

Happy
New Year

Bonaire Reporter- Jan. 4-18, 2016 Year 23, Issue 1

It's Still
FREE

BONAIRE The REPORTER

BES Island News Too

P. O. Box 407, Bonaire, Dutch Caribbean, Phone 786-6518, 786-6125, www.bonairereporter.com email: reporter@bonairenews.com Since 1994



Maskarada

Page 8

G.D. photo

Flotsam and Jetsam

BOINAIRE The REPORTER



Fireworks on Bonaire were spectacular this year. How spectacular? Think of the Grand Finale of a normal fireworks show... then extend it for 45 minutes. Based on that 2016 should be a great year.

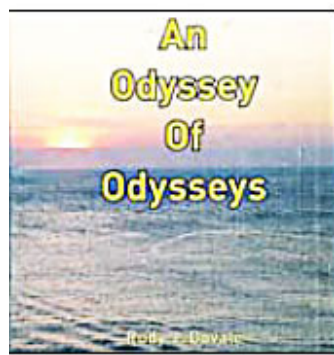
► **Dutch Minister of Home Affairs and Kingdom Relations, Ronald Plasterk, will await the Bonaire Government's course of action** following the recent Referendum. Plasterk stated in a brief reaction on Saturday that he had taken note of the Referendum results. "It is now first up to the Island Council and the Executive Council to determine which direction they want to go," he said.

About 60% of Bonaire's eligible voters turned out to vote. Of those voting more than 65% indicated that they were dissatisfied with the direct ties with the Netherlands in the Referendum.

Bonaire's current government advised voting "no." The "Watermelon Coalition" Government thinks the Referendum result has provided sufficient weight to restart negotiations with The Hague to give a different content to the ties with the Netherlands.

► **THE HAGUE—Family doctors in Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba will start an extensive four-year training program next year in order to qualify with Dutch/European requirements.** Dutch Minister of Public Health, Wellbeing and Sports, Edith Schippers, announced this in a letter that contained an update on health care in the Caribbean Netherlands. According to the Minister, the primary care has insufficiently developed in the process to improve the overall health care system on the three islands since these became Dutch public entities in October 2010. The training program will improve the primary care on the

islands. This will ultimately reduce the cost of secondary care and the number of medical referrals, mostly to a hospital abroad.



A law went into effect on January 1, 2015, which dictates that family doctors (general practitioners), dentists, obstetricians/ midwives and pharmacists have to comply with Dutch/European training requirements by 2020.

The expenses, which amount to 300,000 euros per year, will be funded by the Dutch Ministry of Public Health, Wellbeing and Sports- VWS. Training programs for dentists and obstetricians/midwives may follow.

► **Well-known Curacao personality Rudy Dovale (94) has published his memoirs under the title, An Odyssey of Odysseys.** The first son of Charles Isaac Dovale of Langesraat, Otrobanda and Josefita Cannela Palm of Penstraat, Pietennaai, was born in Brooklyn, New York, where he went to school. He served in the US military as well. Since his return to the island of Curacao he has been involved in many different noteworthy activities that helped make up the story of his life. Three of his children reside in Bonaire.

► **Next year a government-backed mortgage guarantee program will be introduced for Bonaire.** Commissioner Benito Dirksz reported this after meeting with officials of the Dutch Home Affairs and Kingdom Relations Ministry about improving the local housing market. The goal is to have guarantees in place during the first half of 2016. An exact start date will be set next month. Lower income homeowners will benefit most.

► **Why are the people of Bonaire upset with the services of Curoil when it comes to cooking gas supplies?** Despite promises to improve the delivery of ordered and paid 100 lb gas tanks, in the vast majority of cases it takes more than a month to get one. A quarter of the gas customers use 20 lb tanks and most had to visit Curoil at least three times before a filled tank could be

obtained. Curoil has not kept its promise to have a filling station on Bonaire and it will be some time before a facility can be built.

► The National Ombudsman has upheld the complaint by the *Union di Konsumidó Boneiru* (Unkobon) that **closing the cash registers of the Tax Office on Bonaire was improper.** Unkobon stood up for the interests of the group of persons with low incomes who do not have (easy) access to the Internet and / or a bank account.

The Ombudsman considers that the tax authorities have not sufficiently taken into account the interests of these groups in the decision to abolish the cashier function as a whole. There was no reasonable alternative offered. Closing all cash registers without providing an alternative to paying online was therefore improper.

► **FORT-DE-FRANCE, Martinique--** Martinique has become the latest Caribbean island to report the **Zika virus**, according to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). In the last edition we reported that the Zika virus was in the Caribbean, but not on Bonaire. The virus was not thought to cause serious problems for those who get infected. But last week health authorities in Brazil reported that it might be **harmful to unborn children.** Brazilian health authorities say that they believe it may be the cause of thousands of infants being born with damaged brains.

► **THE HAGUE--When BES islanders complain that they feel Dutch people are swamping their islands they are partially right. More than 3,400** persons moved from the Netherlands to Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba in the past five years. An additional 400 people migrated from other countries, mainly Latin America, the US and Canada. The current population of the BES islands is around 21,000 according to the Central Bureau of Statistics. Bonaire's population is around 17,500.

The BES islands are especially popular among European Dutch persons in the age bracket 20 to 30. There was also a relatively large number of persons in their 40s who've moved to the islands.

► The Bonaire International Airport (BIA), Fundashon **BonAeroClub** and Stichting Falki Aviation Bonaire have made additional arrangements about recreational flying on the island that should assist

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Green Label Team Bonaire

Happy New Year

(Flotsam and Jetsam Continued from page 2)

in the development of General Aviation on Bonaire.

► The Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment has just released the figures for minimum wage and pension benefits for the BES Islands in 2016. **For Bonaire the minimum wage for workers over 21 years old is \$4.70/hour.** (The US Federal Minimum Wage is \$7.50 an hour but in some states it approaches \$15). **The top Bonaire monthly pension is \$586, no change from last year.** For an occupationally disabled worker the payment is **\$156 every two weeks.** In Saba and Statia the rates are 3.5% and 5.6% higher respectively.



► **TRINIDAD - Youth Under-14 Barracudas Aquatics Water Polo Club went to Trinidad for their first water polo tournament the weekend of December 20-21. The Barracudas finished in fourth place out of six other teams** including several teams from Trinidad and a team from Barbados. The Barracudas are a new team playing together for only six months. The team consists of

boys and girls between 12 and 17 years who train twice a week in the sea. The team consists of the following members, **Hayte Haakma, Brandon Begina, Rowan Beenackers, Nikolai and Knut Pedersen, Aljantha Emerenciana, Yoa and Jamiro Tree, Chaz Sweers, Nehemyah Maingot, Yair Hormechea and Sergio Villamizar.**

► **Bonaire is getting a take-out delivery service.** According to their Facebook page, beginning January 8, Dinner In a Box Bonaire will deliver your choice of dinner to your home. The current list of participating restaurants includes Between 2 Buns, Exito, Julian's, La Cantina, Maiky Snack, Pasa Bon Pizza and Rumba Cafe with more additions coming soon. Fee for delivery starts at \$2.50. Their website and phone number launches January 4 www.dinnerinaboxbonaire.com, 786-3886. Their slogan: "Cravings Made Possible."

► **Dive Friends has grown from a single dive shop to five dive shops and four retail locations under Company Director Jan Kloos and General Manager Pascal de Meyer.** This week they will be stepping down from those posts to be replaced by Peter Muijselaar, who is a co-founder/co-owner, and Carolyn Caporusso, the present Assistant General Manager respectively. Pascal will continue to work with Dive Friends Bonaire on a part time basis. No doubt Dive Friends will continue its Top Ratings under their guidance.



