain Night at Captain Don's Habitat Bar—** Get up close and personal with Bonaire's dive pioneer. The Captain will autograph your copy of his newest book Reef Windows.

## Tuesdays

- **Chez Nous Restaurant—**Multi-course dinner prepared by students, under direction of teachers, \$20. At the high school. Reservations mandatory 700-4628.

## Wednesdays

- **Chez Nous Restaurant —**Multi-course lunch, about \$12, at the high school. Reservations mandatory 700-4628.
- **Girls Night Out at Bistro de Paris Restaurant** at Harbour Village Marina. 3-course menu \$25, 1/2 price martinis and house wine bottle

## Fridays

- **Happy Hour Crafts Market at Wilhel-**

mina Park, sponsored by Bonaire Arts and Crafts Association. 5-9 pm.

**Happy Hour party at Bistro Di Paris.** Ricky Thomas performs Reggae, Soul, Latin and more 6 - 9pm

## FREE SLIDE/VIDEO SHOWS

**Monday -- Touch the Sea --** Dee Scarr, honored as a member of the Women Divers Hall of Fame, conducts Bonaire's Touch the Sea programs of personalized dive guiding. She presents a unique perspective on critters and corals, plus an updated Bonaire lionfish report, every Monday **when she's on-island** at 8:30 pm in the Aquarius Conference Center at Captain Don's Habitat, Call 717-8290.

**Wednesday - Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB)** presents an informative slide show: *Sea Turtles of Bonaire*, at 8pm, every **2nd and 4th Wednesday** in the conference room at Captain Don's Habitat (717-8290)

## BONAIRE'S TRADITIONS

**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

**Museo Sentro Chichi'Tan,** historical home, behind Rose Inn, Rincon, open 10am-4pm daily. Tel. 786-6420

**Washington-Slagbaai National Park Museum and Visitors' Center.** Open daily 8 am-5 pm. Closed on December 25th and January 1st. **Call 788 - 9015 or 796 - 5681**

## CLUBS and MEETINGS

**AA meetings - every Wednesday** at 7pm. Phone: 790-7001 and 796-4931

**Al-Anon meetings - every Thursday** evening at 7.30pm. Call 700-7751 or 701-8728

**Bridge Club - Every Wednesday,** Bridge Club on Bonaire. 19:15, contact Jeroen Seegers for information tel. 717-4200 or 788-2819 or [jeroen@telbonet.an](mailto:jeroen@telbonet.an)

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

**Kiwanis Club** meets at APNA Plaza, Kaya International, **every other Tuesday,** 7 pm. Tel. 717-5595, Jeannette Rodrigue.

**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 Wednesdays,** 12:15-2 pm - Divi Flamingo Beach Resort in Peter Hughes meeting room upstairs above the dive shop. All Rotarians welcome. Call Gregory Obersi 785-9446.

**Toastmasters Club** meets **every two weeks.** For more information call Crusita

de Palm at 786-3827 or Lucia Martinez Beck, at 786-2953.

## CHURCH SERVICES

**Protestant Congregation of Bonaire:** ( VPGB ), Kralendijk, Plaza Wilhelmina; Sunday service-10 am in Dutch.

Rincon, Kaya C.D. Crestian; Sunday service-8:30 am in Papiamentu/Dutch.

Children's club-every Saturday from 4:30-6 pm in Kralendijk, (annex of the church.) Contact; Marytjin@gmail.com or Daisycoffe@hotmail.com

**International Bible Church,** Kaya Papago 104, Hato, behind Bon Fysio/Bon Bida Spa & Gym on Kaya Gob. N. De-brot. Sunday 9am-Worship service in English; 10:45am-Sunday school for all ages. Tuesday 7:30 pm-Adult Bible study class. 717-8377 for more info or ride [bonaireibc@yahoo.com](mailto:bonaireibc@yahoo.com)

**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. Wed. 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 Sunday mornings 10am-11:30am. Bible studies in English on Monday nights from 7-8 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) 10:20am- Sunday School, 11:15 RS/YM/YW/PH Primary held from 10:20-12 noon Visitors welcome: Information: Call 701-9522 .

