

FREE

BONAIRE

May 13 - May 27, 2019, Year 26, Issue 10

The REPORTER



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Celebrating Captain Don Stewart
Remembering Doei Diaz
Jack & Sue, pioneer
digital photographers



Photo: Pam Broderson

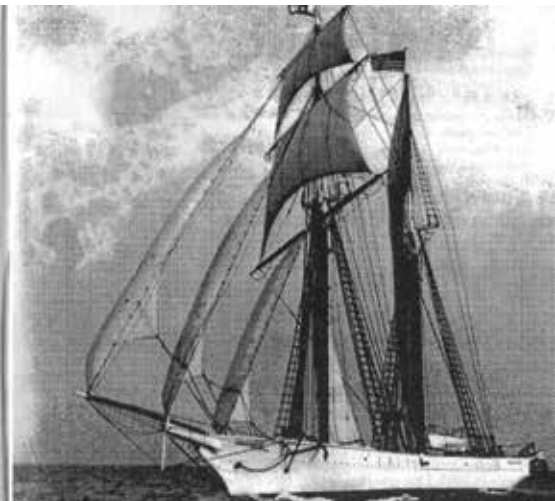
Captain Don and diving arrive

(Excerpt from "The Adventures of Captain Don")

Organized diving began on Bonaire May 21, 1962 at 4:30 pm. How do we know the exact time? "Well, we cleared customs at 2:30 and I would guess it took me about an hour to greet the local officials and visitors. Then another hour to move up to Heit's pier, secure my vessel, gear up and get into the water," said Captain Don Stewart, "I could see the reef as we tied up. I heard it calling my name."

In 1962, there were only 4000 people living on Bonaire and 300 cars. There were no compressors for filling air tanks because there were no scuba tanks, except for the six Captain Don brought.

This issue of *The Bonaire Reporter* is dedicated to Captain Don Stewart, recognized as the 'Father of Bonaire' diving. We have gathered images and stories from people that were directly impacted by Captain Don. In truth, whether you knew the man personally or not, his life work has an effect on yours if you live on the island or visit. He was a born again conservationist devoting himself to protecting the island's marine life and all nature. The Captain was instrumental in banning spearfishing and tropical fish and coral collecting, implementation of the first permanent protective mooring systems, naming of dive sites, establishing the Council of Underwater Resort Operators and aided in establish-



ing the Bonaire Marine Park. He is also responsible for opening the first hotel on the island Zeebad (Divi Flamingo) and opened Captain Don's habitat and the concept of "diving freedom".

Don said in "Reef Windows", "I have done my best to be a worthy custodian of Bonaire's reefs. I hope you will follow the precepts I have learned over the years as you dive the wonders of Bonaire and "Take only pictures and memories, leave only bubbles."

On May 20, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. at his namesake dive resort, Capt. Don's Habitat, we celebrate Captain Don with photos, stories and fun. We do this in hopes of carrying on his legacy and recognizing his work for years to come.

What do all these things have in common?

- Naming coral reef dive sites.
- The Man/Sea Concept.
- The Armstrong Opinion.
- A hotel owned by a dive shop.
- The concept of a protected coral reef.
- Banning of spear fishing, tropical fish and coral collecting...and dive gloves.
- Monk Cells
- Golden Tanks
- Ceremonial chopsticks
- Marine park recognition by the World Wildlife Fund.
- Disposable boats.
- Bonaire Dive Council

Answer: They were all concepts of Cap'n Don.



Find more old photos of Capt. Don and friends on FB.

Elections European Parliament 2019

The 2019 European Parliament election for the Netherlands delegation is scheduled for May 23, 2019.

Dutch residents on Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba have no need to register to vote, because our islands are part of the Netherlands. They may, as in other Dutch municipalities, vote at their polling stations. Eligible voters should must meet three criteria. They must have either the Dutch nationality or the nationality of a European Union member state; be 18 years or older; be not disqualified from voting.

Voters need to bring to the polling station a valid identification and a personal voting pass. Identification can be a Dutch passport, or an ID card or driver's license. Voters should receive a personal voting pass in the mail, but if a new voting pass is needed, it can be personally picked up at the Census Office with valid identification.

Voters on Boanire can vote at any of the polling stations below.

- Jong Bonaire
- Kaya Libertador Simon Bolivar 16
- Sento di Bario Tera Cora
- Kaya Monseigneur Niewindt
- Sento di Bario Nikiboko
- Kaya Pos di Amor 44

Once every 5 years the Dutch members of the European Parliament are elected. In this Parliament decisions are made about important subjects such as tourism, climate change and safety. This is the 9th time the elections have been held for the European Parliament in the Netherlands. The number of Dutch seats will increase from 26 to 29 following Brexit.

► Freewinds, the Scientology cruise ship which is a frequent visitor to Bonaire, was quarantined May 4 in its home port of Curaçao as passengers were tested for measles. Health officials took 277 blood samples from those onboard the ship and sent them to the Netherlands. The results are expected to come back by Tuesday or Wednesday, according to the Associated Press. Of those aboard, ten passengers and 31 crew members were able to provide proof of vaccination.



Freewinds was put under quarantine on April 30 in St Lucia when health officials were notified that a female crew member had been diagnosed with measles. The crew member, who had traveled to Europe, visited a doctor in Curaçao for cold symptoms on April 22. A blood sample sent to Aruba confirmed she had measles on April 29, a day after the ship departed for St Lucia. After deliberations with the Pan American Health Organization, St Lucia health officials put the ship under quarantine on April 30.

As they awaited the test results, passengers and crew members were not allowed to leave the ship because of the risk that they carry the highly infectious disease, authorities said. "If we allow that to happen, measles spreads in places where the risk of severe complications is much bigger, especially when we're talking about poor countries where people have a lower level of resistance," Curaçao epidemiologist Izzy Gerstenbluth told the Associated Press on Saturday. Gerstenbluth said that passengers on the ship have been cooperating with officials.

After the case of measles was discovered, the Curaçao Public Health Department (GGD) asked people to report for testing if they had visited the Freewinds between April 22 - 28. The GGD did not find the disease in the 108 people who had themselves checked for measles. According to the Ministry of Health, the chance is small that there are more measles cases in Curaçao. *Sources: Associated Press, Curaçao Chronicle*



Rincon Day 2019

See more Rincon Day photos on Facebook! J.M.

► The deadline is May 15th—but not really. Have you already submitted your **Income Tax Return** for 2018? Your return was due May 15, 2019, but Belastingdienst (the tax office) grants an automatic extension, allowing Bonaire's residents until August 15 to get their returns in. Returns may be submitted on-line or on paper.

► **The joint trade unions of Bonaire** are united in the Union di Sindikatonan Boneriano (USIBO). USIBO leaders, Mavis Abrahams, recently-elected president, and Norwin Willem, secretary, used a Labor Day meeting to present two goals. They want to offer their members legal help as needed, and they want to attract newer, younger workers to the unions in order to groom them as future leaders.

► **Grocery store rankings remained the same in April 2019** as in March, reported Unkobon, the Bonaire consumer association. Out of the 15 supermarkets that participate in the price comparison, Warehouse Bonaire (Index 75) and Wing Cheung Supermarket (Index 89) are again the two average cheapest stores, with Jia Xing Supermarket and Karibe Nobo Supermarket just behind. Fifth place is shared by Fruteria Union, Van den Tweel Supermarket and Xu Sheng Supermarket, all three with an index of 97.

According to Unkobon, most price changes occur with fresh produce. Bananas were not available in most stores in March, probably due to problems with supplies from Venezuela. In April, a large number of stores did have bananas, but at an average of almost 80 cents each, double the price in February 2019. In February, limes cost an average of \$ 3.18 per kilogram, in March an average of \$ 3.45 per kilogram, and this month the price rose again to an average of \$ 4.10 per kilogram. Unkobon predicts that the price of these products will continue to increase due to the border closure of Venezuela.

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Available in 80 locations
Printed every two weeks

Next edition: May 27, 2019

News Deadline: May 24, 2019

Contributor's Deadline: May 27, 2019

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Distribution: Marlene & Co. (Playa), Yuchi Molina (Rincon), Divi-Divi Airline,

Production: Barbara Lockwood Printed by: DeStad Drukkerij, Curaçao

Founders: George and Laura DeSalvo
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Law Enforcement in the ABCs

People in the news

Curaçao. On May 8, 2019, the Court of First Instance sentenced 78-year-old Eric Garcia four years in prison for misappropriating \$11 million, forgery and money laundering. Additionally, if Garcia doesn't repay 19 million guilders, a three-year prison term will be added. *Curaçao Chronicle*

Aruba links to Interpol. Aruba's Border Control System (RADEX BCMS) is to be linked to Interpol. databases, one of the largest criminal databases in the world. Aruba will use the Interpol interface to check all incoming and outgoing travelers. These indepth background checks will allow RADEX BCMS to register visitors that appear in the Interpol watch list for such reasons as travelling with a stolen passport or being on a criminal's registry.

Safety on the open seas. Following the sinking of the motor yacht, Sherwanda, BONAIRE.NU interviewed authorities in the port office and Shipping Inspectorate about the regulations for ships which transport passengers.

Ships may only carry paying passengers if the ship has a valid certificate. Presently no ships registered on Bonaire have the certificates to make trips to Curaçao, Klein Curaçao and / or on the open sea, such as with fishing charters. Regulation and certification ensures that a ship is suitable for sailing to and from Curaçao, that it has the correct safety and fire-fighting equipment, and that its crew have the skills to sail the ship.

The local port authorities and /or the Shipping Inspectorate do not check recreational craft that transport family or friends. Unlike the certified ships, recreational craft have never been checked and will not be checked for seaworthiness or the correct equipment.

After the sinking of Sherwanda the safety of sea-going ships will be closely monitored, in a collaboration with, among others, the Coast Guard, KMar and Customs. Where necessary, authorities will take legal action. Kmar (The Royal Netherlands Marechaussee) is a military police organization that falls under the Ministry of Defense. The KMar has been active in the Caribbean for more than a century and a half. *BONAIRE.NU*

Bonaire Police Report for May 3- May 8:

Dive site thefts. In recent days, thefts have been committed from cars parked at dive sites. The police ask you not to leave any valuables in the car when you go swimming, snorkeling or diving.

Three houses were burgled. Valuables and cash were taken from houses on Kaya Leo and Kaya Proud during evening break-ins. Sunday morning a Punt Vierkant house was broken into.