Rescue underway, a shark is clearly visible in the water nearby. CG photo

► **The Dutch Caribbean Coast Guard on Friday evening received word that the Venezuelan fruit boat Doña Mathilda, a frequent sight on Bonaire's waterfront, was swamped by a wave and sank while motoring from Bonaire to Aruba, reportedly with a cargo of liquor.**

The mobile drilling platform, *Pacific Meltem*, located some five miles southwest of Aruba, reported that it had taken on a shipwrecked person, while three others were hanging on to its anchor chain and a fourth was on a buoy behind the vessel. The latter was hoisted out of the sea by the already airborne Coast Guard helicopter that was directed to the area. He was then urgently flown to Aruba as he had been badly bitten by a shark, but died upon arrival. Meanwhile, the Coast Guard cutter, *Pantera*, also arrived on the scene and rescued the other three victims still in the water, all tired and with minor bodily injuries. The one on the drillship was picked up later. Apparently, there had been seven people, all Venezuelan, on the boat that sank after being hit from the back by a huge wave. It happened so quickly, that two crewmen apparently never managed to get out and went down with the vessel. ■ G.D./L.D. / Bula Bonchi



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On The Island Since... 2006 – Scott Earl Hardy



“I was born in Toronto, Canada, and grew up in downtown Toronto where I still have an apartment. The first concert I ever went to was Bob Dylan and the Band in 1974.

When I was about 22 I played in a big surf punk band called ‘Fleshtones,’ playing punk, rock, and rockabilly- very fast, all original. I was just the bass player and one of the songwriters. We did well. I guess we got lucky as we got management and a record contract. We didn’t make a lot of money but we travelled. Five guys in a van, a motel room every second night...aaahhh! I guess in the 1980s we were lucky. The whole movement was the punk, the new wave scene – fast Rock & Roll. The scene was very good, an independent scene for new music. We played bars and small colleges that were receptive to the new music and they paid well and they fed you, which is good when you live on \$8 a day! It was fun; I knew lots of people, lots of girls and I got to see the country. We played from Vancouver in the west to Halifax in the east. Canada is a very large country, lots of miles.

In 1992 the band was ending. I kind of walked away from it for a while – I was fed up – but I always kept on playing my acoustic guitar and I was still writing lyrics – words. I have a fascination for Bob Dylan. I kept on hoping to do it again and do it myself – not just be a bass player.

At 17 I’d started working for the Canadian Post as a mailman and I did that for 30 years. It’s a good job when you’re in a band because you finish early, then you can sleep all day and play all night. When the band went on the road I would take time off. I didn’t get rich with it, but it was a steady paycheck and I could eat and play guitars, and while I was walking and delivering mail I would hear lyrics and songs in my head and take notes all the time, hoping that one day...

In my early 30s my girlfriend at the time got involved in diving and wanted me to join her. I didn’t know a thing about diving; I liked the water and to swim but I’d never thought of going under. On a vacation we met a dive crew in the Turks and Caicos and I

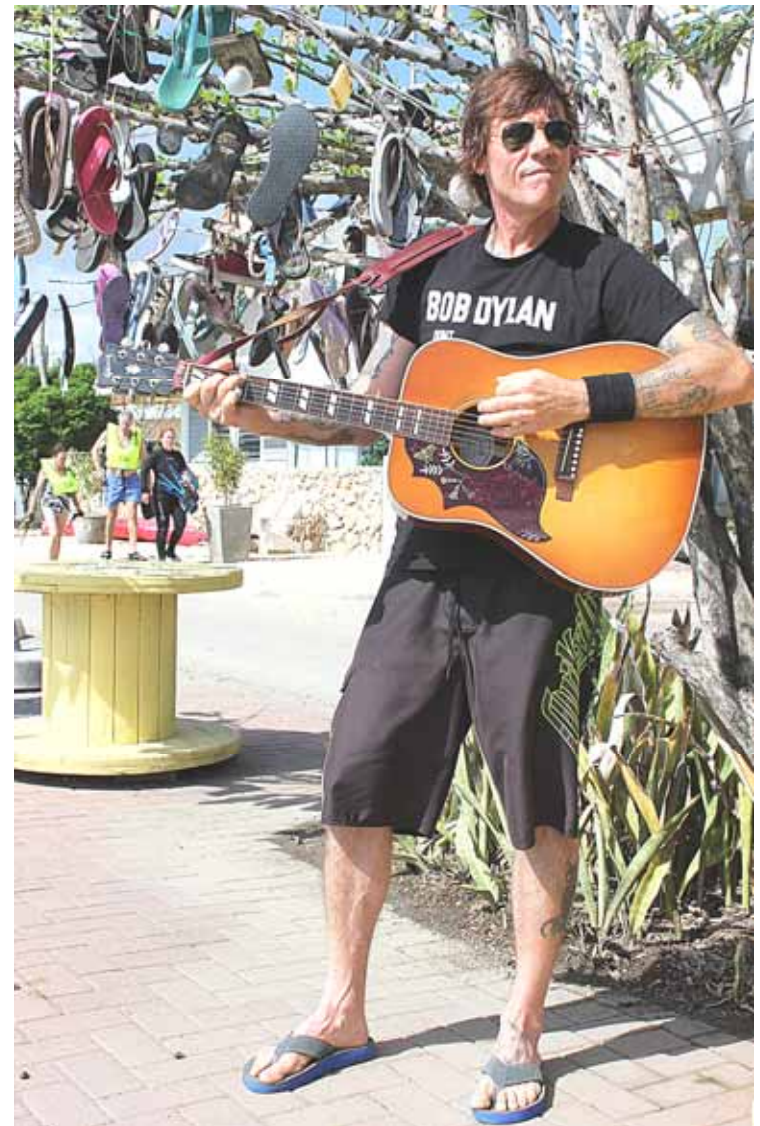
guess when you see people making a living in the sunshine you are like ‘...How do you do this?’ The answer is to become a dive instructor! My girlfriend kind of pushed me and then I became obsessive like I was with my music. I went through open water rescue, dive master and then instructor in Toronto. We used to go shipwreck diving in the St. Lawrence Seaway in Ontario - all wrecks, fresh water and cold.

Before I was working as a dive instructor we would go to Aruba every two months – it was cheap then – and we used to dive with Pelican Divers. They told us, ‘You guys should come here and work, but you have to be an instructor.’ I waited and dreamed and became a dive master and an instructor. Then we were hired and moved to Aruba, carrying two

plane I’d come with. My girlfriend followed with the cats and my guitar and then we were on the lookout for work.

This leads me to Bonaire. The dive manager in Aruba was Augusto Montbrun, who had come to Bonaire to work at Buddy Dive. Through friends he contacted me and asked me to come to Bonaire. Again I came with my girlfriend, two cats and my guitar. Compared to Aruba, which is very American, I found Bonaire very Dutch. I worked for eight and a half years at Buddy Dive- a lot of fun, a great crew. I have very fond memories of that time, especially of the camaraderie.

Next to the diving I always played and wrote music. I hooked up with Douwe, one of the owners of Mona Lisa Restaurant, who plays lead guitar and with Dr. Dick van der Vaart, drums and Steve Thuell, singer and I played bass with ‘The Stingrays.’ They had started way before me and I just joined. But, I always wanted to play original music and I guess they didn’t want to play my music. The last two years I was working at Buddy Dive I got more serious. I was going home to Toronto two, three times a year and the more I was going, the more I wanted to put a band together and do all my stuff and



Scott and guitar on the waterfront

“I found out very soon that we are the only continent that speaks one language – all the other people we met spoke at least three. So, that makes you realize you’re not that big... ”

black kitty cats and my acoustic guitar. No snow, just sun – a big change.

It was an eye opener. Working with people from all different kinds of cultures I found out very soon that we are the only continent that speaks one language. All the other people we met spoke at least three. So, that makes you realize you’re not that big...

After a year and a half my mom got very sick. I flew to Toronto to see her and she’d been waiting for me. Shortly after, she passed. In the meantime Pelican Divers was sold to Unique Sports on Aruba and somehow they were pretty slow with the paperwork and I became illegal, but I didn’t know it. So when I flew back to Aruba I was detained at the airport and put in a room without any handles inside and they charged me with immigration violation – a five-year ban from Aruba – so that was the end of that job. I flew back to Toronto on the same

make me the lead singer – do my songs, my project. I couldn’t do that here, and as Steve Miller says, ‘Never play in a band that doesn’t have your name on it!’ So, nothing against Bonaire, but I had to go to North America to take a chance.