**Foundation Fountain of Living Waters, Centro Fuente,** Service Sunday at Kaya Aruaco 4 at 6 pm, in Papiamentu and Spanish. For Marriage Counseling, contact 717-2161.

Send notice of your activity or event to *The Reporter*: call 786-6518 or [reporter@bonairenews.com](mailto:reporter@bonairenews.com)

## Who's Who on The Bonaire Reporter

**Take The Reporter Home—1-year subscription:** By mail to US \$75; By mail to Europe \$170. By Internet, Free (asking a \$35 donation.) For information about **subscriptions, stories or advertising in The Bonaire Reporter,** PO Box 407, Bonaire, Dutch Caribbean; phone (599) 786-6518, 786-6125, E-mail: [info@bonairereporter.com](mailto:info@bonairereporter.com)

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# Guest Editorial

Opinions expressed are those of the writer, not necessarily those of *The Reporter*

## No Problem

I pretty much always flinch when someone uses stereotypes to define other people. For instance: when Frisians (from the North East of The Netherlands) are matter-of-factly described as surly and lacking humor. Or people from Rotterdam as thick headed yet straight-talking, hardworking. And I don't like descriptions, derogatory nor tongue in cheek, of any other nationality or group of people. Prim Britons for instance, or grimy Frenchmen, unreliable Italians, thorough Germans and God-fearing conservative North Americans. Not to mention the insulting adjectives that are often attached to Muslims and Moroccans.

Stereotypical descriptions relating to characteristics of a group of people can be entertaining, but there is a fair chance the subject will experience it as a pejorative or patronizing. They are more often than not crude, misleading prejudices. And those individuals who, even inadvertently, let these images play a leading role in everyday life when dealing with other people, or in that other land will find themselves at a disadvantage.

Let us take a closer look at an example. Close to home, on Bonaire. Even the excellent book "*de Tragiek van Bonaire*" by Trix van Bennekom uses rather obvious stereotypes to explain, or even apologize for the treacherous collaboration between the Dutchmen and the Bonaireans.

The folks from the Netherlands talk a lot and hardly listen. The native Bonaireans are silent people and are hesitant to venture an opinion or are afraid to do so. It is called the paralyzing culture of silence.

When these qualifications are taken seriously one is bound to have very little hope for good relationships between the officials who are supposed to govern our island. Especially when they do not aspire to speak the other's language.

So is it true that the Dutch do all the talking and the Bonaireans are quiet types by nature and keep their cards close to their chest? I don't think this is always the case.

I know of Dutch people who are very adept at listening, can stay completely silent when it's appropriate and restrict themselves to being patient and asking the occasional very good question. But sometimes something peculiar happens to them when they find themselves in an unusual environment. They become busy-bodies, and maybe it is uncertainty that fires the need to leave a strong impression whilst claiming superiority in experience, knowledge and education.

What about Bonaireans? Under the Watanapa tree they can be very talkative. Outspoken views are bestowed on various subjects whether they are news, small talk or gossip.

They can be quite frank in criticizing each other and do not hold back when expressing their views. But I have noticed that awkward silences can form when a stranger joins them underneath the tree. Just like in the days of old when the clergyman entered the house where we lived.

So is it true that the alleged differences



between the cultures of Bonaire and The Netherlands stand in the way of harmonious cooperation and collaboration? I don't think so! That would be too easy an excuse.

Those who work hard at gaining the other's trust can make things happen. That starts with developing respect for what the other side values. Take the culture and the traumas that have defined the individuals seriously. Even if that means carrying your empathy all the way back to the days of slavery. And reversely do not blame the Dutch of today for their slave trading ancestors. Those good-willing painstakingly punctual Dutchmen cannot help it. And those that come here do so with good intentions.