Samira Rafaela, has been campaigning on the ABC islands this month. Age 30, Rafaela is number 3 on the D66 list of candidates for the European Parliament elections. (Democraten 66 is a social-liberal political party founded in 1966 in The Netherlands.) Rafaela was in Bonaire 9, 10 and 11 May. She urges voters in the Dutch Caribbean to exercise their voting rights on 23 May, believing that many laws and regulations adopted by the European Union will influence daily life in the Caribbean. If Rafaela gets elected to the

European Parliament, she wants to be an ambassador for the islands in Brussels.

Samira has worked in various jobs within and outside politics and currently advises the Dutch police about security and inclusion. You can read a recent speech of hers at: <https://www.samirarafaela.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Speech-Osnabrück-uitgesproken-versie.pdf> Rafaela's website is: <https://www.samirarafaela.eu>



Former Marketing Manager of the Tourism Corporation Bonaire (TCB), **Melinda Hassel**, has been appointed as Communications Manager at the Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association (AHATA). Hassel was employed at TCB for five years. AHATA has expressed their pleasure in welcoming home a "talented Aruban."



Deputy Elvis Tjin Asjoe is now holding office hours every Thursday from 4pm until 6pm at the administrative offices. To make an appointment call 717 5330, extension 1242, or email to deputy.tjin-asjoe@gmail.com. In addition to these office hours, the representative will go into the neighborhoods to talk to residents. As soon as a schedule is ready, the day, time and place will be announced.

A night-time traffic control on Kaya Nikiboko Noord and Bulevar Gobernador Nicolaas Debrot checked 63 cars, issuing 14 fines for, among other things, defective rear lights, and the inability to show a driver's license and / or valid insurance papers. A morning traffic control in the Center Area issued fines for infractions such as incorrect parking. A car was towed.

On the roads: Around 00.00 Saturday 4 May to Sunday 5 May, a collision occurred between two cars on the Kaya Korona. Car 1 drove on the Kaya Korona and indicated that it wanted to drive on the Kaya Neerlandia with the turn signal. Car 2, driving behind car 1, did not see this and collided with car 1. One of the drivers hit her head against the windshield but did not have to go with the ambulance. *Communicatie KPCN*

If you want to give an (anonymous) tip, phone (+599) 717 7251
If there is no emergency, phone Bonaire (+599) 715 8000 or 717 8000

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In Memoriam

What the island owes to Doei Diaz

Doei Diaz was among the founders of:

- the Sailing Regatta,
- the May 2 Simadan parade,
- the local fishing tournament,
- the annual fishermen's Blessing of the Fleet.

In September 1975, Diaz was 17 when he entered the government of Bonaire's Port and Pilotage Service, the same day that BOPEC brought their first boat to the island. Diaz became captain of BOPEC's boat.

"He was man of the land and a man of the sea," said long-time friend, Glenn Thomas. "He was passionate about fishing, and about boats. He taught me how to fish and how to read the sea. During the week he worked on his own boat, *Speransa*, weekends he was on the sea."

For years Diaz sold fish from his house on JA Abraham Blvd. Doei revered the Virgen del Valle, patron of fisherman. At first he and local fishermen celebrated the fiesta di Virgen del Valle in his house and under the palu di wiri, a tree that saw the birth of the musical group Pali'Wiri. After a time the Blessing of the Fleet moved to Sorobon with the parade of boats in Lac and a sacrificial mass.

Doei loved the fishing sail boats. He was part of the group who began the sailing competitions that became Regatta.

In later years, Doei's attention moved to his kunuku, Pas Kontra Mi, where he raised goats and grew sorgum, fruit and vegetables. He and his wife Chana began the popular harvest festival "Ban wapa ku Chana I Doei" which first ended at his home, then in later years, at Wihemina Park. Groups from Bonaire, Aruba and Curaçao dance in the parade, dressed in their regional costumes, accompanied by different groups of krioyo musicians.

Doei Diaz was a man who created traditions for Bonaire. He brought us together in celebration and competition. Sosegá na pas. Rest in peace. Sources: Glenn Thomas, *Extra*, *The Bonaire Reporter*



Doei Diaz, carrying the Virgen del Valle, in the 2018 annual fisherman's blessing of the fleet. Below, in his garden with friends, and as a young fisherman.



Ask Kate

Bonaire real estate advice



Question: Are most places for sale on the island furnished? If not, how do I furnish it, do I need to send things over from home? Ana

Hi Ana, Many properties are sold furnished or partially furnished, you will be provided with an inventory list of anything that is included in the sale.

If you are buying an unfurnished property, you can purchase almost anything you need on the island, including furniture and appliances. The selection is limited, so if you have a specific style or color you want, you may need to ask a Bonaire store to order the items for you. You may also buy items in your country and ship them to Bonaire. In addition to the cost of transport, there is an 8% import tax on items shipped to Bonaire. You may also find used items for re-sale from people on the island. *All the best, Kate Butler, GRI, Real Estate Agent, RE/MAX Bonaire*

If you have a real estate question for Kate, email her at kate@bonairehomes.com
Tollfree from US: 1-866-611-7362

Remembering Hans Hass 1941 - Hass' book, "Amongst Corals and Sharks," previews his future

[Hass' story continues in Europe.] Hass now dreamed of other expeditions that would take him to the expansive coral seas of the Southern Hemisphere. There he wanted to get to know and explore the many unknown animal and plant species. The end of his 1941 book "Unter Korallen und Haien" [engl.: "Amongst Corals and Sharks"] provides an fascinating insight into his plans: "The Caribbean expedition showed what opportunities free-swimming underwater research provides. If the three of us were able to observe so much with such modest means and under such difficult conditions, what success must a more amply outfitted expedition to the South Sea coral world bring. The most important prerequisite for future journeys is a large ship outfitted with modern equipment with which we could cross the southern ocean. Equipped with new, improved gear and instruments, we could then explore the fish kingdom. We must be aided by scientists who, on the spot, can examine and evaluate everything that is brought up from the ocean depths. On board, they would have a modern laboratory at their disposal and instruct the diving team on the observation and filming of life processes of scientific interest in the ocean and the capture of rare fish for examination. I am convinced that such collaboration would enable us to make a valuable contribution to oceanic research. And I am certain that, at least once, our ship will sail to the Red Sea, through the Indian Ocean and to the South Sea coral islands and the Great Barrier Reef of Australia. May we then succeed in carrying out our project successfully, to penetrate ever deeper into the secrets and puzzles of the ocean depths and to make the ocean's beauty accessible to the public with photographs and films".

In this 1941 preview Hass already formulated everything that he would realize in the following two decades. The book proclaimed the conquest of a new



The three-masted schooner Xarifa

field of research. It was translated into almost two dozen languages, has since been reprinted in numerous editions and has sold nearly a half-million copies worldwide.

Starting in 1941, Hass wrote books and articles and held countless lectures in order to earn the money that would help him fulfill his dream of owning his own research ship and to spread the word about the new research method. At the same time, he wanted to show that sharks were not the blood-thirsty creatures they were often said to be and that they were no obstacle to the researchers working in the ocean depths.

Through laborious and painstaking work producing books and lectures, Hass was able, using his own funds, to acquire in 1951 the three-masted schooner XARIFA, hired a crew, gathered a team of scientists around him and set off, with himself as expeditionary leader, to explore the various oceanic coral reefs in great style. XARIFA's expeditions covered from 1953 to 1958 much of the world, from the Caribbean and Galapagos to the China Sea. In most of these locations, Hass' crew was the first to scuba dive. *Story by Michael Jung. To be continued: Hass revisits Bonaire in 1953.*

Ask a Geek by Brian Niessen

Last issue I was asked "Why we can't watch USA Netflix in Bonaire?", and briefly explained what the problem is and that a VPN is a possible solution. This issue, I will explain in depth why we need a VPN and the pitfalls of choosing the wrong one.

Simply put, a VPN is a Virtual Private Network, meaning that you can trick Netflix into believing that you are in the USA without leaving Bonaire.

But the question is "Why do we need it?"

The answer is that companies like Netflix, Hulu, and other streaming services license TV shows for specific countries (Like USA or Canada). Thus, under their license agreement, they cannot allow people in other territories to watch the shows, because they may be licensed to other companies for those areas. So, the solution is to pretend that you are in the USA (or Canada or Britain, etc). This is where a VPN comes in. It can make you seem to be in the country you want to be.

The problem with most VPN's is that they are like the 'after hours' bars that are hidden away in back alleys and only open once the legal bars close for the night. They are great, until too many people start using them, and once that happens, they are shut down. The same happens when Netflix is made aware of too many users using the same VPN. Another problem with cheap or free VPN's is that they aren't all that legit. They are run by nefarious people in places like China and they have access to all of the information you send/receive while using the VPN - including credit card numbers, etc. Thus, the solution is to use a well-known and trusted VPN service... and determine which type of VPN you really need - software only (for your iPad, computer, etc) or hardware based (for your TV, tablets, computers, etc).

In the next issue I will do a comparison of the various VPN services I have used, and tell you which one seems to be the best value and continues to work. *Brian Niessen, The Geek.*

Do you have a question about using computers and computer technology on Bonaire? Email it to the editor, and we'll get an answer for you next issue.

Memories of Captain Don

Cap'n Don's Habitat: In The Beginning

Maybe it was because Don, and his beautiful schooner the Valerie Queen, had previously worked in the movie industry in Hollywood, or maybe he was just born with a streak of wild creativity, but for sure he was one of the most unique and resourceful personalities ever to step into the diving industry or onto the island of Bonaire. He was a true showman and used this talent relentlessly in his daily interactions with everyone he met. His affinity for the dramatic is legendary.

I had met Don several years earlier on a dive trip to Bonaire. But on a July night in 1976, I was talking with him in a much different role. I had been sent to Bonaire by his new business partners in New York, who wanted me to help him manage the new and exciting venture that would become Cap'n Don's Habitat, the first resort hotel owned by a dive shop, called Aquaventure. It was late and we were drinking beer when I realized I was being interviewed in a most curious way.

He would abruptly change topics from generally informative explanations on how his dive operation system worked to absurdly irrelevant questions. "Frank, do you find that your full beard slows your underwater swim rate down?" "How much of a bribe did you have to pay for your instructor's certification?" And maybe his best, "Can you tell me the four colors of blood? That is what we teach in our scuba course." It was clearly a test of my ability to accept him, and I realized that if we were going to work together I had to pass. So I answered with an appropriate mixture of respect and well thought out opinions as well as my own absurdities. I was witnessing his flare for the dramatic and his showman's style, up close for the first of a thousand times.