It was very scary because all of a sudden I had to do it for real – all my songs, my writing. And every time I went to Toronto, I went to put the pieces together. The guys I am playing with – I was very lucky to get them – producer/guitar player John Dinsmore, who owns the recording studio Lincoln County Social in Toronto - he liked my songs and he wanted to produce and play them and his friend, our drummer, Mark Cesper, joined us and the three of us are ‘S Earl Hardy and Guns for Hire.’ Our first CD, ‘More songs about Girls and Drugs,’ had a very catchy title but we meant it ironically. Our new CD, released in October,

is called ‘More Inane Observations,’ which basically means more nonsense, more songs about nothing. Both CDs are available for free download at www.bandcamp.com under S Earl Hardy. Right now we’re not selling; we’re giving it away for promotion. Now we have to get radio airplay in North America. We’re concentrating on recording and playing them on the radio and we’re getting there. Basically nothing gets done until I write it. This time I control everything. I own my publishing which is the songs – never give them away! My music is very dark, punk garage blues, very guitar oriented, but I would say basic Rock & Roll. Rock & Roll to me is the Rolling Stones and Chuck Berry. Maybe I’m dating myself, but they are still doing it!

I spend a lot of time in Austin, Texas, the music capital of the Southwest, a great little town where I write and do some play-

ing and where I’m hustling the CDs – networking.

Now I am on Bonaire for three months and I’ll leave the end of February with eight new songs. I’m just sitting around, playing guitar and writing. As an original artist what you face is that people have no comparison to it, so in many cases they don’t know if they like it until someone tells them. You’re fighting an uphill battle with original music and it can be daunting. I’m selling my music – I am selling me and it may not be everybody’s taste but it doesn’t suck and it is original!

I’ve lived here for so long and I still have my friends here, but going back and forth has turned me in an observer. I’m not so much involved anymore. I would like to spend more time here because I miss the closeness of the friends here because in North America you keep everything at arm’s length. A city attitude is very impersonal and you can’t compare it to the small-town charm of Bonaire. I’m still a resident and I don’t want to give that up because it still feels like coming home - and I don’t get that anywhere else..” ■

Story &

photos by Greta Kooistra





TOURISTS' REVENGE

Dear Editor:

Hello, I am writing to you looking for help. We came to the island for our Christmas break and rented a house in Santa Barbara. Sunday night we left to go to church and when coming back we notice many lights were on inside the house. As we entered the house we realized it had been burglarized. They entered and stole laptops, mobile phones, tablets, cameras, money, sunglasses, DS game console, even Christmas presents with no resale value.

The police were called, and they told us honestly that they are never able to catch the thieves or recover the stolen articles.

We are three families who live in different countries, and as you may imagine, we will tell our story to everyone

and publish it through social media, trip advisor, and we know this will somehow hurt the island's tourism.

I don't know how your newspaper can help, but right know we are all feeling so frustrated, I just need this to be known

Adriana V Gonzalez



GETTING THE WORD ON RECYCLING

Dear Editor:

I didn't know who to contact about this so I'm sending you a note. I am a repeat visitor to Bonaire and only saw on my way to the airport that there is now a recycling facility near the Warehouse supermarket.

The fact that this now exists should be better publicized on Bonaire. A lot of visitors (myself included) would utilize the recycling facility instead of assuming nothing beyond glass is recyclable.

Pete Ollendorf

Picture Yourself With The Reporter Diamond Head Crater, Honolulu, Hawaii

While going through some old photos, frequent Bonaire visitors, 40 trips and counting, and regular *Bonaire Reporter* contributors, 13 appearances in the Picture Yourself feature, Joan and Alan Zale found a photo of themselves on the top of Diamond Head State Monument in Honolulu, Hawaii that they had never submitted. Diamond Head Crater is believed to have been formed about 150,000 years ago by a single volcanic eruption. In the early 1900s it served as a military observation post with its panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean and Waikiki, which can be seen behind Joan and Alan. Today it is a popular tourist attraction and hiking trail where you climb 560 feet from the crater floor to the top of the rim, covering a little less than a mile. Naturally, when Joan and Alan made it to the top, they had their favorite traveling companion with them, *The Bonaire Reporter*. Joan and Alan own a condo at Sand Dollar and have been coming to Bonaire for more than 20 years. ■



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Reflections on Dushi Bonaire

A HOSPI-TALE

Health is not valued until sickness comes.
— Thomas Fuller

And when sickness does come, folks on Bonaire have quickly come to appreciate the island's rapidly expanding and improving medical system. Both my husband and I – at separate times – have been confronted by health challenges of late, giving us first-hand experience with what these new and renewed facilities now have to offer.

First up was Bob. He came down with a severe case of Ciguatera, occasioned by the consumption of a toxic fillet of reef fish. Arriving home one day in late June, I found my hubby seriously gasping for breath while merely attempting to climb the stairs to our bedroom. He looked ghostly pale and yellowish around the gills. His lack of oxygen wasn't caused by unhealthy habits, such as smoking or no regular exercise (although he does enjoy a robust vino now and again with yours truly). Blood tests, performed by BonLab's effective and affable phlebotomists made it official. He was suffering acute anemia following an internal bleed from the toxic fish encounter.

On stem orders from our primary care physicians at Centro Medico, I delivered the hub safe and sound, and on time, at the Emergency Room. Thanks to my hair-raising driving abilities, I conquered some of Bonaire's man-sized potholes, approaching warp speed, en route to San Francisco Hospital, located in "downtown" Playa (Kralendijk), currently housing in-patient rooms with some 60 beds, and with still more rooms and facilities now under construction. Part of the umbrella organization Fundashon Mariadal (FM), the hospital holds the ER, an outpatient clinic, a special care unit, a pharmacy and a recompression chamber for injured divers. It's also home to the island's geriatric care facility. Doctors have been trained in the Netherlands, the US, South America, or on other Caribbean islands and most rotate every three months. Hospital staff members speak at least two languages, including but not limited to Papiamentu, Spanish, Dutch, and/or English. When communicating with the nurses, the language spoken among us was an admixture of Duglish (Dutch and English) and/or Papianish (Papiamentu and Spanish), sometimes all in one sentence. Conversations with any hospital worker were entertaining

for all involved. But as Bob's barber informed him when he first came to the island years ago, "Here we don't really speak very



Bob aboard the Air Ambulance

good Dutch, worse English, poor Spanish, and not even decent Papiamentu. But we communicate very well." And so it proved to be once again.

In the special care unit of the hospital, multi-lingual nurses immediately hooked up Bob to receive blood transfusions, ordered by our Dutch internist. The poor internist didn't know at first how to address me, so Bob helped him out a bit, said I was his "granddaughter" – which he believed. We all laughed, including aids and nurses surrounding my ailing grandpa, I mean husband. It felt wonderful to be embraced by such good-humored people. Their warmth and caring efficiency certainly contributed to my husband's rather speedy recovery and to my reassurance that he was in good hands.

Visiting hours for family are flexible; I was allowed to stay after hours in my hub's chamber and even took a nap on the neighboring and comfortable bed. I was almost misidentified as a patient. Too bad my real identity was discovered, since breakfast, lunch, and dinner were timely served and looked better than the grub I usually serve up at home. Once he asked for a local delicacy, *kabritu* (goat stew) and that's what he got. Unfortunately, the dish wasn't accompanied by a glass of red for his loyal wife. During the long night at the spe-

cial care unit, hubby was prodded and poked for vital signs. Sleep was not much of an option in order to keep *mi anore* from eter-



The author ready for surgery

the minute (nothing could stop it!), the thought of a malignant tumor was overtaking my mind. And so it happened that the receptionist caught me sprinting into the bamboozled surgeon's chambers a few minutes later. I received my diagnosis, not malignant, and a surgery date – next week. The receptionist, however, seized me by the collar and berated me, with a slight smile, for such blatant behavior. She was right. But then again, cancer scares me silly.

It took the blessed surgeon almost an hour to remove that "thing," but it left me, again, full of admiration for this medical outfit. It is so well organized and coordinated, internally as well as with regard to their patients. The staff is extremely capable, communicative, compassionate, competent and convivial – the five big Cs (and no Cancer for me!)

Also, these medical adventures for both Bob and me, including surgery, procedures, meds, checkups, retests, etc. didn't cost us a thing, beyond the variety of tax levies we routinely turn over to the *Belastingdienst* (Tax Office).

The Dalai Lama, when asked what surprised him most about humanity, answered "Man. Because he sacrifices his health in order to make money. Then he sacrifices money to recuperate his health." Except on Bonaire, where we enjoy a government-insured, single-payer hospital and medical care system. ■

Story & photos by Karen Bastiaansen-Gilmour



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Maskarada

Maskarada is one of the most cultural, authentic, original and fascinating traditions on Bonaire.