From here the wisdom of the garden variety of proverbs, along with a fair dose of trial and error is probably the most useful tool of management.

Those who have a talkative predisposition are well advised to train themselves in remaining quiet. That seems logical. They should be patient and wait for the other to open up. And upon the silence becoming unbearable the talker should resort to asking questions until the other starts talking. These questions might be greatly appreciated and seen as a sign of respect. And much preferred to a lengthy sermon explaining how all could be so much better. Be patient and you may gain a new friend.

To which may be added that trying harder to listen to what is actually being said also helps. And when you do say something, try to be clear. That can be quite helpful too.

To which I would like to add an anecdote: When we settled down on Bonaire 14 years ago we invited our Bonairean neighbors to a "house warming party" in order to become acquainted. One of my new neighbors answered my invitation with a "no problem." I went home and found myself confused and unable to inform my wife whether the invitees would come or not. I did not know. Had I not paid sufficient attention or was the neighbour a bit vague with his "no problem?" Was it a typical local phrase?

So I decided to redo the invitation the next day. Yes, of course they would come, they had been quite clear, hadn't they?

We acquainted ourselves and had quite a few chilled Polar beers

Not a problem at all. Godspeed! ■  
Guus Gerritsen



## Bonairean Humor

From the Papiamentu language newspaper *èxtra*,

A drunk guy arrives at the Island Council. He knocks on the door and talks to the guard. "I want to become the governor of Bonaire, Saba and St. Eustasius, what are the requirements?" The guard says: Are you crazy, on drugs, drunk, an idiot or are you stupid? The drunk guys says: Nooooo, with so many requirements I'll just let it go.

My father is so stingy that one time I was kidnapped and the kidnapers sent him my finger and asked for ransom. My father told them that he needed more proof.

One friend tells the other: My wife has a lot of luck. She goes out and walks around town and always finds things. One time she found a gold ring, another day she found a brand new pair of shoes, and one time she even found a new leather jacket and a whole lot more things. I have such bad luck that last night I found a pair of jockey shorts in my bed and they didn't even fit me.

A terrorist hijacked a 747 full of lawyers. He threatened the world leaders that if they didn't comply with his demands and bring him 100 million dollars he was going to let all the lawyers go one by one!

Manolo, lend me your shampoo."  
"But you have your own, no?"

"Yes, but mine says it's for dry hair and right now my hair is wet."

"Doctor, every time I drink coffee with milk my eye hurts. What can be the problem?"

"Well, you can start by taking the spoon out of the cup."

Buchi was walking in the cemetery and came upon a grave that said: "Here lies Papachi, a marvelous father, an exemplary citizen."

Buchi said: How come they buried three people in the same grave?

Two friends were sitting on the beach and one asked the other: Do you know the difference between horrible and terrible? Horrible is when you are sitting with your wife on the beach and a wave comes and takes her away. Terrible is when the wave brings her back.

During his vacation in New York, Manolo bought a television for his family. The salesperson asked him, "That's great, but don't you have televisions in your country?" Manolo said: "Of course we do, but I like the television programs they have here much better." ■

Translated by Jane Madden Disko



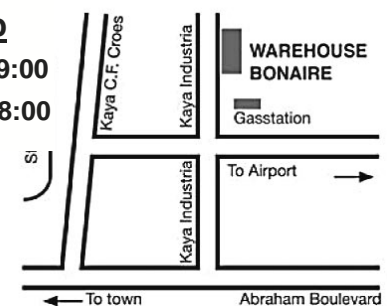
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## Picture Yourself With The Reporter In Charlotte, N.C., USA

Juan-Carlos Obregon and Fittipaldi Pietersz remembered to take a copy of *The Bonaire Reporter* with them when they visited the Zmax dragway in Charlotte, N.C. earlier this year



### For Picture Yourself in the Bonaire Reporter

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**WIN GREAT PRIZES!** Take a copy of *The Bonaire Reporter* with you on your next trip or when you return to your home.

