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FREE**

BONAIRE *Bonaire Reporter- May 2 -16, 2016, Year 23, Issue 9*
The REPORTER
BES Island News Too

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Rincon Day

Better Than Ever

Hermann van Leeuwen photo



Flotsam and Jetsam

BOINAIRE The REPORTER

The top men/women in Bonaire's island government (OLB) may change soon. UPB island councilor **Dr. Esther Bernabela** said in a letter to Governor Edison Rijna that she has lost confidence in the island's governing coalition and declared herself an independent member of the Island Council, with no political affiliation. Therefore the current UPB and PDB coalition haven't a majority in the Island Council any longer.

The "watermelon" coalition, so called because of the parties' colors- red (PDB) and green (UPB)- was just hanging on. Bernabela is the second council member who separated from the once all-powerful UPB. In February **Jeanoushka "Nunu" Raphaella** went independent. **James Kroon** is now the only remaining UPB councilor.

While a new coalition may be formed that includes **Elvis Tjin-Asjoe's MPB** (blue party) there has been no confirmation. While the Island Government can dissolve and reform, the government does not "fall" parliamentary style. New elections are not required.

►The Executive Council of Bonaire is in consultation with the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK), and other key people and organizations about **how Dia di Rincon (Rincon Day) on April 30 can be made an official public holiday**. Pending the outcome of that consultation on Dia di Rincon many employers allowed their workers time off on April 30 to help celebrate.



►Bonaire's Island Governor Edison Rijna and Island Secretary Nereida Gonzalez joined Dutch Navy officers aboard the Dutch Navy station ship *De Zeven Provinciën* last Tuesday in a toast to **King Willem Alexander** on the eve of his birthday. On Wednesday – King's Day – the ship (below) fired a total of 101 cannon shots to honor the monarch in three salvos at 8am, noon and 4pm.

►In addition to the salutes fired, for the first time Bonaire celebrated **King's Day with a flea market, as is traditional on Curaçao**. The Bonaire Rotary Club spearheaded the event at Wilhelmina Park which included food stands, music and other attractions.

Meanwhile in the Netherlands hundreds of thousands of people also celebrated King's Day. King Willem-Alexander and his family were in Zwolle for the festivities. For much of the country the weather was wintry, with showers and temperatures no higher than 8° C, and revelers had to wrap up, but Zwolle enjoyed clear skies and sunshine. Amsterdam was particularly busy, with some 200,000 people arriving from out of town for the street market and festivals.



►On April 18, The Bonaire police added four new bikes to the force. The force now has eight bikes so hopefully we'll see them more often on the street and at special events. The Biker-team has special training to maximize the use of their machines. This team is important on the island because they are able to quickly respond in critical situations. Moreover, they are very visible to cruise ship visitors.

►WEB Bonaire and TNO Caribbean signed a framework agreement last month for technical and economic support for the expansion of Bonaire's electricity production because the need for energy and peak power on Bonaire is increasing significantly. Currently, the electricity supply system is almost at its technical limits as evidenced by frequent outages. Electricity distributor WEB Bonaire along with power producer Con-

tour Global is preparing for this expansion and has hired TNO Caribbean to support WEB Bonaire in the technical aspects, like introducing sustainable power and the economics of available choices.

►All Dutch passport holders, including those who reside on the BES Islands continue to be **eligible to travel to the US under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP)** by first applying for Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA). ESTA is accessible online at <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>. An earlier press release mistakenly said they were ineligible which caused grave concerns.

The VWP allows visitors with passports from participating countries to travel to the US for business or pleasure for 90 days or less without obtaining a visa. There is a \$14 fee to obtain the travel authorization. Travel authorizations are generally valid for two years or until your passport expires, whichever comes first.

Be sure to check the expiration date of your ESTA travel authorization before finalizing your travel plans. For additional information also available in English, Dutch, and Spanish, please visit <http://www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors/esta>.

Travelers should print out the ESTA application response in order to maintain a record of their ESTA application number. And keep it with the Dutch passport

►For the second consecutive year, Bonaire has once again been named in the **Top Ten Caribbean Travel Destinations by TripAdvisor.com**. Their Travelers' Choice Awards are granted annually based upon feedback collected by millions of actual travelers in a single year. Bonaire received high rankings as the eighth best destination in the Caribbean region.

The Bonaire National Marine Park and Lac Bay were both cited as popular areas to visit by travelers, respectively taking the #2 and #4 rankings of recommended areas to see. Woodwind Sailing and Guided Snorkel was also cited as #1 in Boat Tours & Water Sports providers, with an amazing 779 "Excellent" ratings.

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► **Bonaire Cuisine month will be held during May and June, showcasing the island's selection of culinary offerings.** Some say Bonaire's ascendant



Hough

into culinary excellence began in the early 1990s when Jim Hough and Sara Matera who ran the Green Parrot restaurant came up with the idea of a culinary contest for the island's chefs. The idea exploded and Bonaire's top chefs entered international competitions, returning with medals and awards. Today Bonaire has numerous upscale restaurants offering a variety of cookery: Italian, French, Thai, Japanese, American, Argentinean, Peruvian, Chinese, West Indian, traditional Dutch, Antillean and more. Add to that the new phenomenon of "pop-up" restaurants with Thai, Indian, French pastry and world-class food trucks and you know Bonaire is set to take the lead in Caribbean dining.

"What many people don't know about Bonaire is that it is not only recognized as a diver's paradise but is evolving into a delicious paradise, a gastronomic destination for foodies at large," commented Maurice Adriaens, the Director of Tourism for Tourism Corporation Bonaire. "Cuisine month was created to give our visitors an opportunity to explore the diversity of culinary flavors offered and the chefs who create them.

Expanding our Cuisine Month to two months is a testament to the success of last year's program. Whether looking for Mediterranean, Italian, Dutch, French or signature Bonairean dishes, Bonaire has something to satisfy every palate."



Norma Cole and Antonio Bruni receive awards

► On Tuesday April 19 the winners of the **I Love Bonaire Employee Recognition Program** were announced during a special Happy Hour organized by the Bonaire Hotel and Tourism Association (BONHATA). The revamped program recognizes staff talent. **Antonio Bruni** - Executive Sous Chef at Divi Flamingo Beach Resort & Casino won the award for Creativity & Innovation; **Glenn Bernabela** - General Administration Officer at Maduro & Curiel's Bank (MCB) Bonaire Team Spirit; **Lourdes Thode** - Kitchen Steward at Divi Flamingo Beach Resort & Casino won for Professional Development and **Asinta Melaan** - hostess at La Pura Vista won in the category Guest Relations. All nominees share very important qualities like friendliness, motivation, energy and the willingness to share their. Besides

the award the winners also received a gift voucher plus an invitation to attend the cook out by the Bonaire Culinary Team 2016 on May 22nd.

► Four weeks before the start of the annual Atlantic hurricane season most forecasters agree the dwindling El Niño in the Pacific Ocean may bump up the chances of hurricanes forming in the Atlantic, a big blob of unusually cold water in the North Atlantic also may play a part in determining how many storms form this year and how intense they may become.

Colorado State University's Tropical Meteorology Project says this year's hurricane activity will be about average. This comes after two years of below average storms. The project predicted **12 named storms** will form this season, which starts on June 1 and lasts until November 30. Of those, five will become hurricanes and of those, two will become Category 3, 4, or 5 storms.

► **The Venezuelan currency, the Bolivar, is increasingly worthless.** Not even robbers want it: a few months ago, a news report quoted an engineer named Pedro Venero as saying that he was attacked by armed robbers who were looking for US dollars stashed in his home, but refused to take Bolivars.

► **Don't forget that Mother's Day is on May 8.** Bonaire's restaurants will offer special meals and shops, like Penny Lane, will have items for Mom on sale. . ■ G./L.D.

Editorial

RINCON ROAD DANGER



Police objecting to news coverage by Live 99 reporter Ained Ayubi (pictured) and Boi Antoin of Extra at the Rincon Road accident site.

Late Friday night April 22, the police investigated another serious traffic accident on the Rincon Road. Again, it was a head-on crash. The police patrol, two ambulances and the fire brigade were dispatched to the accident scene to provide the necessary assistance. The two drivers were hospitalized. The police closed the road for a time to investigate this accident.

There's a bodily injury accident on the Rincon road every week. How can more accidents and deaths be prevented? Authorities might begin by repainting the white line down the middle and installing centerline and edge "cats-eyes" on the many curves. In some areas the road should be made wider. We're on the road almost every day and frequently see fast driving cars drift into the opposite lane. Perhaps it's to avoid the many potholes and bumps?

Bonaire Commissioners: Please get it fixed fast. ■ G.D.

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Born on Bonaire... November 11, 1951 - Ellen Cochrane-Herrera



A happy Ellen

I am the eldest daughter of Julio Herrera and Clara Herrera-Pellegrim, and I have one sister, Stella, who is three years younger. We had a happy childhood – lots of toys and children were always invited to our house. Also, we travelled frequently and I am grateful for those memories.