Every New Year the group of silent, mysterious, masked people starts at either at the *Bestuurcollege* (government house) or the governor's home to dance, to tease the onlookers and perform little skits—the same every year. This year they were at the *Bestuurcollege*. Later the group moves on to other sites like the hospital, the old folks home and then to the homes of people in the barrios. It is said that good luck will come to those who invite them into their homes. They make another appearance after Three Kings Day (Epiphany, January 6, 2016).

They arrive silently, following a group of musicians— an accordion, a *tambu* (drum), a *raspa* (file) and a *quarto* (large ukulele), and the skits and dancing begin.

Maskarada has been going on in living memory of even the oldest person on Bonaire, it is said, except for when it might have been rained out, and then on New Years 2012 when the group, the costumes and props all became worn out and didn't appear. Maskarada is important because on Bonaire is the only island of the Dutch Caribbean where this unique custom exists in this form.

But last year and this, thanks to the energy of the North Salina volunteers organization, Maskarada is back. All has



The naughty buriku and his rider



Shon Bubu and the band that leads the Maskarada

been rejuvenated—the actors, the glistening costumes and the sparkling props, the enthusiastic musicians. Everyone smiled

as the cast performed their skits — hooking the shark which goes into death throes, the matador facing the bull, and of course the dancing with the audience.

Congratulations to the

Nawati/North Salinja group for keeping

Story by Laura DeSalvo , photos G.D.



The Kings in their colorful costumes



Acting governor Evelina Betancourt Anthony gets a hug from a "king."



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Salute to the Sailors

CELEBRATION OF PLAYA PABOU
MARITIME HERITAGE

Fundashon Patrimonio Marítimo Boneiru (Bonaire Maritime Heritage Foundation) is celebrating the rich nautical heritage of Playa Pabou in a Salute to the Sailors, Saturday January 15th at approximately 7pm as part of the Bonaire Fishing Tournament ceremonies held at It Rains Fishes restaurant.

The foundation is currently restoring the last of the sailing cargo boat, *Stormvogel*, which was built on Playa Pabou 65 years ago.

Join the festivities and show your support for the sailors of Playa Pabou and Project *Stormvogel*. You can also purchase *Stormvogel* products (T-shirts, stickers, beer koozies) or adopt a rib for \$50. The rib will have your name in gold and be installed as part of the permanent frame. All proceeds go directly toward the old ship's restoration.

Head of the restoration, Johnny Craane will be recognizing the following:

Youth Volunteers. During 2015, over 50 people worked on the restoration of *Stormvogel*. Many of these were young people from Project *Stormvogel*'s Junior Shipwright program, made possible with the financial support of the *Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds Caribisch Gebied*. Four students from SGB school who completed the 10-hour program will be



A young volunteer with Johnny Craane



Uz Everts at work

Adult volunteers. Five people will also be recognized for their countless hours on the project. They are, **Uz Everts, Bruce Davis, Bob Craane, chainsaw guru Jim Madden and Lele Davidsson, owner of Navegant Boatyard**-home of *Stormvogel*'s restoration.



Ismael Soliano. Ismael was skipper of *Stormvogel* during a period of four years in the early 1950s. He is currently restoring his sloop, *Etienne*, one of the last of the classic sailing fishing boats made on Bonaire still sailing.



The Craane Family. Etche Craane was the shipwright who crafted *Stormvogel* under the shade of a tamarind tree that still stands in front of the Club Nautico Apartments on Kaya Playa Lechi. His ancestors will receive a historic photo of the old boat builder. ■ Press release



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P Direkt - A Brilliant New Initiative On Bonaire

Since August 2015 there is a new organization working on Bonaire: P-Direkt. The organization is unknown to most residents of Bonaire. That makes sense because although it's located in Bonaire, it works for civil servants in the Netherlands. It's a special situation and a special project that can inspire entrepreneurs.

WHAT IS P-DIREKT? THE INSIDE STORY

P-Direkt is an automated self-service human resources system where Dutch central government civil servants can control job-related personal affairs themselves using a self-service computer application. For example, holiday applications, file claims, resignations, etc. are all possible in the P-Direkt system. Some claims are more complicated than others and not everyone is comfortable with the system yet. Therefore, there is a help desk that can be called when problems arise.

Until recently, employees could call or email the help desk only during office hours although there was a need to increase the accessibility into the evening hours. This opening outside-of-office-hours operation is, however, expensive and complicated, associated with overtime premiums, benefits and scheduling.

So there was an idea to do this job on Bonaire. The brilliant idea was to use the time difference on Bonaire where it's five or six hours later than the Netherlands. People could work here during the daytime and answer questions from the Netherlands that came up during the evening hours there. The fact that Dutch is not a foreign language on Bonaire creates a unique opportunity to start a call/contact center here.

Ed Smit, head of the contact center in the Netherlands and Deputy Director P-Direkt (part of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations) came up with the idea a few years ago

Independently located P-Direkt offices were already established in The Hague and Zwolle doing the same work and they can take over anything from each other. A center on Bonaire could start with the same principles and with the same amenities. The RCN could help to create the facilities as they already have the



The start-up team: Ed, Sandra, Lucy, Jacintha, Annelies, Jeaneliz.

necessary experience and have already set up their own organization.

What does the project look like now?

The idea was the first step. The next step was putting it into practice. It was well thought out and amply discussed with the people who already had the necessary experience on Bonaire. The project was set up in phases. **The ultimate aim of the project is to ensure that within a period of two years the knowledge and skills needed to work in the call/contact center will be anchored on Bonaire and done by Bonairean employees.**

That means investment in people; first, by guiding them in the workplace. On Bonaire every employee has a buddy from the Netherlands. Second, by providing training of one and a half years for contact center employees at MBO 3 level via the SGB (high school). Bonaire's employees go three days a week to school and work two days in the center.

In the Netherlands, team leaders and staff were selected to go for a period of three or six months to Bonaire. These people are selected not only for their experience, but especially for their patience, being able to explain the system which they use, their adaptability and respect for others.

The **team leader, Sandra Engel**, made sure that everything was ready for the first team of employees, ensuring the recruitment of Bonairean employees. It was successful because 230 people responded, 57 people came for an interview, and 16 were eventually hired.

After a brief introduction about working in another culture, the Dutch employees started mid-August of this year.

By September 1 the Bonairean employees joined.

What do the employees think about the project?

I spoke with **Lucy Bertinus** and **Jeaneliz Goeloe** (employees recruited on Bonaire) and **Jacintha Valpoort** and **Annelies Zijlstra** (temporary employees from the Netherlands who remain a half year).

The staff members are unanimously happy with their work here and how it is set up. Much can be learned from each other and everyone is very motivated. What Jeaneliz and Lucy really like it that everyone helps each other, is approachable, and that there is good communication. Jacintha and Annelies agree that there are so many possible questions about the P-Direkt system that you cannot know everything. "We often know who is good at what topics and we give the incoming request to the person who knows the most about it. This way of working creates an environment where you can easily ask questions."

What surprised Lucy was the fact that nobody works with paper. When she came into the office she wondered where all the papers were.

Jacintha and Annelies had to adjust to the fact that they must concentrate on passing on knowledge rather than answering all the questions themselves. In the beginning they were tired after a day's work but felt they had not done anything! They noticed that in comparison with the Netherlands there is less stress here. In the Netherlands they work with 60 people where there are many questions still to be answered. Here it is still relatively quiet as not everyone knows the office is open during the evening hours. The employees here have to think as they greet their customers. Al-

though it is noon here you have to say "good evening."

Jacintha and Annelies are very pleased with their decision to work on Bonaire. They see a different society and experience where one can be happy with little. They live in a small studio with few possessions and see that the materialism that's normal in the Netherlands or things you take for granted may not exist here. Not everyone has Internet access at home for example.

When their Bonairean colleagues were told they could put people on hold when there were too many calls, they said: "You should not do that, because then they hang up on you because their prepaid cell phone credit will be used up." In the Netherlands, almost everyone has a telephone subscription or can call from work. The idea of prepaid credit does not play a role there.

Jacintha and Annelies are confident that the pilot will succeed and that it might also be a **good opportunity for other organizations to set up call centers here.**

The absence of family is one of the difficult things for the Dutch employees. It is also difficult when something happens in the Netherlands. "My neighbor, for example, died," one said, "and I could not be at the funeral. That's hard; you feel the distance. As colleagues we are pretty much close to each other, not only at work, but also at 'home.' We each have a small studio next to each other. We are not only colleagues but also neighbors. It is cozy, but we do make sure not to do everything together and let each other free."