Then take a photo of yourself with the newspaper in hand. **THE BEST PHOTOS OF THE YEAR WILL WIN THE PRIZES.** Mail photos to *Bonaire Reporter*, Box 407, Bonaire, Dutch Caribbean. E-mail to: [info@bonairereporter.com](mailto:info@bonairereporter.com)

## Picture Yourself With The Reporter In Amsterdam, The Netherlands

This picture of a windmill was taken in Amsterdam. Henk and Suze live in Amsterdam and come every year to Bonaire to visit their daughter and husband who moved to Bonaire 31/2 years ago. They are 79 and 77 years old and hope to come many times more. Their daughter is confined to a wheelchair and they find it very special that she lives in Bonaire. Bonaire has now taken their hearts.



To help catch up with the backlog of Picture Yourself entries we are publishing two submissions per edition



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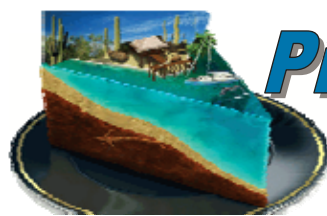
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## Piece of Paradise

Answers to your Bonaire real estate related questions. Please email your questions to [reporter@bonairenews.com](mailto:reporter@bonairenews.com)

### THE REAL ESTATE MARKET IN 2012: REFLECTION TIME

Once a year, when slowly but steadily the focus of most of us changes from work to loved ones, festivities, presents, dinner planning, and just sharing a wonderful time together, in our real estate office we take the time to reflect on how the real estate market on Bonaire has been for the past year. Easy, you will say, no need to reflect; you will have almost not sold anything, and what you have sold will have been sold for prices extremely below the asking price. Well, I would counter, if it were that easy, everyone could put a 'realtor' sign on their door, and despite what you think, based on the sales results this year, there are number of interesting facts that I would like to share with you.

2008 was the last year of the real estate boom, like in most other places in the world. It is safe to say that the difference in sales between 2008 and 2009 was a decline in sales somewhere between 50 to 60%. However, since that time for the next three years, the amount of sales have stayed remarkably stable, and if we are cautiously looking ahead to sales already in the pipeline for 2013, it could very well be that sales are increasing slowly, but steadily.

All well, you might say, so you are still selling, but the value of the real estate sold is probably a lot less! And again, there is apparently more to being a realtor than what meets the eye, since the numbers show that the total amount involved in real estate transactions is actually somewhat increasing. Now, what does that mean for the value of individual properties?

Overall, when you listen in on the conversations during happy hours, the general impression is that real estate prices are decreasing. This is not necessarily the case. We see that real estate that is correctly priced, which means close to the market value that your realtor will be able to tell you, actually sells and sells within a reasonable margin from the asking price. It is interesting to see that properties that are currently introduced on the market sell quite rapidly when their pricing is right.

There is a large group of potential buyers looking to purchase, however, many need to finance part of the purchase price. When you purchase a property on Bonaire and you need financing, you will need to get that at a local bank. Our local banks have rather strict guidelines, and when a property is sold at or close around market value, the buyer has a much higher chance of actually final-



izing the financing for the purchase. So in order to sell your property these days it is very wise to not try to get a lot more out of it than the market value.

Market conditions in the different price brackets is another interesting situation to consider at this time of year, while enjoying a beautiful glass of wine under the Christmas tree. Contrary to last year, the number of sales in the US\$400,000 – US\$1,000,000 bracket has significantly increased. The bracket up to US\$200,000 has more or less remained the same, while the US\$200,000 – US\$400,000 has decreased. The bracket above the US\$1 million mark seems very stable at the moment. This information of course is based on actual sales prices, not asking prices.

So, after considering all this, we then also always sit down to discuss what we can tell potential buyers as well as sellers of real estate on our beautiful island. Based on the above information we are very confident that our real estate market has become more realistic price wise. In addition we believe that the trends in the market show that there is still a high interest in real estate on our island, because our inventory is diverse enough and in general our island has plenty of attractive aspects to offer. In short, an investment in real estate on Bonaire is still sound.