When I was 15, I was diagnosed with Hansen's disease – leprosy – and on April 27th, 1967, the day our King Willem-Alexander was born, I was hospitalized on Curaçao. They cleared out the nuns' sewing room and it became my little apartment with my own bathroom. My parents did a great job decorating and they brought me a record player and records, a TV and lovely magazines. It was very comfy although I felt like a little bird in a golden cage, because I was not allowed to leave the room. After four months I got a roommate, another girl from Bonaire, and we became friends and each other's support. Leprosy was a tremendous taboo in those years, and this is the first time I'm going public about it. But, you know, it was part of my life. I was not traumatized by the experience; I'm grateful for all that God gave me. I feel that at a young age it taught me to put things in perspective because through the window of my room I would see this poor man who was paralyzed from the neck down and I knew there was no cure for him, but I was going to be better.

At the hospital I was taught by the nuns and graduated from Mulo high school there. On February 15th, 1969, I was healthy again and came back to Bonaire. In August that year I went to boarding school on Curaçao to continue my studies. After my graduation I left for Holland. My Aunt Emma came with me and rented a room to be close to me during the first months.

I studied linguistics and Dutch literature and I loved it! Then I met Hein Willems on a plane to Bonaire. Hein took the seat next to me and it was love at first sight! The whole trip - we went through Zurich, Portugal and Caracas – we talked non-stop and when we landed on Curaçao he knew all about me and I knew all about him and his family! He was my first boyfriend and the love of my life. I was 24. Three years later we got married and I was still studying while Hein was working as a documentarian. We bought a house and our eldest daughter, Nathalie Desiree, was born in 1983. I lived in Holland for 12 years and I have only beautiful memories of the time I spent there.

I'd studied with a scholarship and I had to work five years for my island to pay back for my education. We were extremely happy to come here. I became a schoolteacher of Dutch at SGB and our daughter Eline Sophie was born in 1988. My work became my hobby. I loved 'my' children with heart and soul, and when I see them nowadays the connection is still there. I have beautiful memories of that time and I feel I've been very lucky. It didn't last longer than eight years though; then I got sick.

I was hospitalized in Curaçao and when I wanted to go home after almost a month, the neurologist refused to let me go as they still didn't know what was wrong with me. Then I told him about Rooi Lamoenchi, our secluded kunuku with a house where I could stay to get better. The neurologist finally

agreed, but I had to promise that I would have someone to take care of me 24/7. Hein arranged everything. Every day after work he would come with one of my friends, with food and drinks and my daughters to cuddle for a bit. Then he and the children left and my friend stayed. For three months I lived in paradise.

During that period the most important thing happened in my life when I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Savior and Lord. My whole life I'd been very religious, but there Christ Jesus revealed himself to me and I started a personal and intimate relationship with Him. My friend Bernie Lüsse was instrumental in leading me to the Lord. On May 16th, 1992, I was born again, and ever since life with God has been amazing.

Immediately after my retreat I went to Brazil where my sister lived, and there I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. My type was characterized as exacerbation and remission; a gradually descending line. Between 1992 and 1998 I was still very sick. At the same time Hein fell ill, terribly ill, a disease of the kidneys. At the hospital in Curaçao I was taught how to help him at home with the peritoneal dialysis. I did it for



Ellen with her great-grandfather, Jose Atagracia Rosa Herrera, who came from Santo Domingo. He was the first owner of Rooi Lamoenchi and built the house there in 1890.

nine months, four times a day. Then he got a kidney transplant in Orlando, Florida. We stayed for four months, both of us very sick, while the children were here with family. From then on we lived our lives between Bonaire, Curaçao and the States. I had my attacks and Hein suffered from complications of the transplantation.

Life was not easy, but God sustained us. We were a happy family and we shared a lot of love. And Hein was a character, he had such a great sense of humor; he always made us laugh.

Two years earlier, in 1999, I'd met Canadian Pastor Bob Cochran at the church of Trans World Radio where he was invited as a guest speaker. As he was touched by a testimony I'd given previously, he invited me to talk about the matter over dinner. Bob was a widower, a real gentleman, and 23 years older than me. Independently from each other we asked God for a sign as to what His plan was for our lives. Shortly after we received an answer and we got married in Canada. Then he moved here and became the interim pastor of our church which was in transition to become the International Bible Church of Bonaire.

Bob was a loving husband and a most wonderful father figure for 'our girls' as he called them. They loved him and he loved them back. He was the one who took them to Bible College in Canada and then to College and there they met their Canadian husbands. Both of them are happily married, forming their families and serving the Lord.

Bob passed away in 2012. We were lucky to be married for almost 12 years. Though I've lost my husbands twice, I look back at half of my life in very happy marital relationships. They were sweet and good people and I find my comfort knowing they are in paradise with our Lord.

Presently I spend my time between Bonaire and Canada. Twice a week I lead my bible study groups, which is a blessing, and I also organize kunuku tours by appointment at Rooi Lamoenchi. Then, starting June 5th, I'm entering a new phase and highlight in my life as I will be organizing prayer walks every first Sunday of the month (or by appointment) at Rooi Lamoenchi. I want to welcome all the followers of Jesus Christ to follow His example (Luke 5:16) to withdraw to pray in his beautiful creation. I am very happy; I have a lot of peace and tranquility in my life, thanks to God."

For more info call 717-8489 or 005999-540-9800. ■

Story & photos by
Greta Kooistra



“A couple days later she told me that I was the one to benefit from the prayer and up to now I never had another attack of MS...”

At the end of his life, seven months before he passed away on December 8th, 1998, Hein accepted Jesus Christ as his personal savior and Lord and it was an incredible comfort to us. In the end, when he was fighting for his life in a hospital in the States, a Christian nurse was guided to us by the Holy Spirit and she offered prayer, which we accepted. A couple of days later she told me that I was the one to benefit from the prayer and up to now I never had another attack of MS... This is a testimony to the glory of God. It's very, very rare and I see it like this: I am not healed, but God in His miracle power brought me in this rare remission because of His plans he had with Rooi Lamoenchi.

When Hein and I first arrived on Bonaire we started with the renovation of the house at the kunuku. Then we invited friends and family and often we took long walks along the old kunuku roads. There I had a vision about Rooi Lamoenchi where the impenetrable wilderness was transformed into an accessible nature park. After Hein passed, I put a lot of energy into the kunuku to realize my vision, and on November 16th, 2001, we founded the Rooi Lamoenchi Kunuku Park Foundation and with it a dream came true.

Picture Yourself With The Reporter in Serengeti, Tanzania, Africa



Attila Varga and his wife Christina have been regular visitors to Bonaire for the past 12 years and own a condo at the Sand Dollar. They sent us this awesome photo taken during their recent African visit.

“The photo was taken during a game drive through the Serengeti in Tanzania, Africa. A parade of elephants can be seen in the background passing between our vehicle and that of our friends in the other Land Cruiser.”

WIN A PRIZE

Take a photo of yourself with a copy of *The Bonaire Reporter*. Email it to reporter@bonairenews.com to be entered in our annual contest for the best picture. Be sure to include something about the place where it was taken and yourself.

Picture Yourself With The Reporter in Santa Cruz Island, Galápagos



Bonaire visitors certainly seem to be attracted by the exotic places and threatened creatures of our planet. Here is another example.

Ellen and Jeff McPhate, frequent visitors to Bonaire, had their photo snapped on Santa Cruz Island, Galápagos Islands, Ecuador, with a Galápagos giant tortoise. This tortoise is between 125 and 150 years old, according to their naturalist guide.



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What's New on Island

Here are some of the latest developments taking place on the island that locals and visitors will appreciate. They include renovations and solar panels, a new wine bar, food delivery service, and more.

- **AB Carrental** has been recently renovated, along with the garage, workshops and carwash with **48 solar panels** provided by Solar Energy Bonaire.

- **Plaza Resort Bonaire** continues to go green with the start of their 4,000 solar panel power project. The project will include inverter water boilers, replacement of all the facility's water heaters and installation of a water plant to supply the resort with their own drinking water.

- **Coco Beach Bonaire** is a new beach bar and was home to Bonaire's International Sailing Regatta. Coco Beach offers a wide range of activities and services including snorkeling, volleyball, sun lounge hire and more.

- **Divi Flamingo Beach Resort & Casino** welcomed a new Executive Chef, Antonio Bruni. As a culinary expert with over 25 years of cooking experience in countries all over the world, Chef Antonio has brought a new perspective to the resort's two restaurants. Chef Antonio specializes in a variety of cuisines that represent his signature cooking style.

- **La Cantina Restaurant** offers a variety of themed nights during the week. These weekly specials include: Monday Ribs "All You Can Eat," Wednesday "Mixed Grill," Thursday "Burrito Loco," and the Fish Market on Friday and Sunday prepared from the charcoal grill.

- **The Barrel** is a wine bar that opened recently and is ideal for wine connoisseurs. It's located in the new shopping mall at the south pier. Every bottle of wine ordered is served with a complimentary cheese and sausage platter. Wines are also available by the glass. Patrons also have the option of purchasing cigars and/or enjoying some lounge time whether in the interior seating area or outdoors on the patio.

- **"Dinner in a Box,"** a new delivery service has come to Bonaire. Menu favorites from local restaurants that partner with this service can be delivered to hotels and/or vacation rentals. For more information visit <http://dinnerinaboxbonaire.com/>, email dinnerinaboxbonaire@gmail.com, or call +599-786-3884. ■

Stephanie Horbal/Marie Rosa, Adams Unlimited



Sunbelt Fun Race



At the start

On Sunday, April 24, on the Washikimba Sunbelt Trail 23 riders in two classes rode hard in the Sunbelt Realty Xtreme mountain bike fun race. Top riders in the 18 k. Elite Class were **Virgilio Batista, Andre Maciel, Tom Lensink, Dennis Lensink and Frank Böhm**. In the Fun Class top riders were **Ronald Nauman, Andrea Magni, Dick Hanekamp, Gemma vd Linden and Liselotte Bijsterbosch**. ■ G.D.