In early August, the government of Bonaire gave its final approval for the transfer of the bankrupted property formerly called the DeBonaire Bungalows to Don and his business partners and the company Aqua Habitat was born. And so began one of the craziest and most hectic periods of my life, and one of the most rewarding. We knew we had a real challenge if we were going to meet the upcoming season, which was already being booked by divers. We worked as dive guides and construction contractors as time permitted. Appropriately, the first part of Habitat that Don determined needed to be restored was the bar. The logic was that it would serve as an instant source of revenue while we were getting the rooms ready for guest arrivals. In fact, the bar quickly became the most popular hang out on the island, due largely to the fact that Don was always there to entertain, and sometimes bartend. Don had the knack of forgetting who and what he served, so it was a bargain and everyone returned. So did we. Night after night we ended our workday there. There was an occasion when Don was having trouble meeting payroll for the staff, until we paid our bar bill and covered everyone. The bar was a 24-hour facility and also featured hammocks on the patio, where Don would take his 18-minute power nap every night. But always, morning would arrive and he was the first on the job, ready to take his divers underwater, build some other part of his dream resort, and keep up the entertainment at night.

Over the next year, we managed to renovate the cottages, one by one and increase our guest capacity. True to Don's showmanship, he maintained an extraordinarily affordable room rate, and featured Don's creative description of small rooms as "Monk Cells" costing divers a mere \$5 a night. Of course we had no hot water, so Don would advise guests to "shower when the sun was still out". Since we had no formal restaurant, we went to Miami and bought three large propane grills that guests were allowed to use. We built the first dive platform directly over the water and a divers cage to store gear, and we were then able to dock the dive boats and run reef trips directly from Habitat, instead of shuttling to the Hotel Bonaire. Late in the year, as the dive resort became more and more popular, we were able to buy our first three flat-top dive boats, customized and designed by Don of course.

Over the ensuing decades, Don's personality drove every decision at Habitat. Behind the scene he was very business oriented and did all he could to be successful. This serious side of his personality was never more obvious than when the topic was the environment. The current Bonaire Marine Park was the original concept he presented to Carl Steensma, an emissary of the Queen of Holland, who visited Bonaire to take Don's concept back for approval.

But exposed to the public's attention, he never gave up his outward appearance and image. He was a reincarnation of a Hollywood character, a salty buccaneer who found his island and stayed. When he was asked a question, he would never answer it directly, especially if he didn't know the answer. But he would always answer the question; instead of admitting he did not know. He told me "never to quote a whole number, always use a fraction or decimal to keep them off balance". He explained that his philosophy was simply BBB, which stood for Bullshit Baffles Brains. Over 40 years have gone by and thousands of stories can be told about Cap'n Don, affectionately by his many friends. His spirit continues at Habitat. He was the best showman the diving industry has ever had. **Frank Fennell**

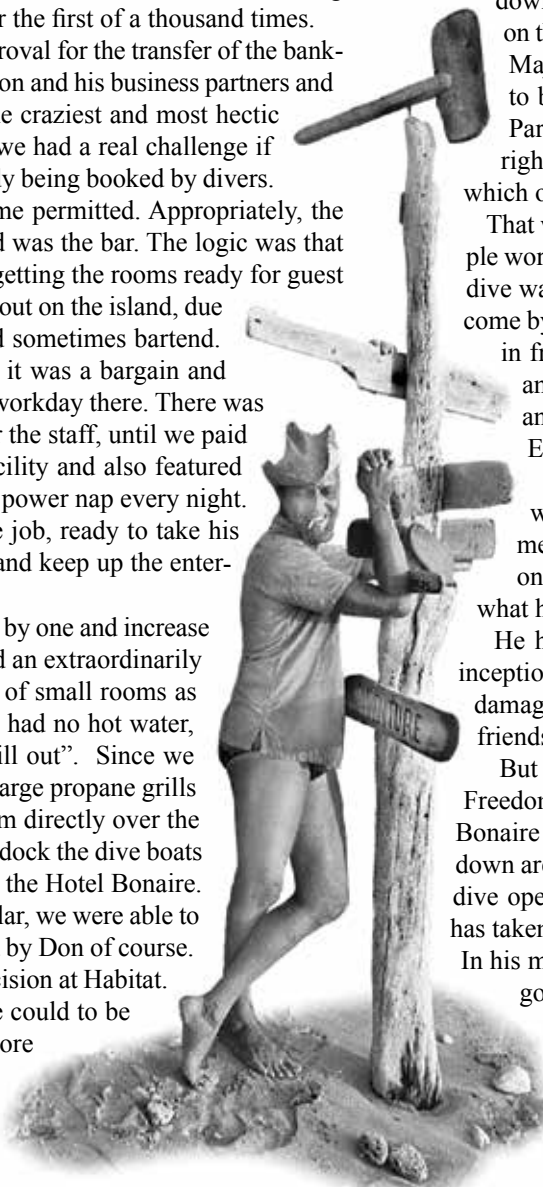


Photo: Pam Broderson

In 1973 I took my first adventure to the Caribbean to a little Island that was hardly known at the time, it was Bonaire. Capt'n Don Stewart was set up in the Hotel Bonaire nicely ensconced on a lovely little beach on the hotel property. He was partnering with a crazy guy from the US named Frank Fennell who was, I believe associated with Skin Diver Mag.

We were met at the Green Parrot bar at the airport by Cai Cai Cicilia and warmly welcomed to the little Island of Bonaire. There was no tower at the time. We had come in late and in the dark, and my first impression was, "WHERE HAVE I GOTTEN MYSELF???"

I had no experience with any other destinations than NYC and Montreal, so the Caribbean landscape and local architecture just set me back on my heels.

We were introduced to Capt'n Don with a welcoming rum punch and several more. As we all know Don was bigger than life, so I was dizzy with sea stories, some quite vivid and explicit and regaled with song by Don on his Quatro, a four stringed sort of Ukelele.

When I woke up the next morning, I walked out on the balcony over looking the sea and the beach area. I had never seen the color blue so vibrant and vivid. It was crystal clean and the coral was growing out of the water up and down the coast. I grabbed my mask and fins and went to snorkel on the beach. Back then the moment you hit the water the Sargent Majors and Yellow Tail Snappers having become accustomed to being fed swarmed you and nipped at your fingers and toes. Parrotfish and Queen Triggers, Black Surgeon and huge grouper right there on the doorstep.... It was like being in a dream from which one would be loath to wake.

That was so very long ago, as I look back, Don had incredible people working for him: Ebo, Eddie and Addie, Bruce and others. Every dive was an adventure. Each morning the school of dolphin would come by and, it was as if they knew you were watching because once in front of the hotel they would sky and flip and whistle.... just amazing... If that were not enough, the bill fish would breach and jump three times their length out of the water.... this was EVERY day.

Sometime so many years later. I was sitting with Don and we were sipping Appleton Rum, and he told me he wanted to show me something. He wanted to show me the future of diving, not only on Bonaire but other islands who would be influenced by what happens on Bonaire....

He had already instituted the sea anchor system. Up until it's inception dive guides would anchor into the reef and cause terrible damage to the undersea environment. So he set up with help from friends on Bonaire the sea anchor system.

But this night he wanted to show me where the home for Diving Freedom was going to be. We walked along the coastline from Hotel Bonaire thru the Divi Divi Trees and iguanas and blow holes to a run down area with little grey shacks. He said I'm going to build the best dive operation in the Caribbean right here. I thought, well the rum has taken hold tonight. But he was a man of vision and huge dreams. In his minds eye he knew what Habitat was going to be, what it was going to do, what it was going to become... And he did it.....

It started with the small, habitat shacks with two bedrooms, a sitting area, kitchen and a bath. He even had a couple that he called monks cells and if you ever stayed in one you would know why, but it made going to Bonaire affordable and even fun.

Flights often came in late at night and back then there weren't a lot of options for food. So Don would take up to the kitchen and cook hot dogs and beans, and we would drink a lot of rum. I spent many nights on the porch of my habitat and drank and sang with Don, or we'd go down to the edge of the water and shoot holes in the buoys with his air rifle..... it was a crazy time and one I'm blessed to have experienced. Don, being the smart man that he was stopped drinking and he developed the best scuba operation in the Caribbean.... it was the best and it led to the establishment of many other operations trying to match just how good he was.

So now the shore is lined with facility after facility swinging on the coat tails of Capt'n Don Stewart many changes have come, some good some bad. **Bill Lebarge**

Forty-one years ago when I first arrived at Cap't Don's Habitat, I met this man, who I wasn't very fond of because of some of his antics! As I got to know this man better, I became very fond of him and then fell in love with him because of what he stood for. He was a man who loved the sea and spent his last 20+ years trying to save our reefs. **Susan Ryan**

Capt'n Don and I met on Bonaire back in the early 1970's when my group Cedar Run Divers and I came to dive with Don at Aquaventure, which was on the grounds of the old Hotel Bonaire. Don led many of the dives himself back then, and he made every dive an adventure. Don called La Dania's Leap a total commit-

ment dive because we would leap into the sea with no way to exit until we reached Karpata. On the way home through Rincon, Don would treat us to ice cream at Prisca's. When he offered me a job as a dive instructor at the end of that week, my life became an adventure also. I taught high school English during the school year and diving on Bonaire during the summers. Eventually, Don asked me to edit his stories, and we had a lot of fun discussing just how many changes in grammar he would allow me to make. Thank you, Capt'n Don, for the great dives, the laughs, and the many years of friendship! **Linda Cober**

I took that [cover] picture in the early 1970's on an Atlantis Safari dive trip with Lee and Helen Turcotte. My husband, Fred, and I were photographers from Chicago and Lee and Helen were close friends. We traveled to Bonaire numerous times back then and got to know Capt Don quite well. Fred did a 30 minute film of the island and the diving. Helen wrote the script and KK provided the music.

Capt Don, in one of his late night vigils, pierced Fred's ear with a sail needle and a cup of rum. Few male divers escaped the island without an earring! The rum was set in front of the "patient" who thought it was to dull his pain, but after the earring was inserted Capt Don grabbed the rum for himself.

Lots of crazy, fun memories!

As I remember we stayed in crude cabins, with little electricity or hot water. It for sure wasn't a "hotel." But it was a great time and the diving was the BEST and Capt Don kept us entertained with his tall tales.