I hope you will be able to use this information to consider your next step in real estate on Bonaire in 2013. We would like to wish you a prosperous and healthy 2013. ■

Corine van der Hout © Sunbelt Realty

### Sudoku Puzzle

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

### Sudoku Solution

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



# Sad Comparison Between French Polynesia and Our Islands



## "Author's Opinion"



**J**ust returning from Aruba after a trip taking two days, I asked myself why the current traveling between the islands of our archipelago is often a big nightmare while in French Polynesia, a much larger group of islands in the Pacific, the air connection is nearly perfect. Unlike here, there is only one air company, Air Tahiti, flying daily to 38 (!) islands of three island groups, forming French Polynesia. It is associated with Air Moorea, operating only small aircraft between the very closely located islands of Tahiti and Moorea, A subsidiary, Air Tahiti Nui, is the international carrier. There are practically no delays or flight cancellations.

Once your passport is inspected after arrival at the international airport Tahiti Faa, you do not need to show it when boarding any domestic flight because there is no airport immigration service on any of the islands. All islands have one currency, Pacific French Franc, CPF. No taxes have to be paid for bringing goods from one island to the other.

Compare this idyllic situation with the real mess in our area! A person, traveling between our islands and using the service of the three larger companies, Tiara Air, Insel Air and DAE, is never sure that his flight will not be cancelled or delayed for

long hours. We were confronted with this situation during my very recent trip to Aruba. It started with the cancellation of our Tiara Air morning flight but, fortunately, there was a place for me on a later departing Insel Air flight. However, a really big nightmare was the return trip. The Tiara Air flight which had to leave Aruba at 1900 was cancelled after we had waited until midnight, and after a long wait we eventually got vouchers for a night in the luxury Ocean Suites of the Renaissance Hotel because the usually used, much cheaper hotel, Talk of the Town, is currently out of operation. The same happened with the passengers traveling to Maracaibo on another Tiara flight of that evening. Imagine the costs for accommodating about 30 passengers in a very expensive hotel!

The following day, we got a call from Tiara Air that we had to be at the airport at 1:15 pm. Unfortunately, when we asked for our new boarding passes, we were told that "we were not on the list" (!) After a very long discussion with the Tiara Air manager and his still longer call in his closed office, we got eventually the boarding passes for a flight leaving for Bonaire at 4:45 p.m. However, because there was no plane available, we had to wait the whole afternoon without any information about our possible departure. Finally, only very late in the

evening, we were brought to Curaçao and from there to Bonaire.

We ask what sense it is to open a new Tiara Air office at the Bonaire airport with a big ceremony when the company is not able to adapt its flight schedule when one of its planes is out of operation and when its employees show no respect for the passengers?

It is evident that the situation as described could never happen if there would be, like in French Polynesia, one big company with a large fleet. It is still a mystery for me that the former ALM, having in the past a monopoly position for the air travel between the islands of the former Netherlands Antilles, could end in bankruptcy.

Besides the air connection problems, there are other, annoying difficulties while traveling between our islands. While, as mentioned, there is no immigration control for flights between the islands of French Polynesia, there is a very strict control at the airports of Aruba, Curaçao and Bonaire. There is no difference between the people living on the island and other passengers. It is really ridiculous that in Europe, while you can travel currently by car from Holland to other countries of the European Union without even stopping at the borders, your passport is being meticulously inspected and all data being checked

by computer by the *Marechaussee* (Dutch Military Police) on arrival from the neighboring island of the Kingdom of the Netherlands! Such a control is certainly necessary in case of passengers coming with international flights but absolutely ridiculous for passengers coming from the "sister" island of Curaçao!