Along the edge of the Lagoen mangroves

DeFreeweiler photos



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Remembering Marlon



One of Bonaire's best loved personalities, **MARLON AULA-CIO**, passed away last March 25th. He wasn't famous, not a celebrity, politician or artist, but he was much loved by many on Bonaire. We asked his brother, Jose (photo with his brother, above), why this was so. He replied:

- "Marlon was the friend of everybody"
- He was a great being, filled with a great smile regardless of the circumstances of life
- Wherever Marlon arrived he brought with him a party feeling and happiness to the place

- Marlon is now in a very special place, with his spirit fully elevated
- The friend of everybody has left this world but he left us a great legacy: unconditional friendship"

Together with his brother Jose, they made this island theirs since they came with their family 26 years ago from Venezuela.

Jose added, "Keep flying high, Marlon, and thank you so much for giving us so much love and happiness to this universe.....AMEN."

Word on the Street

Items not necessarily confirmed but are being talked about "on the street"

It has been rumored that Ronald Plasterk, Dutch Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, wants to redefine the meaning of "closer ties with The Netherlands" by having most of the governmental functions performed by the Bonaire Island Government (the OLB) report to the RCN. The government workers would not be replaced. It will be interesting to see how the group "We Want Bonaire Back" led by James Fines will respond.



in our beautiful Bonairean land-house. Monday Night will continue as normal as our regular Thai Night. However, during the week you can also enjoy our various Vietnamese Bahn Mi sandwiches, noodle soups and other dishes which will vary week by week."

• It's been reported that Dutch ice cream maker Luc Blok will open an ice cream shop on Bonaire next month, supposedly in the new Terramar complex. It would be the eighth branch of his Luciano's ice cream parlor chain which started in posh Wassenaar and has branches in Utrecht, Overveen, Ypenburg, The Hague, Rijswijk and Zoetermeer. It will be interesting to see how his ice cream shop will compare with the awesome flavors and service of Gio's on Kaya Grandi.



• Signs in the window at the new Terramar Complex in Playa indicate that a coffee bar featuring illy coffee will be opening soon. illy is an Italian company whose founder Francesco Illy developed the modern espresso machine in 1933. You'll hear the name in 140 countries, where "illy's singular, sig-

nature blend is available. The company also has over 1500 cafes. No word yet if it is an illycaffè or an independent operation featuring illy coffee.

• According to The Wall Street Journal, Polar of Venezuela said... that it will be forced to stop producing beer because it cannot get the U.S. dollars, which are controlled by the government, to import the malted barley needed to brew. Under Venezuela's stringent currency exchange system, only the government can legally control dollars, which companies need to import raw materials, food, machine parts and other supplies. "Our current situation is this," Polar said, "we have not been able to replenish the inventory, and we only have malted barley to produce until April 29. Under those circumstances, we are obligated to suspend the production of beer and malts until we get access to the currency needed to procure the raw materials." A spokesman said, "This situation affects 10,000 people directly, indirectly even 300,000 people are affected, such as traders and transporters." He also predicted that there will soon be a shortage of beer in pubs. No electricity AND no beer! And no Polarcita for Bonaire.

• Word on the street is that a Dutch European couple are making plans to develop an 18-hole "mini-golf" complex here on Bonaire...think putt-putt golf! The couple was recently featured on a Dutch television program about their move to Bonaire. Ideas for the complex include each hole featuring a different country, motif, etc. Videoin

their adventures (They arrived with no business permit, site location, etc.) is underway. Maybe we'll all learn more about navigating Bonaire bureaucracy.

• One of Bula's "eyes on the street" spotted a new shoe store recently opened next to Brandaris Café, across the street from the Animal Shelter's Pakus di Pruga. Maria Pizzola Shoes, a name brand from Venezuela, is now open for business. Bula's reporter was unable to review the inventory as she has a serious shoe-buying addiction and was short on cash that day!



• What's happening at WEB? A significant amount of Aggreko generators have been delivered to the WEB water processing plant in Hato. Long time residents will remember that those same type of generators provided power to the island for several years after a big fire put the generating plant out of operation. Those days the generators actually provided solid electric service with little interruption. WEB recently announced a partnership to plan for the future. Perhaps these generators will power us there? Bula will stay on the "current" news. ■ Bula Bonchi



• Lek Lek Thai Food, formerly featured on Monday nights at Zazu/Bistro de Paris, has opened a full restaurant at a great location. As reported by Lek Lek on Facebook: "As of the 2nd of May I will run my own kitchen five days a week at a new location, Mi Poron Nobo which is located at the Kaya Caracas in Plaza (opposite the big Catholic church roundabout to Niki-boko). We will open daily starting from 8am and all food can be taken out or eaten



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DID YOU KNOW?

Late April and early May is when seabirds begin nesting in Bonaire. After spending the majority of the year in South America, some seabirds migrate to dushi Bonaire to nest. After fattening up a bit after their long migration, they will find a mate if they don't already have one (some seabird species mate for life). Then they will select a nest site, make a small nest, and lay one to three eggs. Unlike most birds that nest up high, seabirds nest on the ground on beaches, rocky shorelines and small islands. The nests don't look like nests at all. They are just small depressions in the sand and rocks and the eggs are very camouflaged. The birds will incubate the eggs for about three weeks until they hatch. The baby birds look like tiny puff-balls and it takes about four weeks of ravenous eating before they fledge. Both parents take care of the young during this extremely vulnerable time. Animals, including birds of prey, feral cats and dogs, rats and large gulls, eat the eggs and young.

Seabird populations worldwide are suffering from commercial fishing (accidental



P. Bertol photo

Least tern chicks hatched on Bonaire

bycatch) and predation from invasive species (rats, mice and feral dogs and cats). If you think about it, in the past, islands didn't have these species of mammals preying on seabird nests. STINAPA is working together with Cargill and Vogelbescherming Nederlands (Bird Life) to improve nesting success in our nesting seabird populations.

What can you do to help? From April to August, please be extra careful when walking along the coast. If seabirds are flying above you or dive-bombing your head OR you hear agitated birds squawking at you, then slowly back away. You are probably close to their nests.

Because the eggs and babies are so small and very camouflaged, it's easy to accidentally crush them. And if you think there are nests nearby, please don't hang around trying to find them. When you approach a nest, the parents leave the nest exposed and the longer the eggs and/or baby birds are left baking in the sun, the less chance they will have to survive.

■ Story by Caren Eckrich, Biologist with STINAPA



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Bring it into your home with this original impressive oil painting 4 ft. 9 inches (1 m., 44 cm.) tall by 6 feet (1 m., 85 cm.) long, of the dive site "Nukov," by artist Heleen Cornet.

In the 1990s she was commissioned to illustrate the book, New Guide to the Bonaire Marine Park. It appears on a double page spread on pages 82 and 83.

Internationally known artist Heleen Cornet is renowned for her paintings of underwater scenes, rainforests and architecture. She has illustrated several children's books and marine park guides. Her work is in private collections and has been exhibited at art shows in Santo Domingo, Sao Paulo, Bonaire, Curacao, Saba, Washington and Caracas.

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Stormvogel Restoration Support

**FONDS VOOR
CULTUUR
PARTICIPATIE**

**SUPPORT FROM
THE NETHERLANDS**

In April, *Fonds Voor Cultuur Participatie* (Funds for Cultural Participation) in the Netherlands awarded *Fundashon Patrimonio Marítimo Boneiru* (Bonaire Maritime Heritage Foundation) €56,022 (\$63,610) for Project *Stormvogel*. The foundation has been seeking funds for the historic restoration of *Stormvogel*, the last of the sailing cargo boats of the ABC Islands. The 45-foot ship, built in Bonaire in 1951, was rescued from a backwater in Curacao where it was rotting. Later it was shipped to Kralendijk free of charge by Don Andres Shippers in March 2015. Since then, the foundation has been raising funds locally and slowly restoring the boat.

But this grant allows the foundation to move forward at a more rapid pace. "We really needed these funds for materials—planking, beams and decking—to complete the build," says Johnny Craane, head of the restoration. "But the money is also going to further our existing Junior Shipwright program where youth help rebuild *Stormvogel*. We've had over 50 students participate and we now expect to double that number. We will also be creating a Web site where education materials will be accessed and go to schools in Aruba, Curacao and Bonaire, reaching over 1000 students."

Fonds Voor Cultuur Participatie does not normally fund restoration projects. However, their advisement committee listed several reasons why the Project *Stormvogel* application was successful. The project was considered relevant because the knowledge of restoration will be given to a new audience—the young people. Plus, the committee liked that the knowledge from senior boat builders will be passed on to young people and the process will be documented on film. Lastly, the project was found to be significant since it connects with tourism, education and job opportunities in meaningful ways.



Johnny Craane guides a Junior Shipwright



Adult volunteer Uz Everts at work



The restoration crew

The \$63,000 grant is about 48% of the estimated two-year budget to complete the restoration and educational outreach activities. "In our application to *Fonds Voor Cultuur Participatie* we proposed to raise the other 52% of the budget locally," says Patrick Holian, the foundation's secretary and chief fundraiser. "To date we have received money from BOPEC, Cargill Salt, and Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds, plus a number of businesses and individuals here on Bonaire. The support has been fantastic, but we will need others to contribute in the future to successfully complete Project *Stormvogel*."