There are only a few of us left from that group. They were a wild and crazy, fun-loving group. At the time Bonaire was a small island that few people knew of, so glad to have had the opportunity to be part of the first wave. **Pam Brodersen, Digital Imagery, www.pambrodersen.com**

My beginnings: Landing in Bonaire for the first time in 1976, I had arranged to stay at the new 'Aquaventure Habitat'; soon to be christened 'Captain Don's Habitat'. There stood Captain Don himself, personally greeting and gauging each arriving guest ... all three of us...with his well groomed beard, ear ring, red and white shirt and arms folded over his large chest. He looked salty, a seaman maybe; little did I realize then how much pirate there was in those bones! He was clutching an envelope from the island's Government Offices. This is for you', he said as he thrust it towards me. 'Who are you and what are doing here?' he asked, worried perhaps that I was some sort of government agent. The letter was my official permission from the Lt. Governor himself to collect some mollusk specimens for the Harvard University Museum of Comparative Zoology where I was working on a project. I am here from the Malacology program to study mollusks, I replied. 'What the hell is THAT?' Don asked with a worried look. 'Clams and snails', I said. Relieved that it wasn't something worse, he hit me hard on the shoulder and said, 'Ok CLAM, let's go diving'. With that he gave me a moniker, CLAM, that still holds and by which I am often called. Our friendship and collaborations grew strong from that trip and onward for over a hundred returning visits and hundreds of dives over some forty years! **George CLAM Buckley, Environmental consultant, Arlington, Mass. 02476, gbuckley@fas.harvard.edu**



Rincon Day 2019

Our goal is to make The Pyramid a nice memorial for a man that did so much for so many. Anyone on Bonaire (living or visiting) can pass Captain Don's Pyramid, touch it and pledge to do better in helping the oceans and the Earth. You will join a family of many others who have "Stood by the Captain" to continue his legacy. **Ralph Stewart.**



I came to Bonaire in November 1974 with a group of 16 Divers from my dive shop, Divers Cove, in N.J. Diving with Capt Don, Ebo, Ady was such a fascinating experience we came every year with larger numbers. The last year, before I relocated here was in 1980. The group had grown to 70 divers.

Don had a magical way of entertaining us. He had great programs to get the divers to return, like the "Golden Tank" divers, his famous "Treasure Hunts" and his great stories.

We were diving at Nukove and Don was preparing what he called his tube steak BBQ which was hot dogs. He told us I'll cook the tube steaks but you guys have to watch out for the limbi limbis. We didn't know what the hell that was, it could have been some kind of Indians or animals as far as we knew.

Don told me the history of the La Machaca sunk behind Habitat. He said it came from the Amazon with a cargo of fly's that originally came from Africa. They were causing problems in the Amazon. If someone was bitten then it caused a disease. He told me the flies transferred the disease to the Damsel fish. So he built Habitat as a hospital for curing the inflicted divers. Don said if someone was bitten and didn't have sex in two hours they would die

One time Don came up to me and said, we just had some WOPS check in. He knew I was Italian so I just kind of looked at him and didn't say anything. Then later on, at a DEMA dive show, I was talking to Frank Fennell and he said, Don had some WOPS. So I asked Frank, "What is that?" And Frank said, check-ins 'With Out Papers'.

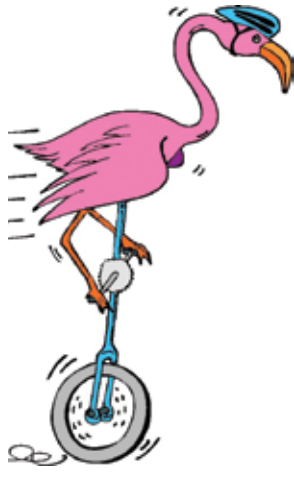
We had a "Special Bond" and I miss him as others do. A note for others: "If you hear anyone speak bad about Capt. Don, you better study that person well, they could be the problem." **Al Catalfumo, Black Durgon Inn and Bonaire Donkey Protection League**

Memories of Captain Don, continued on page 7



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To: The People Of Bonaire
Subject: Naming A Street/Road

For Captain Donald A. Stewart

With this letter I ask the question: "Why is there no street or road named for Captain Don? Why is he not remembered, honored, and treasured publicly by the island he loved so much?"

Through his vision and with the help of many others, Bonaire has served as a model of reef management, conservation, and sustainable development over time.

It is a well-known fact that Captain Don Stewart is the founder of the Dive Tourism Industry in Bonaire. He helped Bonaire emerge as a top ranking scuba diving and snorkel destination that still continues to this day.

He helped form the Council of Underwater Resort Operators (CURO) as an environmental group to help manage Bonaire's reefs.

He started the "Sea Tether" undersea mooring program, and helped finance, build and install 60 moorings.

Admired as a "Visionary" in reef ecology his "Sea Ranger" concept is considered the springboard for the



Photo: Geri Murphy

now Bonaire Marine Park which is modeled and has been copied on other islands around the world.

Over the years Captain Don has received numerous awards. In 2005 he was inducted into the "International Divers Hall Of Fame" and is recognized and respected world wide for his environmental vision and leadership.

He was also awarded with the title of Knight from the Dutch Order of Orange-Nassau in 2008.

Almost 4 years ago, shortly after Captain Don passed away, I sent an open letter to the Government of Bonaire titled "Honoring our Hero's" which also appeared in Extra and The Bonaire Reporter; I asked this same question, and did not get any reaction from the Government or the Community.

Which street or road? I would suggest from the gate at Hato until a 1000 Steps (currently Bulevar Gob. N. Debrot and part of the Queen's Highway), because (1) Captain Don named many, if not all, the dive sites along that stretch of road, and (2) It is a beautiful drive.

Bonaire to this day continues to benefit from Captain Don's vision that has now become his legacy. That is why I feel he merits; he most certainly deserves something permanent and visual on Bonaire. So I again I ask the question, "Why is there no street or road named for Captain Don? Why is he not remembered, honored, and treasured publically by the island he loved so much?"

Ralph Moogie Stewart, moogie@moogienation.com

Reason #1 Why Captain Don Is My Hero

If you're reading this, you're interested in Bonaire's coral reefs. I'll bet you recognize that one reason our reefs are so beautiful is because we don't use anchors on Bonaire. Other places you've dived have used moorings on dive sites just like we do on Bonaire, so using moorings probably seem like standard operating procedure to you -- and you were right -- they are standard operating procedure with dive operators all around the world.

But the procedure had to start somewhere, right? And the place where it began is right here on Bonaire. And the person who came up with the concept is Captain Don Stewart, who arrived on Bonaire 21 May 1962, a mere 57 years ago, and adopted Bonaire as his home.

Don began guiding divers over Bonaire's reefs, first by shore diving and eventually by boat (even Don couldn't figure out a way to get to Klein Bonaire by truck). It didn't take long for the Captain to realize that every time an anchor was used, coral was damaged. He solved that problem by creating permanent protective moorings on dive sites. We on Bonaire were the first in the world to protect our coral reefs by placing protective moorings on dive sites, thanks to Captain Don.

Here's what was going on elsewhere: In the late 1970's I was on a dive charter boat in what was then John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park. The boat pulled up over a large sandy area that was surrounded by a natural coral wall with lush, live, glorious elkhorn coral colonies growing on the top. The mate dropped the anchor in the sand, a location which was perfect for protecting the coral.

Then the captain put the boat in reverse and powered backwards, dragging the anchor through the sand until it hooked on the coral wall; they tied the boat with the anchor chain breaking more of that glorious elkhorn every time the boat moved with current, waves, or wind.

For a few moments I was too horrified to speak. Finally I choked out, "Why did you anchor in the live coral?"

The mate replied succinctly but not accurately, "Better hook."

Here on Bonaire, Don's initial protective moorings had been made by tying a cable around a dead coral head, then attaching a buoy at the surface. In 1981, he created the double-barrel moorings: the barrels were donated by Bonaire's power plant; the re-bar that held the barrels together was from an abandoned construction project; the use of the crane barge that transported the moorings to the sites was donated by the oil transshipment terminal. By 1982, Bonaire had placed 40 moorings at dive sites and anchoring (with a couple of exceptions) was prohibited by law.

The usual definition of a mooring is something on the bottom to which a boat can attach instead of using an anchor. Harbors all over the world provide moorings for yachts, so what's the big deal about the moorings Don designed?

The mooring chain or line to which yachts attach is often long enough to drag on the bottom. This is not any kind of a problem in harbors since the bottom is often barren. A dragging chain or rope is a problem on a living reef, but it's easily solved by the second characteristic of Don's mooring concept -- the one most often forgotten or ignored -- the line must go directly from the mooring to the surface buoy. Once both requirements are met, the mooring is what I'm suggesting we call a protective mooring. To use the mooring, boats tie to the buoy lines; the larger the vessel the more line should be used between the buoy and the boat.

On one Coral Sea liveaboard (the Golden Dawn) in the 1980's, my group talked about Bonaire's protective moorings -- and the Captain-Owner of that vessel, and his crew, were so excited about the concept that they created temporary moorings, using dead coral heads and buoys to the surface, at every site for the rest of the trip. By the next year they had installed and were using permanent protective moorings. Another Papua New Guinea liveaboard Captain-Owner told me, "I anchor in the same place every time, so on each site I only damage one section of reef. We in the tropical Pacific have enough coral so we don't have to worry about every single polyp." In less than two years, he had come to his senses and installed permanent protective moorings on his dive sites.

Thanks to Captain Don, we've had protective moorings on Bonaire's dive sites for about 40 years. Thanks to Don, we don't have to think about what our reefs would look like if boats had been anchoring on them for decades. While coral was being unnecessarily, irreparably, thoughtlessly destroyed on reefs everywhere else, Captain Don Stewart found a way to protect Bonaire's coral without endangering vessels or people. He saved the lives of untold numbers of marine animals, initially here on Bonaire and now all over our planet!

It's an amazing legacy Don left to the world's reefs, and to Bonaire's reefs, and to those of us who love them.

That's one reason why Don is my hero. Is he your hero? Tell us why. *Story and photo Dee Scarr*

Memories of Captain Don, continued on page 13

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Jack and Sue Drafahl pioneer digital underwater photography



Jack and Sue Drafahl's workshop at Captain Don's Habitat

Bonaire's coral reefs and marine life have long been the subject of underwater photographers. For many years every resort or hotel had its own photo-pro to instruct 'wanabe' photographers on how to capture life underwater. There were photo competitions with lectures and advice from dive magazine photographers and prizes for the best images. Divers flocked to Bonaire to learn with hopes of winning the latest equipment or trips. But today, with the death of film, and rise of digital cameras you can't find a photo-pro anywhere. What happened? Did digital cameras instill in everyone with a camera the inherent know-how to take photos?

No, that's not the case at all, say visiting digital photo gurus Jack and Sue Drafahl. The Drafahls have been at the forefront of the 'digital explosion' for years and have held their digital photo schools for the last 18 years at Captain Don's Habitat.