Lucy and Jeaneliz say that working with the Dutch language is fine, but that proverbs and sayings sometimes cause confusion. "The fox to the bacon" was taken literally by some employees. They wondered how to get that done! They appreciate the open atmosphere at work. They often have to explain who they actually work for. The Dutch officials are literally far from the reality on the island. The manner in which we cooperate is, according to Lucy and Jeaneliz, typically Dutch, a very direct approach towards each other. But as long as the intention is positive they appreciate that.

The school program fits well with the work. The combination of work and training is intense. They are sometimes



P-Direkt
Ministry of the Interior and
Kingdom Relations

busy, even on weekends. Both find it unfortunate that their Dutch colleagues will be replaced after six months. "Anyway, in the end you have to find your own way of working and let your buddy go. We have fun with each other, especially on Friday afternoons we often play tricks on each other," they say. "One colleague made a phony phone call to another and asked the strangest questions about P-Direkt. It was quite comical to see that the fellow who answered the phone did not notice it at all and was doing his utmost to give answers! Our team leader also participated in such a joke and that's very nice. She is open and honest. Too bad she's leaving. We feel at home here at work, because there is openness: if we do not know about habits and costumes we simply ask another: How do you do that?"

The team leader and boss from the Netherlands, Ed Smit, is head of the contact center P-Direkt in the Netherlands and the founder of the project on Bonaire. He arrived here just before Christmas and thinks it is a good idea to raise awareness about the project.

The initial seed for the project was planted several years ago when his Director General reported that he wanted more evening opening hours for already established service centers. Then he came into contact with people from the RCN, then the idea came up to open a new branch on Bonaire. Bonaire was chosen because there was already a good infrastructure which had been set by the RCN. "This was indeed true. The RCN has set up everything here, but also the SGB took care of good, accredited training. Furthermore, the expectation was to find enough people who would be interested in a job at the call center. We especially want to attract people who are really settled here and who will stay. Several people warned, 'Keeps in mind that many people will drop out, especially if you start with a small class. After a few months there's only half of them.' Well, we are now nearly six months down the road and no one has dropped out. Everyone is very motivated and working

(Continued on page 11)



The whole team outside and inside the office at the former SVB (Health Insurance) building in Playa.

hard to get along. I am convinced that this will be a success and hope it gets copied. I think that more call center openings are possible from other government agencies or from industry.”

Client contacts are a very important service. For the future Ed thinks that expansion to a team of 30 people is realistic. In this way Bonaire has a team that can compete with Zwolle and Den Haag.

Team Leader Sandra Engel remembers that Ed talked with her about the plans on Bonaire and then said, "I see

you doing it." That got her thinking about it and how that would be, although she was not a globetrotter. Her husband also immediately said yes to the idea. The seed was planted.

She immediately applied and heard that she would be the first team leader to travel to Bonaire. A real adventure began in which she has discovered new talents within herself. It soon became clear that in order to get things done she had to do more than just send an email. Personal contact is essential in Bonaire and basically she thinks this is also very nice.

She was now herself an immigrant and that required the necessary adjustments. The initial phase was to work hard to get everything done.

In the contacts with applicants Sandra has learned a lot about life on Bonaire. The enthusiasm of the people and the good preparation for the interviews was impressive. She was sometimes astonished about the different way of living, for example, the number of people living in one house together.

The work goes very well and at this time Sandra has decided that local em-

ployees are in control. They now decide what they need from their Dutch colleagues. Bonaire has stolen her heart. The work that she can do here has a totally different dimension. Although she has been through difficult times, working here has been hugely enriching and she has been jumping into it heart and soul. It will be hard to get used to the Netherlands again when she returns there. ■

Story & photos by Justine Verschuur




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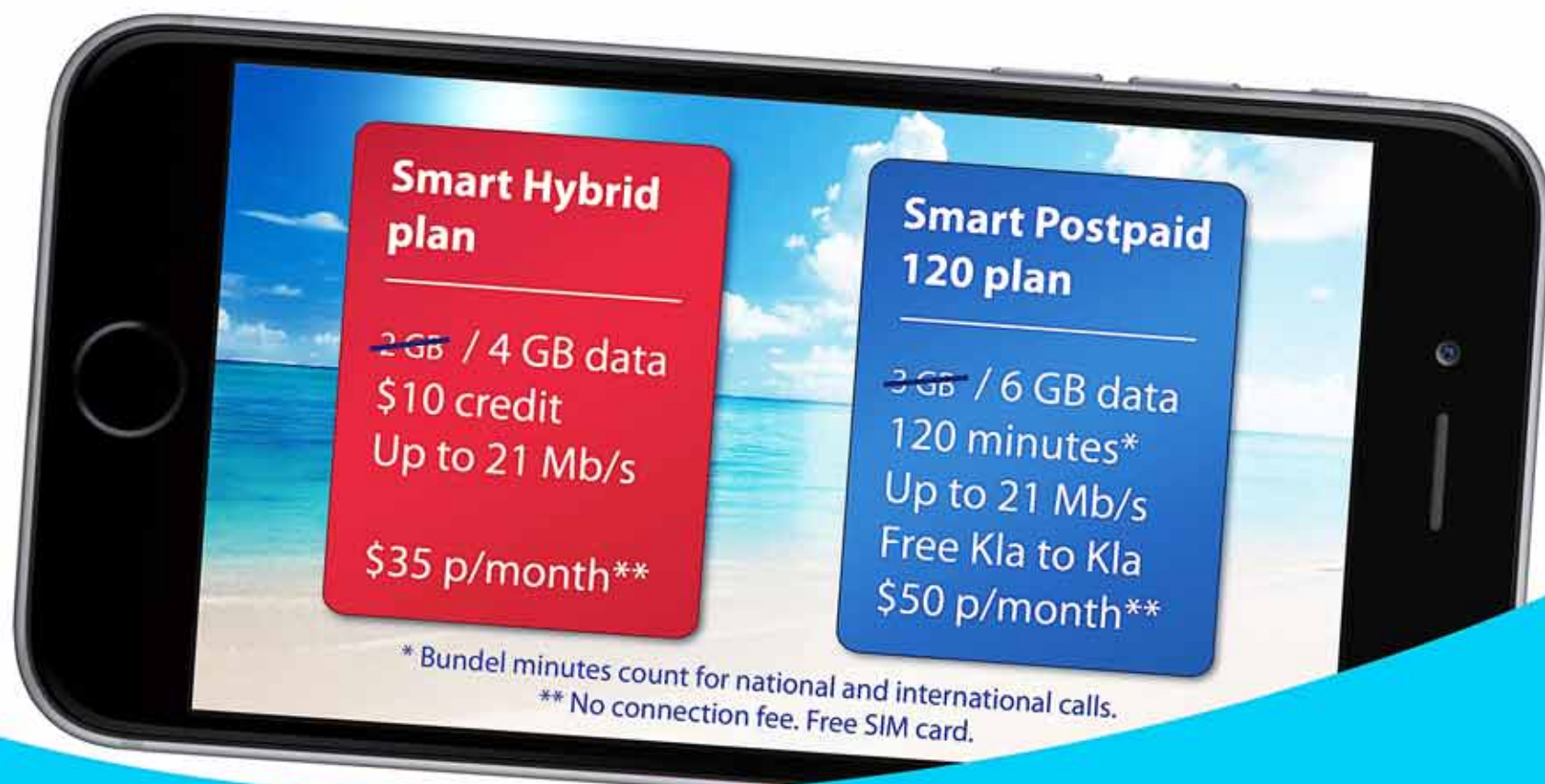
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Following an October 13 post on Unkobon's Facebook page about a water bill which was much higher than his normal account the Consumers Union asked WEB to investigate. However, WEB did not get far because they said they were unable to find the customers with a single high use because the WEB Customer Tracking System is severely outdated. Since there are few formal complaints, it is also not possible to find them with the WEB complaints records.

Therefore, WEB asked Unkobon to gather the data and provide it to WEB.