Once the boat is finished, it will become a nautical museum, eventually a floating one, that celebrates Bonaire's rich maritime culture. Visitors will be given on-deck tours, and below deck films, photos and sailing artifacts will be on display. "We also want to use *Stormvogel* as a training vessel to teach kids seamanship, navigation and experience

Wonders of Nature

Every day I walk my dogs in the mondi. And every day nature looks different. I never get bored. Unfortunately, there is more to see than pure nature in the mundi. A lot of people think they should brighten up nature with their own waste materials. So, every day I see new trash and that makes me wonder. I will share my wondering about this waste and nature with you and hope that this might contribute to putting waste where it belongs: on the landfill.



THE BIRD HAS FLOWN.

What kind of species is that special bird which I perceive in the corner of my eye along the side of the road? And what's going on, as it did not fly away when I passed by with the dogs? This is something that must be investigated and I walk towards it, leaving the road behind me. I see the odd bird gives no sign of life and cannot give any, because it is not a living being. That's good for me, because I do not write about flora and fauna; strange objects are my specialty. And this is strange! Further research shows me that this is a bag made of an old tire, a good example of recycling and consciousness of dealing with waste. Someone really has been thinking about what you might do with discarded tires. A bright idea from which society will benefit. That community involvement must have been the motivation of the buyer of the bag. Obviously you would never buy this bag out of aesthetic considerations. In any case, I would never want to be seen carrying it. Only real world-changers walk around with such a bag.

I suddenly see before me what happened and how it is possible that such a "conscious" bag eventually ended up where you least expect and never want to see it: on the illegal landfill.

Marianne's birthday was coming soon and her husband Jack asked what she would like to have as a gift. She thinks about it for a few days and then tells him that she really would like to have a bag to match her new tropical look. To put Jack on the right track, she names the colors that she approves of: yellow, red and white are fine, preferably in combination. The bag may also be a big size, so she can put all her belongings in it, and the bag must be made of natural materials (secretly she hopes for real leather). The

last criteria is that the bag should have a Caribbean feel. So, with these instructions Jack cannot miss, she will get a fantastic gift. The days before her birthday she imagines the big leather handbag in Mondrian pattern that she will unwrap. On the Internet, she looks at the bags that meet the criteria passed on by her. Both Michael Kors and Armani have included handbags in their new collection that meet the criteria. "I wonder which one Jack chooses, hopefully not the cheapest."

There you have it: April 15 is her birthday. She wakes up, puts on a dress that will match well with the bag she will receive and runs full of expectations into the living room where her gift will be waiting for her. Jack has gone very early to his work at Selibon and said that he would leave the gift over there. She sees a big package, which means that he has not chosen the cheapest bag. She gets tears of emotion in her eyes. Rough diamond, white kernel, so it is still true ... She unpacks the present and the tears keep appearing, but they turn into tears of disappointment, anger, disdain, contempt, self-pity and hatred. How is it possible that Jack chose to give her this shit? Re-use, my ass, this is abuse. She picks up the bag with one finger in order not to get the rubber smell onto her hands, throws it in the back of her car, drives to that place in Amboina where everyone pours his illegal garbage and throws the bag with one finger in the berm. "Well, I hope there will appear a spicy piece in *The Reporter*. That will teach him."

And Jack? He never understood why Marianne disappeared on her birthday and never came back to him. ■ *Story & photo by Justine*



the thrill of sailing this great ship just like their ancestors did decades ago," adds Craane. "And we have plans to sail on goodwill tours to Curacao and Aruba to share with the people there our common past. It wasn't very many years ago that these boats provided our only connection to each other. They provided vital links for our island societies."

If you would like to contribute to Project *Stormvogel*, please contact project-stormvogel@gmail.com.

■ *Story & photos by Patrick Holian*





The IND Building

PART 3: SO YOU'RE THINKING OF MOVING TO BONAIRE – THE IND (IMMIGRATIE EN NATURALISATIE DIENST), - THEN AND NOW

**The Good, the Bad and the Ugly:-
The Good-**

Now: "Papers appear to be complete. You should have your *beschikking* voor onbepaalde tijd (permit for permanent residency) in two weeks."

The Bad-

Then: "We need more papers. Come back in three months (Goodie! That's when my VOG [Bonaire Certificate of Good Conduct] will have expired!)."

The Ugly- Then and Now, a.k.a. most of Bonaire's administrative offices:

"Mañan" (not really "tomorrow," just not today); or alternatively, "No, not here, that's somewhere else. Then maybe you can come back here."

To be able to acquire residency for more than three months per year on Bonaire (pre-2015), especially before 10/10/10 (the day Bonaire became part of the BES Islands and a "public entity" of the Netherlands), an American (and surely others too) had to jump through many paperwork hoops annually.

First, you had to collect, usually from several states, state- and locally-certified copies ("apostilles") of one's birth certificate, marriage (and possibly divorce) certificate, police background check, and an American passport. From Bonaire, one needed a deed to real property (certified by the Bonaire *Kadaster* (Land Records Office), proof of income, medical insurance, *Verklaring Omtrent Gedrag* (VOG, or Certificate of Good Conduct for those who had resided here for over a year) and a Bonaire Census Bureau Report. Beyond that, one had to fill out an application as intricate and cumbersome as my Idaho Christmas tree. Each year, for at least five years, Americans had annually to re-suffer the same ordeal, and pay several hundred dollars every time to apply for the much desired *sedula* (Bonaire Identification Card), then valid for 12 months only.

Hubby Bob and I both endured this lengthy, tedious and costly process; he for eight years. Thanks to the recently changed rules, I had to undergo it only twice to obtain my coveted (for those of us who really want to live on Bonaire) *verblijfsvergunning* . . . voor onbepaalde tijd. For practical purposes, this means permanent residency status and an automatically renewable five-year *sedula*.

In our, well mostly Bob's, experience be-



Papers, papers, papers.....

fore 10/10/10 and still quite awhile before 2015, the worst of it was the traipsing back and forth from home to IND, to City Hall for VOGs, Census Bureau for proof of physical residence and family status, then God only knows where for what other documents IND might arbitrarily require thereafter and, in my case, a profound longing for psychiatric counsel.

Pre-10/10/10, applicants at IND were routinely greeted with skepticism or worse - studied indifference. The IND employee didn't really engage in conversation with you, merely responding in a terse, "yes" or "no" or simply with shrugs, Bob's personal favorite. Friendly "bon dia"s were few and far between. During the scheduled appointment, when one actually occurred, your interviewer would more than likely file her nails and chat up a colleague, pointedly ignoring the matter at hand - pained looks all around should you attempt to interrupt their little tête-à-tête with a plea for attention to your application.

It could also just happen when you arrived for your scheduled appointment, with all your laboriously gathered papers *a mano*, including VOG (valid only for three months), you'd be told, "Oh, she's not here today." You'll have to make another appointment. And, oh sorry, we're booked solid for four months." Desperate applicant: "But my VOG is only valid for three months!" Shoulders shrug. Or the IND simply would be locked tight the day of your appointment. No explanation. Nada. Or my favorite, with an actual sign of explanation on the IND door: "Closed until 00:00."

Finally, when you've managed to retrieve all of the application-listed documents, in order, and you present them to the (grumpy) IND worker who is actually on hand at the appointed hour, you're told simply: "You'll have to bring in your original passport; no copies." "But, it says 'copies,' right here on the (long) list of required documents." Another shrug. Then after schlepping back home for the originals, and back at the IND 30 minutes later, "What



Pollution of the seawater from the ingredients in popular sunscreens is a serious problem for corals.

Sun protection is a significant public health issue, and sunscreens play an important role in the management of this risk. However, there is no single, definitive solution to the problem.

One approach is to ban the use of products that contain threatening ingredients in areas where coral reefs are most susceptible to exposure. A second approach involves a public relations campaign, to be implemented in coral reef managed areas such as marine parks and sanctuaries, that informs visitors and locals about the environmental impact of sunscreen pollution and asks them to use sun care

products without threatening ingredients.

A third strategy is to convince people to reduce the amount of sunscreen they use. Applying lotion to only the neck, face, feet and backs of hands can reduce sunscreen loads into the water by 90%. Sun clothes designed to reduce UV exposure have evolved tremendously in the past 10 years in both fashion and utility. Gone are the days of tight-fitting rash guards or jumpsuits that are a pain to put on and take off, especially when wet; there are now clothes that are comfortable and well suited to the water, the beach and the cafe.

A fourth option requires consumers to demand innovation from manufacturers regarding the formulation of their products. ■ G.D./David Colvard

about your airplane tickets to show return from the US to Bonaire?" Trying not to shout, raising his voice, nevertheless: "AIRPLANE TICKETS ARE NOT ON THE LIST. COULDN'T YOU HAVE TOLD ME THIS EARLIER WHEN I WAS HERE HALF AN HOUR AGO?" More shrugging. More schlepping home again for the demanded tickets. On return, sign on the IND door says: "Closed until 00:00."

On subsequent return the following day, "Sorry, the photo ID machine is broken. Please come back later." More "mañan" - and definitely nothing like tomorrow, more like three months later while trying get other official matters taken care of on Bonaire with an expired *sedula* (ID card). Are we having fun yet?