Sue explained that shooting digital offers more opportunities for a lot of shooters. With film they never knew until they got home after a trip if they had a whole lot of bad pictures. With digital they know if the pictures are bad immediately. "It's kind of like a photo school underwater if you utilize it, but some people just shoot and they don't really care," said Sue.

Many people fell under the misguided idea that when digital replaced film cameras, everything got easier because you weren't limited to 36 shots. People thought they could shoot anything and fix it in Photoshop, Lightroom or other editing software.

Sue added, "You have to go back to the

old school. You have to get it right in the film frame or in digital pixels. You have to get it 100% right the first time."

Workshops at Captain Don's Habitat.

Since 2001, Jack and Sue have made a yearly trek from their digital photo school on the Oregon coast to teach at Captain Don's Habitat. They were here last week with a small class of repeat students.

The students return not so much to learn something new but to hone their skills each year. They can get all the lectures online but the class is personalized teaching.

Each student has a different agenda on what they hope to achieve. They might need help with a new camera system, lighting or how to work with animals. Each student receives one on one attention to accomplish his/her goals.

"I don't bring a camera when I come to Bonaire. I'm here for the students," said Sue. Sometimes she is in the water three times a day equipped with a slate to communicate with the students.

At 4:30, after a day of diving, the technical side of digital photography begins with Jack, the digital editing genius. With a master's in education, Sue said her husband is really the photo instructor and he can answer almost any question the students ask.

"Everyone has a different reason for shooting; everyone is different. Telling someone they are breaking the rules of photography is wrong. That someone could turn out to be the person that goes out and sells his shot for a 1000 bucks," Jack said, "There are no rules! There are things to consider like settings. But everyone has a little different agenda and

that's what I like about it."

The Drafahls instill conservation and were part of the accolade team that Capt. Don set up.

Sue said, "Dee Scarr and I worked this out years ago - to touch the reef is a no - to damage the reef by not having proper stabilization is worse. We instill the one finger touch. The photographer should be able to adjust and have one finger on a dead spot. When we hear of one of our people not doing this, then they are reprimanded."

Early days for Jack and Sue

For several years Jack and Sue called the famed Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara, California their home. They met there, attended school there, and Jack taught there while Sue worked as a professional photographer. Jack learned to dive in 1969 and Sue followed in 1974 and their underwater photography adventure began.

After moving to Oregon in the 80's, they worked for countless magazines providing imagery and writing. They became a reliable product review team for magazines and personal photography clients. They tested films to see which were better for underwater shooting and some of the first digital cameras.

"We saw everything ahead of everyone so when digital came on the scene, we knew all about the cameras. People asked us is this digital thing a fad?" Sue said, "It's not; it's like a freight train and you better get out of its way. It's coming, and you better get on board."

The first digital camera sold to the public was in 1991 and cost \$13,000. By 1993 Jack and Sue were testing some of the first cameras and their first digital product review was the Canon-EOS DCS 5 for Photo Lab Management magazine in 1995.

Jack and Sue were definitely aboard the digital train and were selling tickets to anyone interested, but acceptance was slow.

Starting with their early trips in 2002 everyone was shooting film. In 2003 it was half film and digital, 2004 was predominantly digital and in 2005 almost all was digital.

Over to fiction

The Drafahls said they have been writing for mag-



Jack assists student Paul Schorzman of Portland, Oregon in editing his images

azines for what seems like forever.

"I got tired of writing about real stuff. Having to be really accurate," Jack said, "I'd rather make stuff up."

The couple started writing fiction in 1996 but were so busy writing the technical stuff for magazines they never had the time to get serious about it. After concluding they weren't going to write the great American novel, they decided to just do it, but that took another 10 years. To date, they have published four books and are working on the fifth and have eight or nine waiting to be published.

The books are action adventure, sci-fi and time and space with Acroname titles, the initials of the main characters, CAT, DNA and OMG.

Jack writes the meat of the story and Sue cleans it up. She says he likes to dump his brains on paper [and] it's my job to fix it. It only makes sense that all of their fiction books have some diving sequences in the story.

"They always say you should write what you know," said Jack.

The Drafahls have scheduled digital photo classes for 2019 in Tonga and the Solomon Islands. All of Jack and Sue's fiction and non-fiction books can be found on Amazon. To learn more about Jack and Sue, their digital photography classes and books or to take one of their free online photo classes visit www.jackandsue.com. *Story and photo, J.M.*



Captain Don Day May 20, 6-8 p.m.

Capt. Don Stewart arrived on Bonaire May 21, 1962
He is considered the father of diving on Bonaire
and a pioneer in conservation of the marine environment.

Join the celebration of Don

Slide show and video of the 'old days'
Rum Punch Party and Raffle with great prizes from
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See you at Habitat!



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Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB) staff and volunteer Beachkeepers discovered the first sea turtle nest of 2019 on Bonaire. This finding officially begins turtle nesting season that runs from May to December. During this time STCB staff and volunteers will monitor the beaches three times a week.

The first nest was laid by a loggerhead sea turtle, one of three (critically) endangered species of marine turtles nesting on Bonaire. Loggerheads are normally the first to lay their nests on the beaches of Bonaire, followed by green turtles and hawksbills.

“Bonaire’s beaches receive an annual average of 100 nests,” said Kaj Schut, STCB’s Communications Coordinator. “We hope this nest will be the start of another successful nesting season!”

This year, STCB will continue its long-term studies of nesting sea turtles by recording every sea turtle nest and false crawl on Bonaire and Klein Bonaire, marking each nest and collecting a variety of data.

You can help STCB carry out their work by adopting one or more sea turtle nests. Your support allows them to monitor the safety of the nests, to relocate nests that are in danger of drowning, to place barriers around nests that are laid on popular beaches and to rescue hatchlings that become wrapped in roots during hatching. Over the past five years, the public has helped STCB save more than 13,000 (critically) endangered sea turtle hatchlings through the adoption of 125 sea turtle nests.

The following companies and families have already committed to Adopt-A-Nest in 2019: Best Cellars Bonaire, Blue Jay Holding Bonaire, Bonaire Office Systems B.V., Administratiekantoor Brandaris B.V., Brave Water Foundation, Buts Technical Consultancy, The Cadushy Distillery, Cargill Salt Bonaire B.V.,



Henk van Twillert

After a successful first celebration weekend with interesting and well visited performances, the Classical Music Board Bonaire continues their jubilee with another weekend of music.

Next to special events for seniors at Cocari and school children at the Colegio San Luis Beltran school in Rincon, all are cordially invited to attend the public events on Friday 24 and Saturday 25 May,

On Friday evening 24 May the saxophonists Henk van Twillert and colleagues together with the Bonairian colleagues of Saxomania will roam the streets of Kralendijk.



A Glimpse of the Reef at Night

Wouldn’t it be nice to have perfect neutral buoyancy all the time, like fish do? We see them every day, hovering effortlessly in the water as they mosey around seeking food.

But if they hover at night while sleeping, a current could carry them away. They would be easy prey for nighttime predators, and awakening in an unfamiliar place might make them easy prey for daytime predators, too.

Different fish solve this problem in different ways, but my favorite solution is the filefish’s: when turning in for the night, they bite onto something that’s attached to the reef, and continue their hold until morning.

Really, that’s what they do! Look at the photo!

I’ve seen this behavior in person, with orange-spotted, slender, and scrawled filefish. Back when the Piers were open for diving, a scrawled filefish living under the North Pier bit onto a little bump of metal on a particular piling every night. We never took photos because we didn’t want to disturb its sleep.

Years ago, a divemaster on my very first Caribbean trip told me night diving wasn’t worth the trouble. “Anything you want to see,” he declared, “I can show you in the daytime.” I didn’t have the knowledge then to tell him I’d rather see an arrow crab actually climbing out of its shell than find a crab and a molt. Wouldn’t you prefer to look at an expanded, feeding basketstar instead of one that’s tangled up like a bird’s nest in a gorgonian?

And I wonder what that divemaster would think about how the filefish he sees every day are able to greet sunrise in the same location as they met sunset...*Photo and story by Dee Scarr*



Festival Musika Mundial di Boneiru

They will play their classical tunes from 19 hrs onward walking Kaya Grandi and the boulevard bringing the public to Wilhelminaplein. There, they will continue their performance in the music cupola. A creative program, combining classical tunes with Antillean tunes. Popular music bringing many to their feet! Special guest Chaira Borderslee will entertain the crowd with her fantastic voice, singing Aida opera tunes. After the saxophonists, the Silver Bullet Steel Band takes over and will enliven the square with their steel pans. Dancing shoes recommended.

Join us on Wilhelminaplein, get a drink at Cuba Compagnie and enjoy these free performances.

Rounding off the jubilee, the Classical Music Board Bonaire organizes a very festive gala evening on Saturday 25 May from 20 hrs at Plaza Resort Bonaire. A classical concert, with traditional music and special arrangements composed for this event. You will get to see a very different side of the saxophonists Henk van Twillert and Saxomania. A unique evening, and style full event. Get your smoking jacket out, brush off your gala dress and come to enjoy a tasteful gala evening.

Tickets available via www.classicalmusicbonaire.com or at Addo’s bookstore.

From their start in May 2009, the Classical Music Board Bonaire has organized over 80 concerts, master-



Saxomania

classes and clinics as well as concert for school children, with ten thousand plus guests.

With the continuing goal to make classical music accessible for all islanders, the Classical Music Board Bonaire hopes to inspire not only music lovers but also those who have not yet been acquainted with music. Performances for young and old, a wind ensemble street parade through the streets of town, traditional krio-yo music in the music cupola, Aida opera highlights, serious Bach, contrabassoon and baritone sax, the piano grandi. A festival to remember! *Hellen Volmerink, Photos: Classical Music Board Bonaire*

A Garden? Just Do It!

Some typical kunuku trees

While the island gets drier and drier, you see that there is less green left in the mondi, along the dirt roads, in the kunukus and in yards. I feel badly about this but there are some trees that do remain green, the evergreen trees. The trees give shade to the animals in the kunukus. People often want to know the local or indigenous Bonairian trees because they would like to have them in their yard. This article will hopefully answer these questions.

Watapana tree, well-known on Bonaire, is also called the Divi-divi. The tree is known by both names, but in fact Watapana is the tree name and Divi-divi is the fruit. The latin name is *Caesalpinia coriaria* Willd.

It can grow five to 10 meters tall, but never reaches this height, because of the trade winds that blow from one direction, the Watapana tree grows in that direction. This tree withstands the dry, windy weather of the area and it is always green. The little leaves and strong roots can easily survive this desert climate. Three times a year it blossoms and hummingbirds like to hang out around the tree because the yellow flowers smell very nice. The fruit is a dark brown pod that curls. In the past, the pods were exported for processing leather.