■ *Press conference*

Unkobon, the Bonaire Consumers Union, asks your cooperation in an investigation to identify which customers of WEB in 2015 (or possibly in the previous year) had to deal with a water bill which was much higher than the usual bill. **They are looking for situations where no obvious cause can be found for the high use of water.**

If you had this problem, please send an email to:

secretariaat@consumentenbonaire.com



Mountain Bike Mishap



Just about every month there is a mountain bike event on Bonaire. And in December the Foundation Xtreme Sports Bonaire organizers had to deal with an accident for the first time in the history of the fun races. Experienced cyclist Brad Swanson was hit and ended up in the bushes. Fortunately, there were plenty of cyclists who helped him and put him in a passing car to the hospital. He had some cuts glued and scrapes cleaned. Brad himself does not know how it happened. But the after party continues—see photo↑. ■ *Press release*



Steve (Steven David) Littman the founder of Littman Jewelers passed away on December 28, 2015 following a long illness. He was born on October 3, 1944. He leaves behind this wife, Esther, three sons and six grandchildren. He was a business icon on Bonaire for over 40 years. He will be missed by many. A funeral ceremony took place on Sunday, January 3rd.

←← **The Dutch sailing ship Eendracht (Unity)**, the largest Dutch three-masted schooner, was tied up at the Town Pier for a few days. It offers extended sailing trips including an Atlantic crossing for everyone, especially young people and students. It was en-route to Aruba and then on to Cuba. Cost is around \$1400 for the voyage.

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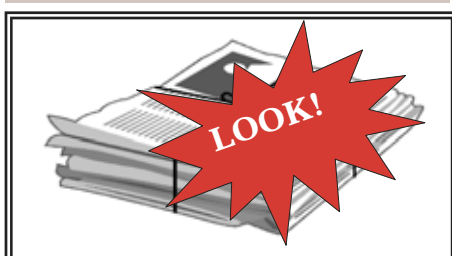


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Day	High	Low	High	Low	High	Sunrise	Sunset
Mon 04		02:12	09:02	17:14	20:30		
		-0.02 ft	0.85 ft	0.12 ft	0.23 ft	6:57	18:23
Tue 05		02:28	09:32	18:13	21:27	6:57	18:24
		0.00 ft	0.90 ft	0.06 ft	0.16 ft		
Wed 06		02:41	10:04	19:10	22:37	6:58	18:24
		0.02 ft	0.94 ft	0.00 ft	0.10 ft		
Thu 07		02:52	10:39	20:04		6:58	18:25
		0.04 ft	0.97 ft	-0.05 ft			
Fri 08	00:09	02:55	11:17	20:50		6:58	18:25
	0.06 ft	0.05 ft	0.99 ft	-0.10 ft			
Sat 09	11:59	21:30			New Moon	6:59	18:26
	0.99 ft	-0.14 ft					
Sun 10	12:44	22:04				6:59	18:27
	0.98 ft	-0.17 ft					
Mon 11	13:32	22:34				6:59	18:27
	0.94 ft	-0.19 ft					
Tue 12	04:51	07:23	14:23	23:03		6:59	18:28
	0.26 ft	0.25 ft	0.88 ft	-0.21 ft			
Wed 13	05:08	09:28	15:17	23:32		7:00	18:28
	0.37 ft	0.28 ft	0.79 ft	-0.22 ft			
Thu 14	05:38	11:09	16:14			7:00	18:29
	0.51 ft	0.26 ft	0.70 ft				
Fri 15	00:03	06:13	12:36	17:12		7:00	18:29
	-0.22 ft	0.65 ft	0.20 ft	0.59 ft			
Sat 16	00:35	06:52	13:53	18:12		7:00	18:30
	-0.22 ft	0.80 ft	0.12 ft	0.47 ft			
Sun 17	01:09	07:33	15:03	19:13		7:00	18:30
	-0.20 ft	0.92 ft	0.03 ft	0.37 ft			
Mon 18	01:44	08:17	16:09	20:16		7:00	18:31
	-0.18 ft	1.02 ft	-0.04 ft	0.27 ft			

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New Years Eve Bonaire Traditions



On and just before New Year's Eve there are traditions and rituals on Bonaire and in the Caribbean to end the year. It's nice to know more about these traditions from the past which make the culture of Bonaire and surrounding areas so interesting.

House Preparation

It starts with the last days of the old year when people clean their houses, inside and out, as well as their gardens. If possible they paint the house too to make sure that all looks new and clean.

The *botica* (drugstore) sells "*Awa Dushi*," liquids of different colors and fragrances meant to bestow all kinds of luck, like winning the lottery, luck in love, luck for good health. *Awa Dushi* can be added to the water used to clean the house. This was a serious business in the old days.

Bathing

The same *Awa Dushi* was used in the

traditional beginning of the evening of New Years Eve to chase bad spirits away and to welcome the good ones. People used to take a bath with it, mixing it with hot cooked water in a tub. The cooked water should be from the cistern, rain water or holy water from the church. Then different herbs and flowers are added. The choice of the flowers (type, fragrance) and the choice of the perfumes have special meanings for the person's personal needs. The colors of the flowers have a very special role in this. Also, depending on the needs and wishes, some drops of certain perfumes or Florida water (a kind of fragrant water used for more than two centuries in rituals against bad spirits) can be added. A white candle also burns in the bathroom so that one can pray for strength for the new year. A hollowed out half *kalbas* (calabash) is used with the *Awa Dushi* for the ritual bath to clean the body and mind from all negative things and bad energies. The water has to go from the head down. After that one has to put on new clothes. It was considered wise to wear the underwear in a wrong way in order to ward off all the bad things. Then you are ready for the evening, to celebrate the last hours of the old year.

Midnight

Just before midnight the head of the family goes through the whole house with a pot of glowing coals and incense to smoke every corner of the house. Then the pot is put just in front of the

main door. Anyone who wants to enter the room has to jump over the coal pot, to be free from bad spirits and enter as a clean person into the room.

The traditional use of incense in the house and jumping over the burning coal pot with incense (which is a mix of seven types of incense) could also be in the middle of the living room. At midnight every member of the family jumps over the smoking pot.

With the words "*saka fuki ana~ bieu*" ("take away the bad luck of the old year") and with rum and Florida water people celebrate the last moments of the old year.

Special Foods

Certain foods are cooked especially for this last day too. Often it's traditional food from the time of slavery, like salt fish or *funchi* and fried fish with *tutu* (brown beans mix) and certain soups like goat soup or *mondongo* soup with *jambo*. Don't forget the delicious pumpkin pancake. The popular rum is on the table and the homemade *ponche creme* and *pina coladas* are in almost every house.

Fireworks and More

Well-known in some parts of the world and also on Bonaire is the shoot-



Traditional Meal

ing of fireworks at midnight on New Years Eve. This is also to chase bad spirits and bad luck, to say farewell to the old year and to start the new year healthy and happy. Some people put a piece of aloe vera plant on their body as a talisman and some use certain ornaments from their ancestors as spiritual protection. A lot of people go to church to pray. Many have good intentions to stop their bad habits and do better next year. And when the new year begins everyone wishes everyone else all good things and happiness, luck and health, success and joy, peace, blessings and love.

This all I wish you too in 2016. May all your wishes come true. Happy New Year. ■ *Angliet, Nature lover*





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What's Happening



REGULAR EVENTS

Tanki Maraka Heritage Park and Open Air Museum. Site of an American soldiers' camp during WWII. Self guided tour with excellent signage. After leaving Kralendijk on the Rincon Road watch for sign to the park on the right. Driveway to entrance just a short distance. Free entry.

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

Soldachi Tours—See the Real Bonaire and be transported back in time. Learn about the history, culture and nature by Bonaireans from Rincon. Call Maria Koeks for more information: 796-7870, 717-6435.

Parke di Libertat -Park-playground and canteen (formerly Dare to Care Park) Behind the hospital. Open Monday-Saturday 8am-7pm. Free entry.

Saturdays

• **Marshe di Playa** -Every Saturday, 8am-noon, Jong Bonaire, locally made and grown products

• **Marshe di Kunukeru (Farmers' Market) First Saturday of the month**, at Kriabon, Kaminda Jatu Baco #55, next to Aquamarin School, 8am to 1pm.