After 10/10/10, however, this harrowing process - along with parallel wrinkles shared anecdotally by American amigos -- began to change noticeably. Yet it was still not optimal. (Bob noticed that, at some time after the beginning of 2011, literally all of the old IND employees he'd come to recognize there had evidently found employment more suitable to their talents elsewhere.) IND employees now seemed more ambitious to assist and their demeanor had become far friendlier. More often than not, documents officially listed as "required" were those actually required at IND. And there was not nearly so much scuttling back and forth. Appointments were more or less held, and held on time. Nevertheless, the cost of obtaining each new *sedula*, let alone permanent residency was still through the roof. Also, the Census Bureau was moved from the IND office downtown to a new building on Kaya Neerlandia, just off Kaya Korona. And at least one of the infamous ID

-making machines mostly worked thereafter.

After 2015, our appointments are always kept. The IND staffers now "bon tardi" and "ayo" us. They're quite helpful. Demanded and assembled docs agree. Now, a *sedula* is gratis, is valid for five years and automatically renewable. Dutch funding has made it possible to establish new, modern offices all over the place -- not just the new Census Bureau on Kaya Neerlandia, but also the new *Belastingdienstkantoor* (Bonaire Tax Office Building) in center town, and the *Afdeling Financiën* (Bonaire Finance Department) on Abraham Blvd. a kilometer or so south, and the new *Zorgdienst* (Health Services) on Gob. Debrot, a kilometer or so north. The upshot, of course, is still considerable schlepping from pillar to post in search and delivery of paperwork - oh, and to the bank to pay the requisite fees, gather receipts and trot back to (wherever) with evidence of payment.

It might have taken years of administrative recouping to turn the application-for-residency situation around. Indeed, traveling to and fro remains an issue with locations all over town and there's more traffic with fewer available parking spaces. But there's now way less paperwork - once every five years -- not annually, and far less out-of-pocket personal cost for the service. What's more there are dushi people in all offices!

Or so it's been in our experience. ■

Story & photos by Karen Bastiaansen-Gilmour



Be Proud of Bonaire

Boneiru
nos orguyo



Jermainy Diaz and Michèle Knuf, members of IVA, speak about their goals

“JUST SAY BON DIA”

Proud to live on Bonaire. That is what we should be according to the local organization “Initiative, Vision, and Action” (IVA). The celebration of Dia di Rincon was used as an opportunity to re-launch the organization’s campaign, *Boneiru Nos Orguyo* (Bonaire Our Pride). *Boneiru Nos Orguyo* is a community awareness project which illuminates the positive things about Bonaire and strengthens the solidarity and unity among the island’s diverse population. The project was set up in September 2014. Jermainy Diaz and Michèle Knuf, members of IVA, explain why it is necessary to emphasize that we should be proud of Bonaire

“We want to stimulate the feeling that we are one across all backgrounds,” Michèle starts off. “It is not about where you are from. If you are proud to live on Bonaire, then you are part of it.” IVA started the project as they noticed that society was changing. “People started complaining,” Jermainy mentions, “something we were not used to.” Another thing that struck the organization was that people did not greet one another in the streets as they used to. “It might be something they don’t do in other places, but here we do.” It is IVA’s goal to support positive initiatives in society and to help co-residents out. The *Boneiru Nos Orguyo* project’s purpose is to spread that positive attitude through the whole of Bonairean society.

The growth of the island and the increasing diversity amongst the population is a challenge for the solidarity on Bonaire, the ladies explain. Feelings of personal responsibility for the island and for one another should be strengthened. “It is not necessarily about big actions or about tangible deeds, but it is about attitude,” Michèle says. “Be tolerant, be open-minded, don’t blame others for not mastering your language, and just say bon dia. That opens

many doors.”

The campaign targets all people who live on the island, not only native Bonaireans. The fact that most communication and promotion is done in Papiamentu is, however, a conscious choice of the organization. “This is *Boneiru Nos Orguyo*. If you are proud of Bonaire, you must be proud of the language too as it is part of who we are,” Michèle explains. “We don’t want to exclude anyone; we use simple language and we are happy to help anyone understand.”

On Dia di Rincon the ladies will be celebrating Bonaire and handing out hand-sanitizers with the organization’s logo. “That is a way to remind people to be proud of the island, and of course to get them look up our Facebook page!” On the project’s new Facebook page positive news about the island is shared. “Too often we focus on negative things, and of course not everything goes well, but with this project we want to focus on all the positive things we have. This does not mean there is no space for criticism or comments, as long as it is constructive. Let’s see what we can do about it together.”

Other future ideas for the project are to decorate the island’s roundabouts with quotes, logos or maybe sculptures that celebrate the island, Jermainy adds. “Let’s focus on the things we can be proud of. After all it is no so bad living here,” the ladies conclude with a smile.

For more information, suggestions or comments, [email ivabonaire@gmail.com](mailto:ivabonaire@gmail.com), look up their ‘*Boneiru Nos Orguyo*’ Facebook page, or approach one of the organizations members. ■

Story & photos by Gerjanne Voortman



Edith Delgado:

“I am proud to live on Bonaire because the people are always friendly, even though I am not from here originally. There is no discrimination. I am also proud of Bonaire because the island gives me the opportunity to work and to help my family get ahead.”



Marlijn Clement:

“I am proud to live on Bonaire because here you get the freedom to be who you want to be without being pigeonholed.”



Donna Wuyts-DeSalvo and daughter Ava Rose:

“We are proud to live on Bonaire because it is very safe and quiet, and because it is a real melting pot with people from all over the world. I especially fell in love with the island because it is clean and people are in general environmentally conscious. Let’s try to keep it that way!”



Dennis Martinus (left) and Angelo Alberto:

“We are proud to live on Bonaire because it is quiet, incredibly beautiful and the people are really friendly and calm. Also we like that the island provides us with many opportunities to develop ourselves. In a big country you have to specialize in what you do. Here you get to be a generalist and get experience in various fields. We want to show the world that we are small, but talented!”



Herbert Domacassé:

“I am proud of the values that we share on Bonaire, such as respect for others. I hope we will keep carrying those values out even though the island is growing. I am also proud that on Bonaire we don’t just live by the rules of science and knowledge, but that we also listen to the wisdom of the heart.”

Hope For A Better High School

NEWLY APPOINTED DIRECTOR FRANS VAN EFFERINK AND SGB BOARD MEET THE PRESS

Newly appointed director, Frans van Efferink, of *Scholengemeenschap Bonaire* (SGB, the island's only multi-level high school complex) was on the job for just 13 days before his first general meeting with local press, Friday, April 20, at the SGB on Kaya Korona.

Van Efferink came to Bonaire after first-hand experience as a teacher and later as an interim high school director in the Netherlands and on St. Eustatius. His mission has been to help weak schools integrate educational theory with practical content by focusing on primary student interests, such as the Internet. His announced strategy on Bonaire is not to cancel out-going interim director Lydia Emerencia's "Improvement Trajectory" or "Excellence in Development Plan," as it's known, to bring Bonaire's secondary education program up to Dutch standards, but rather "to make it work."

"My drive is for innovation," Director van Efferink declared. "High school students typically learn at different speeds, but most share an equal fondness for technology. It's this very technology that enables us -- teachers and administrators alike -- to create an individual approach to learning, tailored to each student's need. Here, at SGB," van Efferink continued, "students seem to lack motivation. However, they enjoy using social networking venues, just like kids everywhere in the world." He alluded to Whatsapp, Messenger and Facebook, in particular. "By paying more attention to the student's world of experience, we need to integrate technology as a crucial part of



SGB school board: R. Sealy-Clappers, J. Balentien-Nicastia (treasurer), K. Visser (president), F. de Palm (secretary), N. Huygen (secretary), F. Goedgedrag. (foto R. Thodé)

education, if we are to increase our kids' motivation," he said.

Together with a relatively new and promising school board, consisting of Karel Visser, Chairman; Nina Huygens, Secretary (newly hired); Joanne Balentien, Treasurer (other board members, Frits Goedgedrag and Riet Sealy were not present on April 20), van Efferink admitted that the educational program at SGB is currently polarized.

According to many reports, the overall quality of education and productive relations among administrators, teachers, students and parents has been called into serious question. Students and parents have repeatedly expressed general dissatisfaction with student - teacher and teacher - parent communications and, in particular, with frequent, last minute class cancellations in preference to impromptu staff meetings called by the former director.

In early 2014, the Dutch Minister of Education, Sander Dekker, complained publicly about the poor quality of education, administration and financial affairs at SGB. Shortly thereafter, former director (and former Bonaire Governor) Emerencia was appointed on an interim basis with the intent to improve

the levels of instruction and organization. According to several teachers and parents, Emerencia's "Excellence in Development" plan had sounded promising but in practice had actually detracted from student-teacher-parent involvement.

Other teachers have also complained that implementation of the plan had built barriers between those who felt sympathetic towards Emerencia's policies and others who reacted unfavorably to them. According to "the opposition team," Emerencia hindered real innovation by pressing her own parochial issues and by displacing effective subordinate administrators in preference to new hires from among her friends and family. In their view, desperately needed educational improvements were undermined by the resulting administrative disorder.