The commonly known tree **Wayaka** was named by the Indians. The Latin name is *Guaicum officinale*. This tree grows very slow and its wood is extremely hard and heavy. Because of the hard quality of the wood it was used extensively for shipbuilding, for rafters in land houses and as spokes in cart wheels. The Wayaka grows on many kunukus. These evergreen trees have a large number of stems that look like an umbrella with small green leaves. The flowers are blue

and the Wayaka has yellow fruit. Birds and the strong wind spread the trees red seeds easily. When the leaves are dry they are very good for compost, as are the leaves from the watapana tree.



Small wayaca tree along a lane



Midday rest under the divi-divi tree along the sea

A popular fruit tree on the kunuku is the **tamarind tree**. This tall, long-life tree grows in full sun and has a high resistance to drought. The tamarind prefers sandy soil, which is exactly the type of soil we have on Bonaire. The pod-like fruit contains a pulp that is used in cuisines all over the world. On Bonaire the sour tamarind fruit is sweetened and used as jam (dushi tamarein), juices or syrup. Now is the time to pick the ripe tamarind pods found under the trees. This is a very healthy fruit with a lot of vitamin C and other food values. Go get them; they are free, just do it now. *Angliet, Nature Lover*



Making Bonaire "Accessible"

OUR WHEELCHAIR CHALLENGES # 9.

How to help the helper.

To get by with a little help from your friends, when you are taking care of someone at home, is something so precious. To know who those friends are and to know exactly what kind of help you get from them is even better.

But in order to get help, you have to know what you really need and what the person you care for needs. What the patient needs is always the first priority. Knowing what they think is most important and is also good for the helper.

One should always demand the best ways to get the highest quality of care. This is in the best interest of your loved one. See to it that the care is customized and up to standard.

Do not just assume that neighbors, friends or family-members do not want to help. Maybe they can buy groceries when they are out shopping, mow the lawn, clean-up the yard and/or take the garbage out.

Do not only share the care, but share it with others as much as possible.

To ask for help is not a sign of weakness. To share and let others take over once in a while is very important for you. You need your rest and to get grounded every now and then. After that, you can care better than before.

Ask help from family and friends, when they are together at a birthday or other family-affair. It is contagious when they see others wanting or trying to help.

Is someone having a hard time with a special care task? Make an agreement with somebody else, or do the job together.

Share highlights plus downlights with

friends, and/or neighbours. It makes the bond as caregivers even stronger and one can always "blow off some steam."

Share your story with caseworkers and other caretakers in a group get-together. Ask around to see if these possibilities are available.

"Care-mates" are volunteers who listen and take over your caring job for a while, so you can take some time off. If there is no such thing as a "care-mate," start up a group by yourself. One may always ask for assistance at the home-caregivers organization. They know almost everyone that is cared for by a family member.

Most caregivers are women. And most care-givers are daughters. They have more experience than men. Men need specific "orders" to do a task. Women mostly see right away what needs to be done.

So, how do we get more men to be caregivers? Do not just expect them to, and if they do, they may care in a different way, not a lesser one.

You can always contact a local politician who knows how to get things done in caring for someone. Because it's good for the whole population.

Caring is not always hard. There are moments that it can be great fun. You always learn as you go. And that counts for both sides.

But when the caring gets too tough, because the loved one isn't getting any better or getting worse, the kind of care changes. Caring for someone strengthens the bond and you will have precious moments that you will be able to look back on with a smile and a bleeding heart. *Ria Evers-Dokter*

Looking Back: May 4, 2019, was Global Big Day. The statistics for the global bird count are still coming in, but at the time of publication, 32, 903 people counted 6,833 species of birds. Five birders from Bonaire added to the world-wide total, with Caren Eckrich, scraping past Steven Schnoll by identifying 41 species to his 39.

Top eBirders	
BY SPECIES	BY CHECKLISTS
1 Caren Eckrich	41
2 Steve Schnoll	39
3 Elmarie Beukenboom	32
4 meredith schnoll	24
5 Caroline Gerlach	18

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Did You Know... That managing the quality of the water in the Bonaire National Marine Park (BNMP) might be one of the most important and beneficial things we can do locally to safeguard our coral reefs?

Coral reefs have been around for millions of years. During this time, they adapted very well to existing in very oligotrophic waters. This means that coral reefs do best in waters where the concentrations of nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphate, and ammonium are very low. A healthy reef also needs to be able to get plenty of sunlight. This is because the algae that lives in harmony with the coral, inside the coral's tissues, requires sunlight to provide food for itself and the coral. This is why tropical coral reefs mostly exist in areas where the water is crystal clear. When the water is clear and nutrient concentrations are very low, we can say that the water quality is good. In general, the better the water quality, the healthier the reef.

As mentioned earlier, high nutrient levels are bad for coral reefs. High nutrient levels can weaken corals, making them more vulnerable to disease and to coral bleaching. Nutrient concentrations above a certain level can also make it harder for the corals to build their skeletons, resulting in slower growth and/or weaker skeletons. Higher nutrient concentrations also help harmful macro algae and cyanobacteria which compete with corals for space. How fast these organisms grow and spread is mainly influenced by how many nutrients are available to them. When nutrient concentrations go up, algae and cyanobacteria can grow faster, giving them a competitive edge over the corals. If nutrient concentrations get high enough, they can trigger changes that cause coral reefs to turn into vast areas of rocks covered entirely by algae. Scientists have already seen this happen in places like Jamaica.



Discovery Bay in Jamaica. A reef that 28 years ago shifted from coral to algae covered. Photo by Dr. Bob Steneck. PhD.

Nutrients reach the sea various ways: during heavy rain events in the form of runoff, through water running underground, from the deep sea (upwelling), from dust blowing into the sea (from unpaved roads and overgrazed land), etc. Recognizing the importance of having safe and clean water not just for nature, but also for recreation, Bonaire installed a wastewater treatment facility that began functioning in 2015. In Kralendijk, Hato and Belnem, properties close to the coast were connected directly to the facility through an underground system of pipes and pumps. Properties that aren't connected to this underground system can hire trucks to transport wastewater from their septic tanks to the treatment plant.

The water treatment plant alone is already preventing tons of nutrients from entering the water and jeopardizing the health of our reefs. However, there is still so much more that we can do. In the last couple of months there have been alarming reports of algal blooms in or near the BNMP. At the end of January, STINAPA began receiving reports from concerned citizens about the waters in the Plaza Marina, the channels near Caribbean Court and the Marriott hotel turning bright green. While algal blooms are not uncommon, this one was worrying given how long it lasted and the effect it had on marine life in the area. Together with Div' Ocean and the Plaza Hotel, STINAPA

is currently monitoring the area to try and get to the root cause of the problem.

Besides algae, cyanobacterial blooms are also becoming more of a concern. Both are triggered by high nutrients. Currently, there is one cyanobacteria bloom near the salt pier that has persisted for several months and a similar bloom on the east side of Klein Bonaire. Scientists from the University of Amsterdam and the Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (NIOZ) also observed large areas completely covered by cyanobacteria in deep waters offshore of Bonaire. STINAPA and Wageningen Marine Research are investigating these blooms. Working together with the local and the national government the hope is to develop and secure funding for a long-term water quality monitoring program for Bonaire. Once the program is in place, plans can be developed and implemented to improve water quality in the marine park. Given the many factors already threatening the continued existence of coral reefs around the world and in Bonaire, there are many steps we can take to ensure high water quality. By improving and maintaining high water quality, we provide our reefs with the best chance to resist disturbances and survive and, in turn, safeguard Bonaire's tourism-driven economy. *Written by Roxanne-Liana Francisca. STINAPA Biologist. Connecting People With Nature*




Turtle foraging between cyanobacteria at the salt pier. Photo by R. Francisca.



Cyanobacterial bloom in the shallows at Nearest Point, Klein Bonaire. Photo by C. Eckrich.

Top swimmer Chenice Bergman Oosterlee of the Delfins Swimming Club Bonaire traveled to Barbados to attend the CARIFTA 2019 Games April 19-24. Participating in this prestigious event were: Grenada, Martinique, Antigua, Bahamas, Suriname, French Guiana, Aruba, Curacao, US Virgin Islands & Cayman Islands.

Chenice, specializing in the breaststroke, participated in the 50 and 100 meter breaststroke in a 50 meter pool. She improved her PR by 0.61 seconds. Delfins Swimming Club Bonaire thanks sponsors: public entity Bonaire, Fundashon Wegu di Number and FXDC Communications.





Rincon Day 2019

Echo Bonaire fights the drought

As the dry weather continues, the volunteers at the Echo Bonaire Reforestation Project are battling hard to keep hundreds of young trees alive. The situation became a crisis recently when the two Echo plantations near Playa Frans began to dry out. Echo's vehicles are too light to haul water to those trees because of the terrible condition of the road to Playa Frans.

Short term relief came when the people living at Boca Druifi offered to loan tankage to Echo. Echo now has tanks available close to the exclusion areas where the trees are planted. They are hoping they can arrange for the WEB trucks to start filling those tanks for them. *D.R.*

Benito Koffie (L) and Eugene Martis of Echo Bonaire at work keeping the young trees of the Reforestation Project alive through the dry season. Each tree in the exclusion areas gets watered by hand.



Friday, May 24	Music Festival Street Parade to Wilhemina Park: 7pm+ Saxophonists <i>Henk van Twillert & Co.</i> with the <i>Bonairian group, Saxomania.</i> Also <i>Chaira Borderslee;</i> and the <i>Silver Bullet Steel Band.</i> Bring your dancing shoes. See page X
Saturday, May 25	Mashe Rincon Krioyo Street market in Rincon, 1st & last Saturday each month Nos Zjilea Cultural Event from 8am till 2pm at <i>Mangazina di Rei</i> located at the east-entrance of Rincon. Enjoy delicious food, live music, local arts & crafts, plants & vegetables, educational presentations and an exhibition about Rincon. Fun, relaxed and entertaining for kids and adults alike. All proceeds go to our educational programs. SEE, FEEL AND TASTE THE CULTURE OF BONAIRE. Music Festival 8pm a gala evening of classical music at Plaza Resort Bonaire. Tickets available via www.classicalmusicbonaire.com or at <i>Addo's bookstore</i> See page X
Sunday, May 26	Animal Shelter Bonaire PARTY celebrate the 10th anniversary of the launching of our free sterilization campaign. FLEA MARKET-ALL NEW STUFF!!
Thursday, May 30	Ascention Day Legal Holiday
Saturday, June 1	Mashe Rincon Krioyo Street market in Rincon, 1st & last Saturday each month
Sunday, June 2	Jibe City, Windsurf Slalom Race. Sign up May 31, 1 to 4 pm.
Saturday, June 8	Clean Coast Bonaire Clean-up Survey Three month check of plastic at <i>Piedu Pretu.</i> 8am-10am

REGULAR EVENTS

'Sea Turtles of Bonaire' is a free public presentation about Bonaire's endangered sea turtles—topics such as where to see sea turtles, how they live, what they eat, how they reproduce and how you can help! Where: Yellow Sub, Dive Friends Bonaire (on the front porch) 8:00pm, 2nd & 4th Wednesdays.