There are much more ridiculous matters on the islands of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the Caribbean, for instance that each of our three islands has a different currency – Aruba guilder on Aruba, Netherlands Antilles guilder on Curaçao and US dollar on Bonaire - while the mother country has also a different currency, the Euro. I think that a small country like the Netherlands, with its 16 million inhabitants, has a world record, having four official currencies in its territory!

In my opinion, it has been also a big mistake not to unite the very small islands of Saba and Sint Eustasius with the very close by Sint Maarten on which they fully depend in practically all respects. Putting them together with the far away Bonaire and forming the BES islands has been not justified not only for practical but also for economic and cultural reasons. However, this matter could be dealt with in another article, after hearing the opinion of our readers about it. ■ *Jiri Lausman*

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# Pet of the Week

"Rudolph, the pink-nosed reindeer cat,  
Has a special wish for you,  
All of the Shelter residents  
Hope your Christmas dreams come true!"

On behalf of all the dogs and cats at Bonaire Animal Shelter, gorgeous red Rudolph, the Shelter's very own "reindeer cat," sends all *Reporter* readers and Shelter supporters best wishes for a happy, peaceful Christmas and a joyful holiday season with hopes that all your Christmas dreams and wishes are fulfilled. Rudolph was lucky enough to have one of his Christmas wishes answered. He was adopted last week and will spend his very first Christmas with the loving family who has given him a forever home. But Rudolph has another Christmas wish... that all of his feline roommates and his dog and puppy neighbors will also find their own loving home in the coming new year.

Adopting a companion animal from the Bonaire Shelter is a win-win-win situation. You get a socialized, loving, healthy companion, a Shelter resident gets a caring home, and a "room at the inn" opens at the Shelter to take in another abandoned, unwanted or homeless animal that can look forward to its own forever home. The dedicated Shelter staff take the time to know and understand the personalities of the residents. If you have a particular type of "character" in a cat or dog that you are looking for, just ask one of the staff and they can likely match your "wish list" to one or more of the residents eagerly awaiting a caring family.

Please help make Rudolph's Christmas dreams come true. Come visit the cats and dogs at the Bonaire Animal Shelter and you'll probably find a loving companion animal to welcome into your heart and home. The Shelter on the Lagoon Road is open Monday through Saturday, 9am-1pm and 3-5pm.

**NEW YEAR NOTE:** Fireworks are not only dangerous for humans, they are dangerous and sometimes deadly for animals as well. The biggest danger is fear. Dogs and cats can be profoundly frightened by the enormous fireworks activity on Bonaire and will often run from their homes in panic. Unfortunately, bad things can happen when they are on the street. Do everything you can to contain your animals and make them feel safe on New Year's eve. The best advice is to keep them indoors with you and use **Rescue Remedy**. (See the related story, "Pet Project," on page 9). Do not leave them alone outside on a chain or rope.



Rudolph the Reindeer cat

If your animal does run off as a result of the fireworks activity, please contact the Shelter (717-4989) to see if he/she is there. Many Good Samaritans find lost and wandering pets and bring them to the Shelter. ■

Jane Madden-Disko

## SHELTER NEWS



MOZES & MISTY—Photos by Suzi Swygert

Shelter Manager Marlies writes:

"The dog with the broken leg is called **Mozes** and the little one is called **Misty**. They are from Nikiboko. A worried neighbor called the Shelter. The neighbor had given the dogs food and water because the owner stopped feeding them. Animal Welfare picked up the dogs. Mozes was on a chain, and Misty was found in the garden. They were both dehydrated and very, very skinny. Mozes had his leg broken a month ago and the owner just left it like that.

It is a sad story but for us it's everyday work. More and more people leave their dogs behind, abuse and mistreat them. We want it to stop so that's why we want to save these two dogs. Normally it is not possible to find owners for dogs like Mozes because nobody wants a handicapped dog. But because Christmas is coming and because it is necessary to make people aware of the fact that animal abuse has to stop, we have to bring this to the public's attention. We are trying to raise funds to pay for the treatment of those two dogs and we hope we can find new owners for Misty and Mozes."