SGB's current board and new director have announced one principal goal: "To offer quality education to our students and thereby contribute to their futures as well as to Bonaire's economic development." Involvement of students, teachers, parents and administration is important to carry out the mission of SGB: "Focus on the student's education and motivation." To do this, the new team intends to cement new relation-



New SGB Director Frans van Efferink

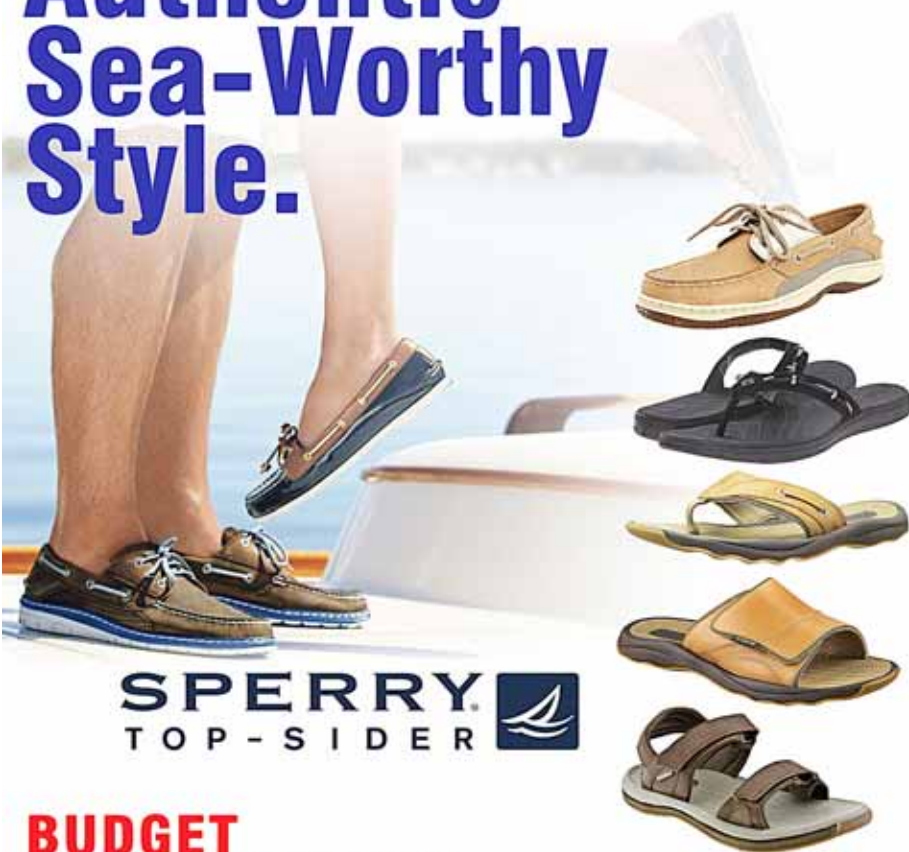
ships among parents, students and teachers. Also noted was the need to improve physical conditions, facilities and learning materials available to both students and teachers. According to director van Efferink, students, in particular, need a way to be heard, and one way to do this is help them establish a Student Council. But even more importantly, van Efferink made clear, is that the fundamentals have to be met: classrooms, books and materials available to teachers and students at the beginning of each term -- not sometime weeks later.

Outside of the press conference, one obviously dedicated SGB teacher captured what others have expressed in a variety of ways: "What I feel is really important is that the instructional-level placement for years 1, 2 and 3 will be improved, so that more children receive a secondary education best matching their capabilities, leading to their success in life, making students feel better about themselves and their school and giving them the necessary skills and self-confidence for the future."

One of the SGB board members summed up: "We all feel passionate about the high school on Bonaire. We believe in our children, our teachers and its mission: the student's motivation and learning should be at the center of what we do." ■

Story & photo by Karen Bastiaensen-

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Wet & Wild Water Polo



Team members

Recently our team, "Barracudas Swim and Water Polo Team Bonaire," participated under the banner of Bonaire at the CARIFTA* Games water polo matches in Trinidad. We left on Thursday, April 7th with our players, two coaches and two assistants. Our under-16 players from Bonaire joined together with two under-16 players from Curacao. Bonaire had one player under-19 and one under-14 who teamed up with the Curacao teams to make the right number of players for a team in their age groups.

Because our team hasn't existed very long and we have little competition experience, we were classified at a lower level than the other national teams that took part in the CARIFTA games. Still, we decided to go. We did this to gain experience in the game, to learn many things about the official water polo rules and of

course to have a lot of fun as a team.

In Trinidad we stayed with host families who took care of our breakfast and supper. We were cared for with lots of love and hospitality and felt very much at home with them. We met lots of new people.

As a team we were in the pool every day but on the last day we had time for a great outing with the Curacao teams when we toured the south of Trinidad.

In every game we played we learned new things. So we learned better passing, better defense, watching the clock, building an attack, taking positions, etc. Our coach said, "I see that you have improved every game in leaps and bounds." And that felt so good for us. This was true not only for playing the game, but also the fun that everybody had in the game.

Not only did we learn a lot in our own games but when we had a break we'd go



Nikolai Pedersen named Best Defender

to watch the other teams. With that we came up with ideas of how we could practice during our training. We as a team have grown enormously over the past weekend! We learned so many things and had so much fun together! And even though our team did not win, it was a big surprise when Nikolai Pedersen was awarded a prize for best defender. Aljantha Emerenciana came home with a bronze medal that she won with the 14 & under team. We enjoyed this weekend and we hope we can do this much more often, and always slightly better!

■ Story & photos by Chaz Sweets & Emma van Wijngaarden, Team Bonaire Members



Note from the coach

Thanks to our great supporters: Fundashon Wega di Number and Bon Bida Spa & Gym.

Our next event will take place when we visit the Water polo Team the Orcas in Curacao on May 14 and 15. Orcas from Curacao will come to Bonaire on September 24 and 25 to play on Bonaire.

Interested in swimming or water polo? Feel free to come join us at our sea pool at Park Tului Domacasse.

Training Schedule:

Monday: 17:30 swimming
 Tuesday: 17:30 swimming/water polo
 Wednesday: 17:30 water polo
 Thursday: 17:30 swimming
 Friday 17:30 fitness@Bon Bida Gym
 Saturday: 10:00 water polo
 More on Facebook page: Bonaire Barracudas Swim & Water polo team

* The Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA) is a multilateral free-trade area composed of Caribbean nations and dependencies. The BES Islands are not members. CARIFTA sponsors games of various sports for teams from the Caribbean to help bring pride and unity to the region.

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Bonaire-Sun Rise/Set, Moon Phase and Tides

Day	High	Low	High	Low	High	Sunrise	Sunset
Mon 18		05:12	10:10	17:17	23:17		
		0.10 ft	0.43 ft	-0.03 ft	0.51 ft	6:21	18:48
Tue 19		06:28	11:12	17:45	23:58		
		0.09 ft	0.33 ft	0.04 ft	0.54 ft	6:21	18:48
Wed 20		07:48	12:31	18:07			
		0.05 ft	0.24 ft	0.11 ft		6:20	18:48
Thu 21	00:36	09:04	14:17	18:21			
	0.57 ft	0.00 ft	0.20 ft	0.16 ft		6:20	18:48
Fri 22	01:13	10:06	16:35	18:09	Full Moon		
	0.60 ft	-0.06 ft	0.19 ft	0.19 ft		6:19	18:48
Sat 23	01:49	10:54					
	0.63 ft	-0.11 ft				6:19	18:48
Sun 24	02:26	11:33					
	0.66 ft	-0.16 ft				6:18	18:48
Mon 25	03:03	12:07					
	0.70 ft	-0.20 ft				6:18	18:48
Tue 26	03:41	12:38	19:20	21:23			
	0.73 ft	-0.23 ft	0.23 ft	0.22 ft		6:17	18:49
Wed 27	04:20	13:06	19:16	22:36			
	0.75 ft	-0.24 ft	0.24 ft	0.21 ft		6:17	18:49
Thu 28	05:01	13:33	19:26	23:41			
	0.76 ft	-0.25 ft	0.27 ft	0.19 ft		6:17	18:49
Fri 29	05:42	14:00	19:46		L Quarter		
	0.75 ft	-0.24 ft	0.33 ft			6:16	18:49
Sat 30		00:45	06:26	14:27	20:14		
		0.16 ft	0.72 ft	-0.23 ft	0.41 ft	6:16	18:49
May							
Sun 01		01:51	07:12	14:56	20:49		
		0.14 ft	0.66 ft	-0.22 ft	0.51 ft	6:15	18:49
Mon 02		03:02	08:03	15:27	21:29		
		0.10 ft	0.57 ft	-0.20 ft	0.62 ft	6:15	18:50

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Email: fossilres@gmail.com; or call 44 3301 3415. Like Rincon. Small place with electric, water. PADI Divemaster certified. Contact **Richard S. Bon Bini!**

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House for rent at Belnem, available last week of June. Two bedrooms, 1 bath, kitchen with lots of cabinets, large living room, front-porch, back-porch with garden terrace and tropical garden

with drip system, 2 air conditioners and 4 ceiling fans. Location: Kaya Uranus 4, 2 minutes walking distance from Bachelor's Beach. Rent \$770 including garden maintenance, utilities not included. wifi included, 2 empty 100 pound gas cylinders included. 2 months deposit required. Dogs not allowed. Minimum one year contract. Call: **Mobile phone 785-9900, house phone 717-2698;** e-mail theresebonaire@gmail.com

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A Garden? Just Do It

Nature's Solutions



Sansevieria plant

Most of us have experienced "bad days" at least once in awhile. Those days, when you get up in the morning with a headache or still feel tired, no energy.