• **Tera Kora Ranch Market—2nd & last Saturdays**- local produce, clothes, food, games for kids, 2nd hand items

• **Monthly Cultural Market at Mangazina di Rei**—Usually the last Saturday of the month, 8am-1pm. See the real Bonaire: traditional music, crafts, local produce, Creole kitchen, educational presentations. Mangazina di Rei is on the Rincon Road, at the eastern entrance to Rincon. Free entrance

• **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. Drop off cast offs on Saturdays or at the Shelter on the Lagoen Road weekdays. 717-4989

• **Last Saturday of the month** – donate foods and household items to Food Bank (*Stichting voedselbank Bonaire*) from 9:30am-2pm at Van den Tweel Supermarket

• **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. +5999-560-7539.*) Snacks and tasting of six wines for \$10 per person.

• **Petanque- Jeu de Boules**, 2:30-6 pm, Landhuis De Tuin on the road to Lac Bai. Info: 786-0150

Sundays

• **Landhuis DeTuin- Real Jamaican BBQ on the terrace** of the land house

#	DAY	DATE	NAME	PAX	Line
Cruise Ship Schedule					
1	6-01-16	Britania	TBA	3600	P&O
2	6-01-16	Club Med 2	0800-1700	390	Club Med
3	8-01-16	Thomson Celebration	0700-1300	1254	Thomson
4	8-01-16	Serenade of the Seas	0700-1400	2490	Royal Caribbean
5	9-01-16	Insignia	0800-1500	684	Oceania
6	9-01-16	Carnival Dream	0800-1600	3652	Carnival
7	13-01-16	Oosterdam	0800-1800	2388	HAL
8	13-01-16	Aida Diva	0800-1800	2194	AIDA
9	16-01-16	Vision of the Seas	0800-1700	2500	Royal Caribbean

in the quiet countryside. Jerk Chicken, BBQ Chicken, Seafood Curry, Veggie Dish, Child's plate, Bread Pudding. On the road to Lac Bai – Kaminda Lac #101. Follow the signs, 12 noon to 6 pm. Tel. +599-786-6816, +599-701-1982. A Forsa training school.

Mondays

• **Bonaire Goat Farm Tour—9 am.** Meet the goats, see milking, and more. **\$10 includes tea. Kids \$5.** 786-6950- Also on Wednesdays & Fridays.

• **Happy Hour at Captain Don's Habitat Bar.** The books of Bonaire's dive pioneer, Captain Don, will be available: Island Adrift, Shangri-la, Sea Trauma and the newest book, Reef Windows. 5:30-7pm. Tel. 717-8290.

Wednesdays

• **Bonaire Goat Farm Tour—9am.** See Monday for more information.

• **12-step meeting (AA/NA).** Every Wednesday at **Gogreen/Bonaire Basics**, Kaya Korona #47. Walk in from 18:45, starts at 19:15, ends at 20:30. Feel free to mail 12stepsbonaire@gmail.com or stappenbonaire@gmail.com for more information.

• **Echo** offers free (donation-based) Public Conservation Tours at 4:30. No reservation needed. For optimal birding, you can also book a private tour by calling 701-1188 or emailing: info@echobonaire.org. Please give at least one day's notice. Private tours are \$25/person with 2 person minimum.

• **Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB)** presents an informative slide show: *Sea Turtles of Bonaire*, at 8pm, every **2nd and 4th Wednesday**. STCB presentation will be taking place upstairs at Yellow Submarine Dive Shop, Kaya Playa Lechi 24 courtesy of Dive Friends.

Fridays

• **Bonaire Goat Farm Tour—9am.** See Monday for more information

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

Chichi i Tan Museum. Step into the past—a typical old Bonairean home, furnishings and garden. **Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, Sundays.** 10am-3pm. **1st Sunday of month**, live

performances of local musicians, arts & crafts. Free but donations appreciated. **Kaya Melon #4, behind Rose Inn in Rincon. 786-6420/78-7842**

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

Bridge Club - Every Wednesday, Bridge Club on Bonaire. 19:15, contact Jeroen Seegers for information tel. 717-4200or788-2819 or peejeesee@gmail.com

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 Obbersi 785-9446.

Toastmasters Club meets every **two weeks**. For more information call Cruscita 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-8:30am in Papiamentu/ Dutch.

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

CLOSE-IN EVENTS

Going on Now—Art exhibit "Klabu Ku Hito" by Francisco Uty Melaan, at TCB office.

Tuesday, Jan. 5—Clean up at Karpata, 9 am on land.

Sunday, Jan. 10—Maskarada. More on page 8.

Thursday-Saturday, Jan. 14-16—International Fishing Tournament—More on page 9

Saturday, Jan. 16—"Salute to Sailors" at It Rains Fishes— as part of Fishing Tournament. More on page 9

Saturday-Sunday, Jan. 30-31 — Children's Karnaval Parades Rincon and Playa

Saturday-Sunday, Feb. 6-7 - Grand Karnaval Parades Rincon and Playa

Monday, Feb. 8—Karnaval Monday, legal holiday, no school

or Daisycoffie@hotmail.com

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

Catholic: San Bernardus in Kralendijk – Services, Sunday at 8am and 7pm in Papiamentu. 717-8332.

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



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AUTOMOBILE DEALER

Check out **Auto City Bonaire** for the widest selection of new car brands on Bonaire including Chevrolet, Honda, Isuzu, Suzuki, Subaru. Used cars too. Complete service department. Hertz rentals.

BANK

ORCO Bank offers one-on-one attention, personal banking. Each client is a person, not a number. The office is the historic building at Kaya Grandi 48.



BEAUTY

Hair Affair. Expert hair cutting, styling, facials and facial waxing. Great new shop on Kaya Grandi. Walk-in service too. Find them on Facebook.

BIKES

De Freewieler sells bikes and all kinds of bike accessories. They do professional repairs on almost anything on two wheels. **Have your keys made here too.**

CELLULAR PHONE SERVICE

Telbo, Bonaire's pioneer phone company, offers the fastest data and voice communication on Bonaire. Sign up and get a variety of special offers. See ad on page 12.



DENTURE REPAIR

All Denture Lab—for the best denture care by an experienced professional. Repairs while you wait. Next to Botika Korona on Kaya J. G. Hernandez.

ON and IN the WATER

Budget Marine has what anyone with a boat needs, and if it's 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. Ad on page 11.

Dive Friends has four dive schools and three retail shops so you always get the best deals and can be assured of top notch training. Remodeled shop, Dushi Style on Kaya Grandi and new dive retail shop at the roundabout in Hato.

GARDEN SUPPLIES AND SERVICES

Green Label has everything you need to start or maintain your garden. They can design, install and maintain it and offer plants, irrigation supplies and garden chemicals. Off Kaya Industria, behind Lucky Supermarket. See pg. 2

LIQUORS, WINES and MORE

Best Cellars has one of the island's widest selection of spirits including "hard-to-find" brands. In addition there is an exceptional assortment of wines, tobacco products and everything needed for a great party. See the back page



OPTICIAN

Buena Vista Optics is Bonaire's most up-to-date place to get eyeglasses or contact lenses. The combination of experienced personnel and advanced equipment and technology make it a top value. See page 19

PHOTOGRAPHER

Bonaire's most creative above or underwater video and still photographer for the wedding or other important events in your life. Drone photography too. ScubaVision, recently renamed Bonaire Vision Films & Photo, has a new website at www.bonairevisionfilms.com.

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



RESTAURANTS

Bobbejans— Bonaire's quintessential "rib joint" not only has some of the best ribs but tasty extras like Gado-Gado, pork chops and fries. Open Friday night and weekends only.

La Balandra at The Harbour Village Resort offers Bonaire's most spectacular setting. Superb cuisine, top notch service. Eat on the deck or with your feet in the sand.



Breeze 'n Bites at the Den Laman Apartments. Provides a memorable seaside dining experience with fine food. Specializing in Fresh Seafood and Select Meats. Happy Hour 4-6 pm.

Pasa Bon Pizza—Bonaire's quality pizza-Best ingredients, best baking and best taste. Great salads and lasagna too. Eat in or take away.

RETAIL

Dushi Shoes & Dive Friends Shops – featuring Clarks, Guess, DC Shoes, Reefs – as well as Tee Shirts for men and women. See page 18

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. See page 18.

Penny Lane is Bonaire's first upscale fashion consignment store. Buy fashionable, top brand clothing, high quality toys and more for a fraction of their original price. See page 11



SECURITY

Special Security Services will provide that extra measure of protection when you need it. Always reliable. See page 16.