To donate, you may transfer funds to the Bonaire Animal Shelter MCB Account #10337800 (Mozes & Misty). ■



"Smile for Santa."

Last weekend's Shelter Christmas Market was lots of fun for everyone. There were abundant bargains, great snacks and ice cold beers for only \$1. The highlight of course was when **Santa arrived and posed with some lucky pets** whose owners gave a donation to the Shelter for the privilege. New Board member **Annemarie Rozendal** (above) was the photographer. You may see all the photos

on the Shelter's Facebook page.

Please help the Bonaire Animal Shelter by **donating your old license plates**. We sell them at the Cruise Market and with the funds raised we help the dogs and cats of Bonaire. So please clean out your garage. We know you must have some old license plates somewhere..... ■ *Laura DeSalvo*



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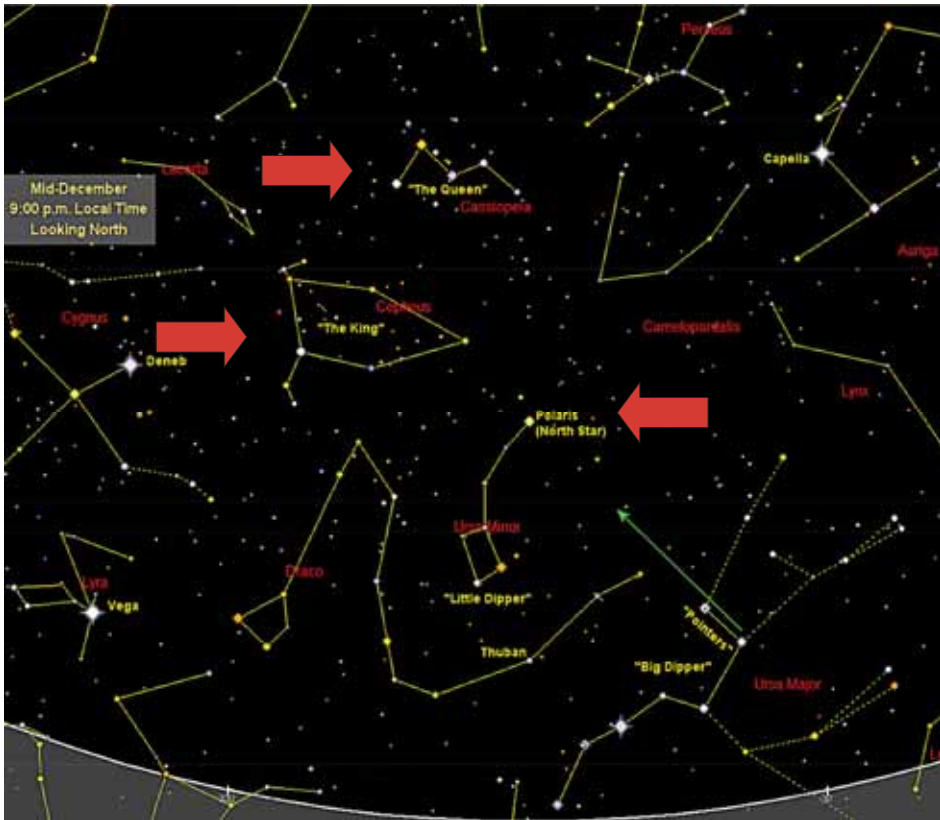




# BONAIRE SKY PARK\*

\*to find it... just look up

## KING AND QUEEN GO ROUND AND ROUND.



On these December nights, look to the north in the Sky Park to see the celestial King and Queen, and watch them circle the North Star.

**King Cepheus and Queen Cassiopeia** reign over the northern sky. They are visible every night of the year. Of the two royal persons, Cassiopeia is by far the brighter and easier to spot. She has a distinctive W shape or—at this time of year—an M shape, and once recognized will always be easy to identify. The stars of Cepheus are fainter, but from a reasonably dark location, you will be able to see the lopsided "house" shape of the King.