And those nights that you cannot fall asleep, just tossing and turning in your bed, waiting for the morning. Yes, there are so many of these "little uncomfortable" things which can spoil your whole day.

But did you know that nature has some solutions for these problems? Yes, there are plants which can help in these situations. So if migraine is one of your troubles or bad sleeping, look to see whether one of these wonderful plants can release you from the problem. And make sure you always have them around because they are easy to grow, like house plants.

People who have sleep problems need to have good air quality which works as a natural sleeping remedy and it should smell fresh too.

Some plants that can provide this good fresh air:

Jasmine: for high quality air, good for sleep.

Lavender: relaxing, nice fragrance, calming, peaceful. Also look for lavender oil and soap.

Gardenia: offers relaxation.

Sansevieria: air cleaner, gives a good night's rest, good against headache. It can grow easily in a pot and in your yard.



Areca palm

—All plants pictured are easy to grow in pots in the house.

Aloe Vera: air cleaner, gives a lot of oxygen at night and gives a good sleep.

Ivy: absorbs gas, grows easily.

Dracaena: clears the air from bad stuff.

Golden Pathos: works as a powerful air cleanser.

Plants to have around you which are very good for your health :

Areca Palm: a topper in the making of oxygen. For 100% pure air , you need to have three of them around you or in your house, but even one alone is already a big help.

Scindapsus: a great plant which removes formaldehyde and benzene.

Plant against migraine:

Ginger: It's proven that ginger has a great influence on migraine and headaches as well as altitude sickness, sea-sickness and travel sickness.

Plants against inflammation:

Kurkuma: has curcumine which fights against arthritis and psoriasis.

Basilicum: has euganol which is effective against skin problems, bronchitis, asthma.

Plants against pain:

Chili pepper: a natural remedy because of its capsaicin which is an active pain-killer that has influence on the nerve receptors.

Cherries (shimaruku): thanks to the antocyaninen which give the cherries the red color it is a pain remover too.

Aquamine: which is found in red sea grass and is rich in calcium, magnesium, blocks inflammations and makes bones strong.

Peppermint: often used as a natural remedy for toothache, stomach problems, skin irritation and muscle pain. Essential oils from peppermint block the pain canals.

Cranberry: strengthens the natural defense system, keeps the stomach healthy and lowers the risk of chronic sickness.

Olive oil: not only healthy but also works against pain and inflammation.

Bromelaine: a mix of enzymes found in pineapple. Good against arthritis and sicknesses in the muscles and wrists. Good for digestion of protein in our food. Works very well against inflammation caused by infections and is good against different kind of pains.



Ivy

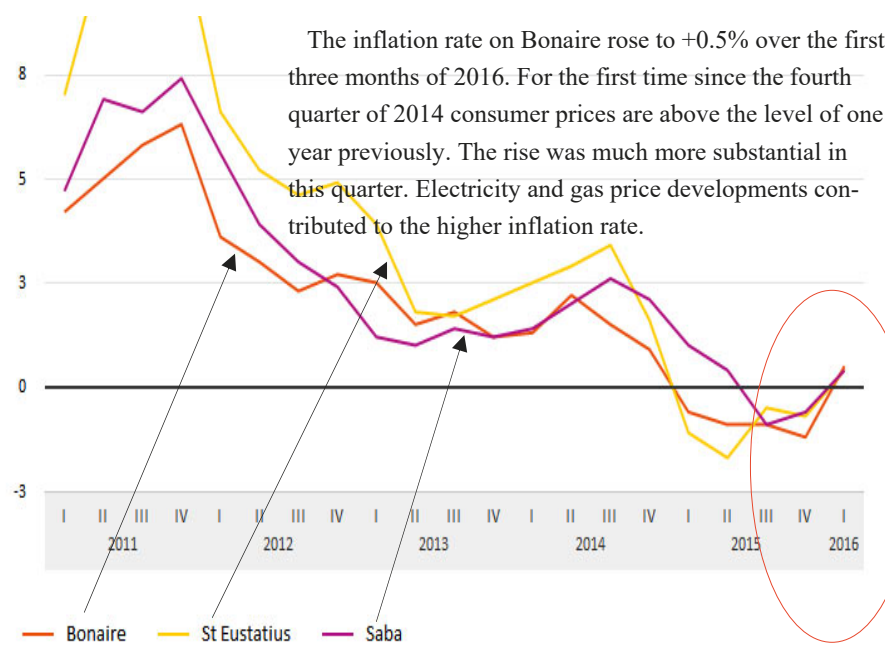
So now you have all this information about plants that you can have not only in your yard and in your house but for sure in your bedroom. Then see how many of all these little health problems might disappear as snow from the sun. ■

Story & photos by Angliet, Nature Lover



Prices Climb In BES Islands

The average price level in the Caribbean Netherlands rose in the first quarter of 2016 compared to a year ago. The price increase comes after a period of negative inflation. On the basis of the consumer price index (CPI), Statistics Netherlands (CBS) reports that consumer prices rose on all three islands of the Caribbean Netherlands at the same time.



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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 Kocks 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 (Bonaire Duodero)**- 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

#	DAY	NAME	Time in Port	Cruise Line
Cruise Ship Schedule				
54	7-05-16	Hanseatic	0800-1700	Hapag Lloyd
55	8-05-16	Royal Princess	1200-1900	Princess
56	31-05-16	Adventure of the Seas	0800-1700	Royal Caribbean

Sundays

• **Landhuis DeTuin- Real Jamaican BBQ on the terrace** of the land house 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 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 12stappenbonaire@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

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

CHURCH SERVICES

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints --Kaya Sabana 26 Sunday Services - Papiamentu/ Espanol 9:00 am to 12 noon Add'l Info (599) 701- 9522 Dutch/English 1pm to 3pm Add'l Info (599) 701-2892

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 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. 717-8332 for more info or ride bonaireibc@gmail.com.

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

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

CLOSE-IN EVENTS

Thursday, May 5—
Ascension Day, legal holiday

Saturday, May 7—
Kriabon Farmers Market, Kaminda Jatu Baco #55, next to Aquamarin School. Plants, local food, crafts. 8am-1pm

BEACH TENNIS TOURNAMENT

15 May @ Coco Beach



Compete one against one - Men and woman mixed
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BONAIRE GET READY FOR THE SECOND EDITION OF



DATE: SUNDAY, MAY 15
START: BACHELOR'S BEACH 6.30 AM
FINISH: SOROBON BEACH

PAYMENT AND T-SHIRT PICK UP:
MAY 11, 12 AND 13 FROM 5-8 PM
AT GUARDIAN GROUP FATUM,
KAYA GOBERNADOR N. DEBROT 35

REGISTRATION:
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Saturday, May 28

-Cultural Market at Mangazina di Rei- traditional music, crafts, local produce, Creole kitchen

-Taste of Bonaire, Wilhelmina Park-music, foods, drinks, dancing, evening hours

June 16th - 19th Defi-wind Challenge— Wind and Kite surfing competition—More news coming

SHOPPING, SERVICE and DINING GUIDE

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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

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DENTURE REPAIR

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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

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.

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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.



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.

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

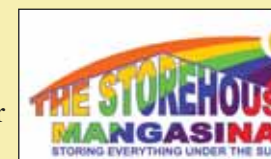


SECURITY

Special Security Services will provide that extra measure of protection when you need it. Always reliable. See page 15.

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.



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. 19

Regular repeat advertisers get listed free in the Shopping, Service and Dining Guide

Animal Shelter News

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



Quint and the Echo Team

THIS IS THE STORY OF QUINT

Quint is a shelter dog who was brought into the Animal Shelter Bonaire almost two years ago. He has been a quiet, patient and very loving dog who has seen many other dogs get adopted. All the staff and volunteers have always loved this dog who accepts everyone- people and dogs- but it seemed he was always passed over when it came to adoptions.

THIS IS ABOUT THE ECHO FOUNDATION, PARROTS AND PEOPLE, who have been on the island since 2010 protecting Bonaire's endangered yellow shouldered Amazon parrots (Lora) and brown throat parakeets (Prikichi).

Their goals are to ensure a stable and growing population of the Yellow-shouldered Amazon Parrot by:

- Reducing the poaching of chicks for the local and international pet trade.
- Restoring the dry-forest habitat that

the parrots call home.

- Reducing habitat degradation by non-native species such as donkeys, goats, and pigs.

They are also growing seedlings of native trees to help with the reforestation of Klein Bonaire, Washington Slagbaai Park and other areas of Bonaire, funded in part by the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Island Government.

They are an incredible group of dedicated people.

But what they were missing as part of their team was.....A DOG!

I'm sure you can guess what comes next!

The team leaders came to the shelter to find a dog and finally Quint's day had come.

Quint is now a working part of the Echo team and loves his new life and interacting with all the wonderful people there. ■ *Story & photo by Nathalie Peterson & Marijke Passer*

Pets of the Week



Senior dogs: Stevie, Katie, Kiki

Adopting a senior dog is a wonderful experience for you and your new dog. You will gain a faithful companion. You will save a life. And don't forget, senior dogs and senior people bring out the best in each other. Old dogs make great friends!