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 Koeke for more information: 796-7870, 717-6435.

Nature Organization, STINAPA, has frequent events—bird watching, sunset hikes, lectures, etc. Go to their website for information of events for the rest of 2019: stinapabonaire.org/events, Tel. 717-8444

Bonaire Goat Farm Tour. Monday, Wednesday & Friday. 9 am. Meet the goats, see milking, and more. \$10 includes tea. Kids \$5. 786-6950.

Echo. See Bonaire's parrots. Wednesday at 5pm \$10 per person. Public Conservation Tour. No reservation needed. For optimal birding, book a private tour by calling 701-1188 or email info@echobonaire.org. We need at least one day's notice. Private tours \$25/person 2 person minimum.

SATURDAYS

• **Marshe di Playa (Bonaire Duodero)** Every Saturday, 8am-1pm, near Warehouse Bonaire, locally made and grown products.

• **Marshe di Kunukero (Farmers' Market)** At Kriabon the first Saturday of the Month. Kaminda Jatu Baco #55, next to Aquamarin School, 8am-12noon.

• **Monthly Cultural Event 'Nos Zjilea' at Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei** - Every last Saturday of the month A fusion of local arts & crafts, plants & vegetables, educational presentations, food & music and an exhibition about the most interesting sights around Rincon. Fun, relaxed and

entertaining for both kids and adults. All proceeds go to our educational programs. SEE, FEEL AND TASTE THE CULTURE OF BONAIRE

• **Marshe Rincon Krioyo** 1st & last Saturdays. Street market in Rincon, crafts, local food, sweets, noon—6pm.

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

• **Food Bank (Stichting voedselbank Bonaire)** Last Saturday of the month. Donate foods & household items 9:30am-2pm at Van den Tweel Supermarket.

• **Petanque-Jeu de Boules,** 2:30-6pm, Bolascentre GOLDFINCH (next to baseball centre on Kaminda Sorobon) Info: 786-0150.

CLUBS and MEETINGS

• **Rotary lunch meetings** **Wednesdays,** 12:15-2 pm - Marriott Courtyard Hotel, Piet B meeting room. All Rotarians welcome. Call Gregory Obersi 785-9446.

• **General 12-step meeting (AA, NA, CoDa etc.)** -Every **Wednesday** at Bonaire Basics, Kaya Korona 47. Starts at 19.15, ends at 20.30, walk in from 19.00. For more information, email: 12stepbonaire@gmail.com

• **Chess Club** meets **Wednesday** to play starting at 6 pm at Tera Cora Ranch.

• **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.

• **Toastmasters Club** meets every two weeks. For more information call Crusita de Palm at 786-3827 or Lucia Martinez Beck, at 786-2953.

CHURCH SERVICES

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

In honor of Washington Slagbaai National Parks 50th Anniversary, Stinapa held a celebration event on May 9 at the park entrance. Park manager Albert Cecelia welcomed the invited guests and presented speakers including: Governor Edison Rijna, Stinapa director Arjen de Wolf, and Stinapa president of the board of directors Delno Tromp. A premier showing of Booi Antoin's 13 minute film about the park with vintage footage was a highlight for guests. Singer Capella Chirino accompanied by Jaedan Crestian entertained the group. Head park ranger George "Kultura" Thode was honored for 38 years service with a poster to be displayed at the park. The crowd was treated to champagne and appetizers throughout the evening.

Congratulations to the WSNP and to George! J.M.



Head park ranger George "Kultura" Thode and the poster with his likeness.

2019 Cruise Ships

DAY	DATE	CRUISESHIP	TIME	PIER	CAPACITY	& LINE
Tuesday	5-14	Monarch	0800-1800	N.pier	2744	Pullmantur
Tuesday	5-21	Monarch	0800-1800	N.pier	2744	Pullmantur
Thursday	5-23	Freedom	0800-1700	S.pier	3782	RCCL

Protestant Congregation of Bonaire (VPGB), Kralendijk, Plaza Wilhelmina; Sunday service-10am in Dutch. Rincon, Kaya C.D. Crestian; Sunday service-8:30am in Papiamentu/Dutch.

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

Dutch service Every Sunday evening at 7pm, Hanchi Amboina 37. Kralendijk. Pastor Oppeneer. Info call +599 787-0646

International Bible Church. Kaya Pápago 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 10am. Wednesday- Prayer Meeting at 7:30 pm. 717-2194

Casa de Oracion para todas las naciones. Hanchi Amboina 37 Kralendijk, Spanish service: every Sunday morning at 9 am. Dutch service: every Sunday evening at 7 pm.

Prayer Walk at Rooi Lamoenchi every first Sunday of the Month (or on request) for all followers of Christ. 4.30pm-7.30 pm.

Contact Ellen Cochrane-Herrera at ellenherrera@cochrane@yahoo.ca or phone 717-8489 or +5999-540-9800. English/Papiamentu/Dutch/Spanish.

MUSEUMS & EXHIBITS

Terramar Museum at Terramar Shopping Mall, on the waterfront. Monday-Saturday 9am-6pm. Sunday, closed. Cruise ship days 9am-6pm, \$10, \$5 for residents, children free. *Coral Restoration exhibit.* 717-0423, 780-4327

• **Museo Bonaire** on the waterfront at the old Kas di Arte, Kaya Kachi Craane #34. 717-8868. Monday-Friday 9am-noon, 2-4pm. *Salute to the Sailors exhibit*—Free

• **Chichi i Tan Museum.** Step into the past in an old Bonairean home and garden. Open Thurs.- Sun. Reserve 717-3183 or 795-2021 Donations appreciated. Kaya Melon #4, behind Rose Inn in Rincon.

• **Washington-Slagbaai National Park Museum and Visitors' Center.** Open daily 8 am-5 pm. 788-9015 or 796-5681

• **Tanki Maraka Heritage Park and Open Air Museum.** Site of WWII American soldiers' camp. Self-guided tour. After leaving Kralendijk on the Rincon Road watch for sign to on the right. Entrance just a short distance. Free entry.

• **Yana's Fine Art Museum** at Lagoen Hill 19- Call: 599 785-5002. Free entry. Also exhibited at Bon Bida Spa and Gym.

• **Bonaire Museum of National History** Kaya Julio C. van der Ree #7, open all cruiseship days, 9am-3pm. Free.

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BONAIRE SKY PARK*

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THE MANY FACES OF THE BIG DIPPER

One of the most frequently referenced star patterns is the Big Dipper. This one star pattern has been called different things, depending on where and when it was observed.

If we set our skies for about an hour after sunset, facing north, high in the sky you'll see seven bright stars that form the familiar pattern of "the Big Dipper". The four stars, Dubhe, Merak, Phecda and Megrez make the bowl. Right next to them are the three stars Alioth, Mizar and Alkaid. They mark the handle. The Big Dipper however is not a constellation. Astronomers refer to it as an asterism; which is a pattern of bright stars in a much larger constellation.

The Big Dipper has had many aliases throughout history. For example, the ancient Maya saw it as the giant macaw and celestial trouble maker, Vucub-Caquix. According to legend, he was placed in the sky by the hero twins Hunahpu and Xbalanque after the macaw arrogantly claimed that he was the sun and the moon. In China, the seven stars of the Big Dipper form the right wall of the purple forbidden enclosure, a celestial barrier that surrounds the north celestial pole. In Germany, it's called "groser wagen" (großer wagen) or "the great wagon", in Finland it's called the otava or "salmon net". In Ireland, it's a farmer's plow, in northern England, it's sometimes called "the butcher's cleaver", in France, it's a casserole and in Holland, it's a sauce pan.

My favorite reference to the Big Dipper comes from African-American history. When Harriet Tubman was helping to slaves to escape, she used a technique called the underground railroad. Families would escape in the middle of the night and travel to safe houses on their way north; their ultimate destination being southern Canada, where there was no slavery. Since people of that time didn't have GPS devices like we do today, or readily available compasses to find geo-magnetic north, they relied on the stars to help them navigate. Back in the 19th century, people knew the night sky very well, because they didn't have street

lights to wash out the stars. Therefore, to maintain their northward bearings, they told each other to look for "the drinking gourd" and keep it in front of you. That piece of advice led many people to freedom, and they even made a traveling song called "follow the drinking gourd" where the lyrics of the song mentioned many of the landmarks travelers would encounter on their way to the Ohio river; the designated pick-up point.

The stars of the Big Dipper are between 75 to 100 light years from us, and if you have really good eyesight, you can see one of the most famous visual binaries in the night sky. Right next to the star Mizar, the star which marks the bend in the Big Dipper's handle, you will see a small, faint companion star named Alcor. These two stars are collectively called "the horse and rider" and were often used as a test of a person's eyesight. Speaking of eyesight, if you have a telescope handy, there are two spectacular spiral galaxies visible near the star Alkaid; which is at the end of the Dipper's handle. M101, the pinwheel galaxy is just to the north of Alkaid and M51. The whirlpool galaxy is to its south.

No conversation about the Big Dipper would be complete without showing how you can find its neighboring constellations using its stars. For example, you can find Polaris (the north star) by drawing a straight line from Merak to Dubhe and continuing that line approximately five times the distance spanned between Merak and Dubhe. You can find Bootes the Herdsman by drawing an arc from Alioth, to Mizar and then Alkaid. Eventually you will encounter Arcturus, the brightest star in Bootes. You can find Leo the Lion by drawing a line from Phecda to Megrez and beyond. And you can find the Gemini Twins by drawing a line from Megrez to Merak and beyond. So there you have it. The Drinking Gourd, Casserole, Wagon, Plow, Cleaver, Macaw, Dipper in all its glory. And it's waiting in the sky just for you, when you... Both: keep looking up!

Dean Regas & James Albury, <http://www.stargazeronline.org>



THE STARS HAVE IT

Horoscope May 2019

Aries (Mar.21–Apr.20) Better still, take your mate and let them foot the bill. Avoid any erratic behavior or it could cause isolation at home. This will not be the best day to initiate change. Sudden changes at home will affect family members more than you anticipated. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Monday.