Because of their location near Polaris, **the North Star**, Cepheus and Cassiopeia are circumpolar. That means that for observers in the mid-northern latitudes (such as the continental US), these constellations never set. They sweep around Polaris night after night, always visible in the northern sky. For an animated illustration of how the constellations and their

stars appear to move during the course of a night, see:

<http://www.astronomyboy.com/circumpolar/>

Polaris has not always been the North Star. At any given time in history, the North Star is simply whichever bright star happens to be closest to the **North Celestial Pole**, which is the point in the sky directly above the Earth's North Pole. However, like a spinning toy top, the Earth wobbles on its axis, and over many centuries, the axis of our planet slowly changes its orientation with respect to the stars. In a period of 25,700 years, the North Celestial Pole traces a huge circular path through the sky. Starting in 3942 BC and lasting for more than 2,100 years, the bright star closest to the North Celestial Pole was **Thuban**, in the constellation Draco, the Dragon. Thuban was thus the North Star for more than two millennia. And about 18,000 years from now, Thuban will become our North Star once again. ■ *Lyn Baker/Astronomy Today*



# THE STARS HAVE IT

By Astrologer Michael Thiessen  
2<sup>nd</sup> Half- December 2012

**ARIES** (Mar. 21- April 20) Your fickle nature may cause jealousy. Your partner could make you angry if they steal your thunder or embarrass you in front of others. Make sure that you take time to remember those you love. You can dazzle members of the opposite sex with your quick wit and aggressive charm. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Monday.

**TAURUS** (Apr. 21- May 21) You may have difficulties with family members if you get involved in petty arguments. You can make major accomplishments while on short trips. Real estate should be lucrative for you. Don't upset elders in your family who don't understand your present situation. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

**GEMINI** (May 22-June 21) Put your energy into moneymaking ventures. Don't trust coworkers with important or personal information. Lighten up your serious attitude. Do your own thing and everything will settle down. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

**CANCER** (June 22-July 22) Social activities will be satisfying. You may have problems with skin, bones, or teeth if you haven't been taking proper care of yourself. You can make amends by taking them somewhere special. Female members of your family may be difficult to deal with. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

**LEO** (July 23-Aug 22) Coworkers may not be on your side. You may be tempted to spend too much on entertainment or luxury items. Think about taking the time to complete unfinished domestic chores. Use discrimination and play hard to get. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23 -Sept. 23) You are best to ask questions if you aren't certain about issues that are confronting you. Deceit around you is evident. Don't hesitate to take short trips. You can expect changes at your work place. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 24 -Oct. 23) You have a lot to offer. Look into real estate. Don't let your work and your personal life interfere with each other. You will be highly entertaining when in contact with your lover. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Thursday.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22) Disharmony in your relationship may cause minor ailments. It would be in your best interest to stay away from any intimate involvement with a client or coworker. You are best to be accommodating for the time being. Sudden romantic infatuations won't be lasting. If you can, try to work out of your home this month. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Monday.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 23 -Dec. 21) Having your own business is a good idea. You don't want to give anyone fuel for the fire. You can make a difference if you take a position of leadership. Let go of the past in order to progress. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec 22.- Jan. 20) Travel will be favorable and bring you the greatest rewards. Your creative talent may well be recognized by others this month. Be careful not to reveal private information. Travel and educational pursuits may help alleviate the stress you have been feeling. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 21 -Feb. 19) Take time to reevaluate your motives regarding friendships. Avoid friends or acquaintances who drink too much. Coworkers may not be completely honest with you; try not to rely on help from others. Don't give your heart too readily. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

**PISCES** (Feb. 20-Mar. 20) Losses are likely if you get involved with uncertain individuals. Things are looking up. You may be somewhat emotional concerning a rather private matter. Delve into worthwhile causes that will show results if you put in the effort. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Monday. ■

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*Sunbelt Realty wishes you happy holidays*

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