Senior dogs lose their homes for a variety of reasons, usually having nothing to do with their behavior or temperament, but more due to the fact that their owners are unable to keep them for reasons including: the novelty of owning a dog wearing off, allergies, death of a guardian, a new baby, loss of a job, a move, change in work schedule, and various other lifestyle changes. These dogs need homes just as badly as young adoptees do, and they make wonderful household pets.

If you are interested in adopting a senior dog come and visit the Animal Shelter Bonaire at Kaminda Lagun 26a to meet them.

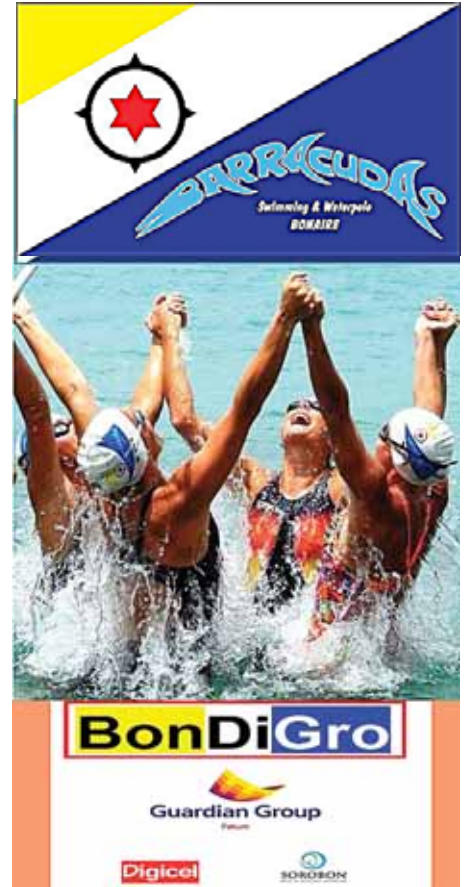
All the adoptable animals at the Animal Shelter Bonaire are treated against ticks and fleas are de-wormed, vaccinated and micro chipped.

For more information call #717-4989/ 701-4989 or e-mail us and like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/AnimalShelterBonaire/ animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com ■

Story & Photo by Nathalie Peterson



Bonaire Master Swimmers To London



The Master Swimmers of the Bonaire Aquatics Club "Barracudas" will participate at the LEN European Masters Championships (EMC) from May 25th until May 29th 2016 in London, the United Kingdom. The team members attending are Simone Sweers, Anita Smits, Evy Witlox and Nathalie Peterson.

Thanks to the wonderful support from the sponsors BonDiGro, Guardian group (Fatum Insurance), Sorobon Beach Resort Bonaire, Digicel, MCB, TCB, Bon Bida Gym, fxdc-communications, De Freewieler Bonaire, Mangasina di Boneiru (The Storehouse) and *The Bonaire Reporter* the Master Swimmers of the Bonaire Aquatics Club "Barracudas" can make history to be the first Bonaire (swim) team to participate at the LEN European Masters Championships. Follow and like us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/BonaireBarracudas>

■ *Press release*



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THE STARS HAVE IT

May 2016

ARIES (Mar. 21- April 20) Ferret out information that will hold them responsible. You may want to try your hand at a little creative writing. Don't let your boss get the better of you. Don't be too quick to judge those you live with. Don't do something silly just to get back at your mate. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

TAURUS (Apr. 21- May 21) You're in need of love. Attempt to face key issues with lovers or problems could escalate. Someone you work with may be emotional. Don't let your partner goad you into wearing your heart on your sleeve. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21) Unexpected romantic connections can be made if you go out with friends or take a pleasure trip. This is a good day to check out your investments. You could do extremely well in competitive sports events. Broaden your horizons and look into programs that will teach you awareness and relaxation. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

CANCER (June 22-July 22) Hold your temper and refrain from doing anything that might cause injury. You can make profitable investments if you purchase an art object for your home. You haven't been watching your spending habits and you may have been neglecting your duties. You may be frustrated by the way situations are being handled in your personal life. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Thursday.

LEO (July 23-Aug 22) Be sure to organize events that will keep the children busy. Resist any idle chatter. Overstatement will be your downfall. You might be overly emotional concerning situations at work. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 -Sept. 23) Visitors may be likely to drop by. You should expect to have changes in your home. You should consider getting your whole family involved in a project at home. Don't evade important issues; you may find yourself backed into a corner. Your luckiest events will occur on a Saturday.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 -Oct. 23) You can expect to have a problem with your lover. Don't put off the things that they have asked you to do. You can make money if you pursue your own business. Get involved in sports events that will benefit your physical appearance. Double-check before you go out. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Thursday.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22) Your talents might just be discovered. You could be your own worst enemy if you overreact to something you're told. Don't lend to people who have given you negative vibes. Changes regarding family members will set you off. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 -Dec. 21) Money problems will be difficult to deal with if you have a partner. Deep discussions may only lead to friction. Your best gains will come through helping others emotionally. Romance may be likely if you travel. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22.- Jan. 20) You may have difficulties with someone who lives with you. You can offer your help to others but back off if they appear to be offended by your persistence. This will not be the day to lend money to friends or family. Try to understand their point of view. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 -Feb. 19) You will be a bit of a spendthrift this month. Take time to do something nice for yourself. Be careful not to reveal private information. You must look into your options. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

PISCES (Feb. 20-Mar. 20) You need to keep busy doing things that you both enjoy. Avoid being intimately involved with clients or colleagues. Property investments, insurance, tax rebates, or inheritance should bring you financial gains. Don't forget to let your mate know how much you care. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday. ■

Michael Thiessen



BONAIRE SKY PARK*

*to find it... just look up

TRANSIT FEVER!

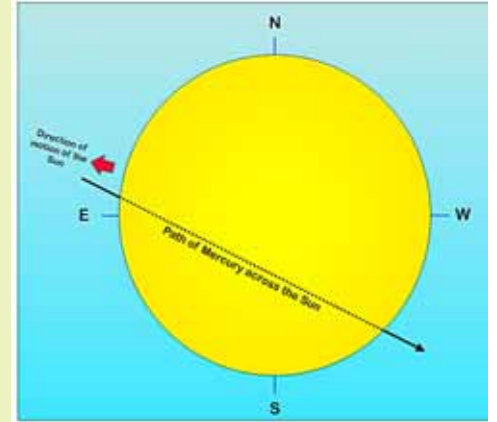
There's something really exciting happening in the sky in a few weeks and it involves the closest planet to the Sun. On Monday, May 9th, 2016, we will get to see the planet Mercury passing directly in front of the Sun. We call that a **Transit of Mercury**; and it's something you don't get to see often.

Transits of Mercury across the Sun are rare events where Mercury passes directly between Earth and the Sun. It's like an **Eclipse**, but not nearly as dramatic. From Earth's perspective, we'll see Mercury as a little black dot crossing in front of the Sun and even though they're rare, these Mercury transits are a lot more frequent than **transits of Venus**.

On average, there are between 13 and 14 transits of Mercury visible each century. This is mostly because Mercury is much closer to the Sun and it orbits more rapidly.

A Mercury year is only 88 days long, so it passes between the Earth and Sun four times each year here on Earth. However, Mercury's orbit and Earth's orbit are inclined to each other, so most of the time, Mercury passes above or below the Sun as it passes us. Here on Earth, transits of Mercury happen in May and November. The first observation of a transit of Mercury was on November 7, 1631, by **French astronomer Pierre Gassendi**. The most recent transits happened in 1999, 2003 and 2006. After this one, the next transit will occur on November 11th, 2019; but after that, we won't see another until November 13, 2032.

Transits of Mercury are not only visible from Earth. On June 3rd, 2014, the **Curiosity Rover on Mars** viewed Mercury transiting the Sun. This marked the first time in history where a planetary transit was viewed from a location other than Earth. Speaking of which, if you happen to be visiting Mars on November 10, 2084, make sure you take your solar filters with you, because that's the day our planet Earth will transit the Sun, from Mars' perspective. If you have a telescope with you, you'll even be able to see Earth's **Moon**. That's almost 68 years from now. But think about it, people are living longer these days; and we might have astronauts on Mars by that time.



If you don't want to wait until 2084, visit **Jupiter** on January 10th, 2026 and you can see Earth transiting the Sun then.

The 2016 transit of Mercury will happen between sunrise and 2:38 pm Sky Park time on Monday, May 9th. Make sure you have a strong solar filter.

So now, let's check out what's going on in the rest of the sky. Shortly before midnight any night this week, and if our skies are clear, you'll get to see three planets gracing the sky at the same time. If you look toward the west, you'll see the backwards question mark of stars that make the **Head of Leo the Lion**. The giant planet Jupiter is just below the triangle of stars that make Leo's tail. In a telescope you'll be able to see four star-like objects to the right and left of Jupiter. These are **Jupiter's four largest moons: Io, Europa, Ganymede and Callisto**, and each night, they'll be in a different position.

If you look toward the southeast, you'll see the stars of **Scorpius the Scorpion** emerging above the horizon. Among them, you'll see two bright lights that form a triangle with the star **Antares**. **Mars** will be the brightest of the three lights and at midnight will appear at the top of the triangle. **Saturn** is the light on the bottom left and **Antares** is the light on the bottom right.

Mars is getting brighter right now because it's about to enter what astronomers call "**opposition**." When Mars is near opposition, it's opposite the Sun in the sky and it's at its biggest and brightest. Saturn is also nearing "**opposition**," but that won't occur until June 3rd, 2016. ■

Dean Regas & James Albury

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