STORAGE

The Storehouse (Mangazina in Papiamentu) offers Secure Storage for Vehicles, Household Items, Diving and Sporting Gear, Business Files or Inventory. Across from the northern hotel row. See page 19



SHIPPING

Rocargo Freight Air and sea shipments in/out of Bonaire. Customs agents. Professional and efficient. **FedEx agent. What would we do without their superb services?** See ad on page 5



SUPERMARKETS

TOP Supermarket— Conveniently located **downtown** at the old Cultimara location. Featuring a complete selection including liquors, fresh meat, fruit and vegetables. See page 2.



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) See pg. 15

Animal Shelter Tips & News

The Bonaire Animal Shelter is a refuge for dogs and cats that can no longer be cared for by their owners, have been abandoned, or were born in the wild and brought in by concerned citizens and tourists.

The Shelter also offers a boarding place for cats and dogs. There is a gift shop on the premises to help raise money to sustain the Shelter.

A Very Happy New Year For Floortje!



Floortje with her new pal, Rosa



Floortje before rescue

Meet Floortje. She was found outside the Animal Shelter Bonaire in a cardboard box about two months ago. She was in very bad condition; her body was covered with parasites eating away at her skin (Demodectic Mange). Despite her condition, Floortje was very friendly

to everybody.

We worked around the clock to provide Floortje with all the care and supervision she needed. She had a long road ahead of her. With patience and the proper medication and supervision of our great veterinarian, Floortje's fur slowly grew back. And the best thing of all is that one of our lovely volunteers was able to take her home to foster and give her all the TLC she needed. She is gaining weight, playing with other dogs and truly embracing life again!

And even a better thing happened during Christmas. Her foster family decided to adopt Floortje and she can stay in a loving forever home!

A thank you to everybody who gave Floortje a second chance in life! ■ Story & photos by Nathalie Peterson

Pets of the Week



Meet the Pack

Happy New Year from all of us at the Animal Shelter Bonaire!

We - Freya, Goofy, Ivana, Minnie and Donald - are ready for adoption and waiting for you!

Are you looking for a lifelong friend, one who is easy going and always happy? Come meet the pack at the Animal Shelter Bonaire at Kaminda Lagun 26a or call for information 717-4989. E-mail to animalshelterbo-

naire@gmail.com

All the adoptable animals at the Animal Shelter Bonaire are treated against ticks and fleas, are de-wormed, vaccinated, micro chipped and sterilized.

■ Story & photo by Nathalie Peterson



DEMODECTIC MANGE

Demodicosis, also called Demodectic Mange or Red Mange. It's caused by a sensitivity to and overpopulation of Demodex Canis as the animal's immune system is unable to keep the mites under control. Demodex is a genus of mite in the family Demodicidae



If Demodectic Mange is suspected in a dog, it can usually be confirmed by a skin scraping or biopsy, in which case, the mites can be seen with the aid of a microscope. They are too small to be seen with the naked eye. The treatment of Demodectic Mange is usually accomplished with topical (on the skin) medications, though some oral medications are also used. Localized Demodectic Mange usually does not have to be treated, but will often cure itself as the puppy ages. If you suspect your dog has mange, go to your veterinarian to get it confirmed before starting treatment. ■ Nathalie Peterson



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THE STARS HAVE IT

January 2016

ARIES (Mar. 21- April 20) Your charisma will no doubt attract a lot of attention. You can have an enjoyable time if you socialize with friends. Your ability to work with detail will bring recognition. Get involved in groups that are creative in nature. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

TAURUS (Apr. 21- May 21) Your magnetic, outgoing personality will capture hearts. Caustic language may cause you to want to get out of the house. You may find it necessary to confront a situation that has gotten out of hand. Put your time and energy into travel, philosophy, and soul-searching. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21) Minor accidents are likely if you take risks. Don't turn down offers that include sports activities or children. You are best to look into investments that will grow in value over an extended period of time. You may want to try your hand at a little creative writing. Don't let your boss get the better of you. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

CANCER (June 22-July 22) Travel and creative hobbies will be your best outlet. You will enjoy events that lean toward theater, art, or music this month. Talk to someone with experience about budgets or consolidating debts. Concentrate on work. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

LEO (July 23-Aug 22) You will be extremely sensual; take precautions and don't take any risks. Your high energy must be directed into productive goals, or frustrations will occur. Take care that arrangements to spend quality time together are made in advance. You can get ahead if take on a partner. Your luckiest events will occur on a Sunday.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 -Sept. 23) Help children complete projects they're having difficulty with. Don't get involved in secret affairs or underhanded involvement's. Try to bend but by no means should you give in completely. Try not to push your philosophies on others. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Thursday.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 -Oct. 23) Be discreet about your personal life or whereabouts. Be mysterious. Sit back. Socializing will be more than just entertaining. Get busy on projects that improve your own image; you'll have the discipline to succeed. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Monday.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22) You are apt to meet someone special on your journey. You may find that someone you really cared for in the past has come back into your life. Opportunities for romance may develop through dealing with groups that have a purpose. You will be ready to jump on anyone who gets in the way of your progress this month. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 -Dec. 21) You can make a serious attempt at quitting those bad habits that you've picked up over the years. Control your anger. Unexpected events may be upsetting. Don't let your jealousy be the reason for a decaying relationship. Your luckiest events will occur on a Sunday.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22.- Jan. 20) You will have extra energy; put it to good use. Don't be afraid to pursue unfamiliar grounds. Take the whole family and make it an enjoyable outing. You may need to make a few alterations to your living arrangements. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 -Feb. 19) Travel for business purposes may bring the highest returns. Emotional disputes will only end in sorrow. They will not be in the right frame of mind to put up with tactless comments. You'll find it difficult to control your emotions. Your luckiest events will occur on a Wednesday.

PISCES (Feb. 20-Mar. 20) Recognition can be yours if you present your ideas and stand behind your beliefs. Look into career choices and courses being offered. Don't blow situations out of proportion. Rewards for past good deeds will be yours. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday. ■ *Michael Thiessen*



BONAIRE SKY PARK*

*to find it... just look up

COMET CATALINA



Everyone loves comets. When we get a bright one every 15 or 20 years the world goes nuts.

We thought we had one. Two years ago, the automated Catalina sky survey, using a large telescope, discovered a strange new comet whose origin was the faraway **Oort cloud**. Astronomers closely monitored it and by last spring had high hopes that this month would deliver a worthy naked eye spectacle.

But in September, **Comet Catalina** stopped brightening. By the time it whipped around the **Sun** on November 15, it was obvious that this comet was underperforming.

However, the comet's visibility is slowly improving as it moves away from the bright light of the Sun and towards **Earth**. It is now visible through binoculars and moving through an easily located part of the sky.

A lot of media hype is surrounding Catalina, and we don't want to oversell this. So here's the real scoop.

Through telescopes using long exposure photography, Catalina looks fantastic. It's green and has a double tail. It's gorgeous. Everyday it's a little different, as it now approaches Earth. Although it will come nearest to us on **January 17**, the best time to see it is probably after New Year's day, once the **full Christmas Moon** dims and leaves us with darker skies.

Catalina might surprise us and brighten up enough to be visible to the unaided eye, if you live away from city lights. Otherwise use ordinary binoculars. De-

pending on your sky conditions, it may pop dramatically or it may be impossible to see. You'll never know unless you check it out yourself.

When to look for Comet Catalina

Over the next couple of weeks, get up a couple hours before sunrise which is about 7 am. Gaze toward the east, the direction of the sunrise, just before the sky starts to brighten.

Where to Look for Comet Catalina

First, you'll see a super bright star low in the east. This is **Venus**. Look far to the upper left of Venus and you'll notice a bright orange star—the famous **Arcturus**. You can also find Arcturus by following the arc of the **Big Dipper's** handle.

Comet Catalina virtually touched Arcturus on December 31 and January 1. but we missed that.

Between now and January 17, it will be on a line between Venus and Arcturus. Easy!

How to See Comet Catalina

Although it's technically visible to the unaided eye, you'll need ordinary binoculars. You should see a hazy roundish blob of light; this is the comet's body. Keep looking and binoculars might also show the comet's tail, depending on how long and bright it becomes.

Grab some binoculars and look up! Catalina will soon be gone, never to visit again. What a way to ring in the New Year! ■ *Dean Regas & James Albury*

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Santa Barbara, Kaya Topaz 6

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