Taurus (Apr.21–May 20) You can put in some overtime and make extra cash. You are able to make changes in your home that will be favorable to all involved. Things aren't as they appear. Any renovation or decorating to your home should include the whole family. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

Gemini (May 21–Jun.21) Get domestic chores out of the way early. If they're too demanding, reconsider this union. If you haven't planned a vacation, then at least try to get away for the weekend. Be careful not to show your temper when dealing with the boss. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

Cancer (Jun.22–Jul.22) Look to a close friend for advice. There will be hidden matters that you may find disturbing. Travel opportunities must be taken advantage of. Try not to let your emotions interfere with the completion of your work. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

Leo (Jul.23–Aug.22) You will enjoy lavish forms of entertainment and should consider making arrangements early. Exercise programs will be effective. You will find their philosophies worth exploring. Double check your work and be sure that your boss is in a good mood before you do your presentation. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

Virgo (Aug.23–Sept.23) This will be a very hectic day if you've made promises to too many people. They will not be in the right frame of mind to put up with tactless comments. You may have ignored or neglected your mate lately. Stick to your work and avoid emotional confrontations. Social events should be the highlight of your day. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

Libra (Sept.24–Oct.23) Hobbies will be good for your emotional well being.

Promote your ideas now. You may find out that someone is trying to undermine you. You may find that family members may not be too easy to get along with. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Thursday.

Scorpio (Oct. 24–Nov. 22) Be very careful while in transit or while traveling in foreign countries. You may want to look into warm vacation spots. Those you care about may oppose your ideas. Don't neglect these problems; deal with them once and for all, then move on to more pleasurable tasks. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

Sagittarius (Nov.23–Dec.21) Your concern with older family members and those less fortunate than yourself will only add to your attractiveness. Use your creative abilities to come up with new ideas and directions. Look into attending seminars that can expand your perception. You should feel a little more stable about your position; however, don't be surprised if a job offer comes your way. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

Capricorn (Dec.22–Jan.19) Stress coupled with diet will add to stomach problems. You can raise your standard of living if you pick up some freelance work on the side. Don't let your mate bully you into thinking that you owe them your time and your life. You may find that getting together with colleagues after hours will be worthwhile. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

Aquarius (Jan.20–Feb.18) You don't need to pay out in order to have fun. You could have trouble persuading others to accept your ideas and opinions. Romance will be on your mind, and chances for ideal connections are in the works. Social activities or travel should be in your plans. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Thursday.

Pisces (Feb.19–Mar.20) You will be ready to jump on anyone who gets in the way of your progress this month. You could have a tendency to spend too much on your home or entertainment. Try not to discuss important matters with colleagues. You may need to lend an ear to an old friend. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Monday. *Michael Thiessen Astrology Online*



KUNUKU BAND RELEASES FIRST CD

If you have ever been to Bonaire you may already know these fellas. They are Sparky Thorne and Moogie Stewart of



Capt. Don Stewart (left) with Sparky Thorne and Moogie Stewart on Bonaire.

the Kunuku Band. Sparky and Moogie came to Bonaire in 1990 to perform at Captain Don's Habitat for two weeks. They were offered free diving classes and were certified the same week. Eventually, Sparky and Moogie became PADI dive instructors and members of the Habitat dive staff, while still performing weekly. Well, it has finally paid off—the Kunuku Band's first CD, *Trolling*, was recently released. If you miss the island sounds of the Caribbean, write or call the Kunuku Band at 4127 Catherine Street, Panama City Beach, Florida 32408; (904) 234-0787.

Memories of Captain Don, continued from page 7

I never heard of Bonaire until I joined the Princeton Aqua Club in 1972 with intentions of becoming a Scuba Instructor through their YMCA program. While attending the classes a man named Don Stewart appeared to also become an instructor. That was the first I ever heard of him.

After completing the program I got a call from Don asking if I would be interested in going to Bonaire for 3 weeks to teach YMCA classes. After a long thought (one second) I said yes and that was the beginning of a great education in diving.

Don had at the time, just started Aquaventure at Hotel Bonaire. Everything he did was so well thought out that including instruction programs. He was an exceptional diver and a great public relations person. If you had an idea to set up something and thought it was great, he would look at it and modify the layout and you would say to yourself, "yes that is so much more logical."

I really think he pioneered resort courses which are now called Discover Scuba Diving by PADI. He pioneered conservation which included boat moorings to protect reefs, a ban on spearfishing and collecting fish and coral plus a lot of other things. He really held nature at its highest value. How soon we all forget. **Bruce Bowker**

Memories of Captain Don, continued on page 14

Shelter News



**Kirza,
Pet of the Week**

Hello Animal Friends! Let me introduce myself, my name is Kirza. I'm a fluffy mixed breed dog about three years old. I don't know exactly what mix, but I am not a big dog. I surely won't fit in your purse, but I don't take up that much space either. When I was little, I lost the toes on my back right paw, but it does not bother me at all. I am still very happy, always moving around, up and under and behind and in front! I love to run and play even with other animals. What I love the most is jumping, they say I'm a dog, but in my heart I feel like a free jumping goat. I like to learn new things. I already know some commands and walk very well on a leash. I am looking for someone who wants to cuddle, play and pet me, but I am also good alone when you are not home. I am sterilized, vaccinated and ready to love you.

Please come and visit me at the Animal Shelter at Kaminda Lagun 26A, Monday till Friday from 9am till 12pm and 3-5pm and Saturday from 9am till 3pm non-stop. Call for me at Bonaire Animal Shelter 701-4989 or 717-4989. *Story and photos by Sanne Attevelt*

Memories of Captain Don, continued from page 13

My first trip to Bonaire, in the early 80's, was as a sales representative for a Diving and Snorkeling Distributor based on St. Thomas US Virgin Islands. I was traveling with my wife, the current sales representative for Bonaire and the son of a diving equipment manufacturer from San Diego who was traveling along with us to check in with some of the accounts that used his equipment. We arrived on the island late afternoon via the company aircraft that we flew from St. Thomas to Bonaire. We rented a car at the airport and drove directly to Habitat as the current sales representative wanted us to meet Don and subsequently stay at Habitat. We did meet with Don who was tending bar dressed in his classic red Speedo. Unfortunately, there was no room at the inn... We arranged to have dinner with Don later that evening and then traveled over to Sunset Beach hotel where we checked in and took a nap, showered and then came back to Habitat at the designated time of 7 o'clock to meet Don for dinner. When we arrived, there was no Don, so we sat at the bar and waited... After about 15 minutes of waiting, Louie, the incumbent sales representative said we're not going to wait for Don... we're gonna sit down and at least order appetizers. Our guest, the son of the owner of the diving equipment manufacturer, strongly protested saying that we should be polite and wait for Don. Louie said from experience "either Don is with a woman, drunk, asleep or all three and will show up when he shows up. But we weren't going to wait for him. Chuck, our uptight guest from San Diego, reluctantly agreed but insisted on directing seating arrangements. We giggled but let him do his thing. So, it's now about 7:45 our appetizers had just been served. Louie, my wife and I had salads - Chuck had soup. When Don appears at the table he was dressed in full pirate regalia and quite an impressive sight I might add. Now Don had a talent of being able to spot uptight people and he loved to push their buttons. With this in mind... Don sat down next to our guest, grabbed a piece of bread from the bread basket, dunked it in our guest's soup, took a bite and asked, "How you doing Chuck"? And so began a friendship that grew and remained till my last visit with Don in 2014. *David Morgan*

PARTY !!!

Animal Shelter Bonaire marks milestones in free sterilization for dogs and cats

Animal Shelter Bonaire celebrates the milestones of their free sterilization program on Sunday, May 26, 10am to 2pm.

The program initially began 22 years ago providing free sterilization for financially challenged pet families and in 15 years they were able to include all families and finally launched a sterilization education campaign with a cartoon character known as Bonny the Superdog.

To celebrate these milestones, the festivities include a book sale, flea market (ALL NEW STUFF!!), raffle prizes, trivia questions with new "vintage" Bonny the Superdog t-shirts as prizes. There will be cold beverages, bargain prices on toys and accessories for your pets and much more.

Since its inception in 1983, the Animal Shelter Bonaire has promoted sterilization as the single most important factor in reducing the number of unwanted animals on the island. As early as 1997, the Shelter tried to provide free sterilization for those who could not afford it although funds were extremely limited. In 2000, the Shelter established a sterilization fund for donations to help meet that need.

Despite these efforts, the unwanted animal population continued to grow and the Shelter realized that more needed to be done. In 2004, teams of volunteer veterinarians from Canada, the U.S. and the Netherlands came to Bonaire to for a week to provide free spaying and neutering. The converted the shelter "kitchen" into an "operating room." Portable sterilization stretchers were built and the shelter turned into what looked like a triage center. Two hundred seventy-two dogs and twenty cats were sterilized in just that one week!

In that same year, 2004, the Shelter expanded the program to provide free sterilization to every pet owner, not just to those with limited resources. The Pakus di Pruga and the Animal Shelter booth at the weekly cruise market are the main sources that keep the program alive.

In May 2009, the Shelter launched "Bonny the Superdog" sterilization campaign. The objective of 'Bonny' was to further educate the community of the importance of sterilization and set a goal to sterilize 500 animals within one year. Over 220 were sterilized in just the first three months of the campaign and it took less than a year to reach the goal of 500!

Even with the high number of sterilizations, unwanted animals continued to pour into the shelter. Another campaign

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was launched in February 2014, with the slogan "No tin suficiente doño pa tur... laga sterilisá bo kachó òf pushi gratis awor" (There are not enough owners for all...let's sterilize your dog or cat now for free!). That campaign resulted in 535 sterilizations that year and further raised awareness of the free program.

Over the last fifteen years, education programs in the schools and at the Shelter continue to emphasize the importance of sterilization. Since 2004, the number of sterilizations continues to increase with an average of 450 per year, and in most recent years well over 500. Despite this success, the Shelter continues to take in at least that number of unwanted animals each year. This is possibly due to the fact that the island population has almost doubled in the last 15 years. Accordingly, the sterilization campaign continues to be a top priority to this day. Our goal is to educate the community and provide free sterilization so that one day unwanted animals will be a thing of the past.

The event will be held at the Shelter, Kaminda Lagun 26, from 10 am to 2pm. Please join us for a fun-filled day celebrating the success of the past and advocating the continuation of our free sterilization program. *Jane Maden*



Capt. Don and famed cartoonist Irwin Hasen, creator of the Dondi comic strip that featured Capt. Don on the island of Bonaire in the 1970's. Don teaches Dondi about ocean conservation in a series of the comic strip, photo Geri Murphy

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