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BONAIRE The REPORTER

Jan. 18 - Feb. 1, 2023 Year 30, Issue 2



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Photo Julie Morgan

Cyclists get organized

Life is like riding a bicycle, to keep your balance you must keep moving.

Albert Einstein

When growing up, many of us rode our bikes to school, ran errands for our parents and had fun riding and exploring with our friends. It meant freedom to go 'almost' anywhere.

Three avid Bonaire cyclists are hoping to convince you to dust off your old bike, air up the tires and hit the road or trail again. A new organization, so new it doesn't even have a name yet, is in the works for cyclists. Frank Bohm, Jarne Everts and Tom Homburg are creating a bike club for everyone who rides or wants to ride any kind of bike at any level or age.

"We want to unite to create awareness and have a united voice," said Homburg. "We want to encourage and develop all bicycling on Bonaire."

The plan is to improve the quality and structure of all cycling related events on Bonaire whether the bike in question is BMC, which the kids love, a mountain bike or a city bike that travels along a road.

One of the ideas is to create school programs to show kids how to bike and be safe.

Everts said, "We want to develop and create a culture of 200-300 adults and kids in a friendly atmosphere. There is hardly any place to ride your bike and no place that is safe."

In the last month, bike riding on Bonaire has taken center stage with the death of two cyclists on two different occasions. Road safety for all will be one of the club's first priorities whether on the main roads of Bonaire or in the back country.

Jarne explained, for example, instructions will be given in how to ride near a car. Many people don't know

motor vehicles can only pass a bike when there is no vehicle coming from the other side and that at least 1.5 m (5 ft) should be given when passing a bike. Helmets will be a requirement for riding as injury can be fatal to riders not wearing one.

The organization is hoping to bring training clinics for

beginners, intermediate riders and pros on techniques and safety. They hope to include lectures from nutritionists, sport scientists and even on bike repair as a career.

Biking tourism is a missed possibility for Bonaire. People will visit the island just to ride and race if biking areas are improved.

"Tourist love biking. It is way to get to know Bonaire. Not only mountain biking but also on the roads. We have amazing trails but they aren't inviting to anyone because there are no signs saying, this is where you can bike," said Everts.

In November, Indebon Bonaire, the Department of Society and Care with sport and exercise services for the people of Bonaire, held a bike sporting event for adults, kids and families.

Indebon's Terrence de Jongh said, "We will support more activities in the cycle world... more activity is best for our community and a healthy lifestyle."

Bonhata and TCB are providing biking support and creating awareness too.

The club hopes to improve the quality and structure of all cycling related events and to provide support. Once they become a government licensed organization, the club is hoping to support bike laws. For example, they propose that every time a new road is built or improved, consideration should be made for cycling.

The club is still under organization and needs your help establishing the board and coming up with a name. Please contact freewieler@bonairefreewieler.com or 777-8545 or drop by De Freewieler at 61 Kaya Grandi.

Riding a bike is a pollution-free, gas free mode of transportation, provides great exercise and it is far easier to park.

Story/photos Julie Morgan



Anyone of any age, on any type of bike at any level is welcome to join.

COHO dead, three mini-COHOs under negotiation

State Secretary Van Huffelen (Kingdom Relations) and the Prime Ministers of Curaçao, Aruba and Sint Maarten met last week in Philipsburg for consultations. They mutually agreed to trash COHO, the draft Consensus Kingdom Act for the establishment of the Caribbean Body for Reform and Development. They also agreed to replace COHO with mutual arrangements between the Netherlands and the individual CAS countries, and to complete those negotiations by March.

When the former Netherlands Antilles fragmented in 2010, the Dutch proposed - some say imposed - COHO as an agreement which would allow the CAS islands to continue receiving financial support from The Hague, subject to instituting financial reforms. The leaders of the separate islands were long accustomed to operating under a "you send, we spend" principle. As members of the Kingdom, they claimed entitlement to financial support from the Netherlands. At the same time, they insisted that their "national autonomy" shielded them from Dutch financial scrutiny. For decades money arrived from the Netherlands, then disappeared without a trace.

The Dutch understandably saw the 10-10-10 restructuring as an opportunity to renegotiate those financial assumptions. They created COHO as a way for the separate island governments to receive specific loans and grants, but in exchange for specific reforms: paring down inflated bureaucracies for instance, or cutting exorbitant salaries paid to senior people, or to start submitting budgets in advance of projects and providing financial reports afterwards. Sweeping reforms did not need to be undertaken, the Dutch said, just step-by-step progress toward fiscal accountability, each step constituting negotiations that paired a specific reform with a specific disbursement.

Then Covid changed the game. The CAS islands, their economies in crisis, needed hundreds of millions in immediate liquidity support. And they had nothing to bargain with but their own recalcitrance.

Raymond Knops, State Secretary for Kingdom Relations at the time, deftly—some said arrogantly—pressured the islands to accept immediate reform packages. When the CAS leaders accused him of violating their national autonomy, he claimed they retained full autonomy. They were free to choose between receiving money and carrying out financial reforms, or forgoing the money and continuing to govern in their accustomed ways.

The negotiations that followed were contentious, and CAS politicians were not the only voices protesting them. According to *Dossier Kingdom Relations*, in 2021 the Council of State of the Kingdom determined that the COHO law had been developed unilaterally by the Netherlands and would never be accepted by the States of Curaçao, Aruba and Sint Maarten. The House of Representatives also reacted critically. While many people agreed with the goals of financial reform, they found the process unfair to the people in the islands.

Dossier Kingdom Relations says that as a result of the recent negotiations, "The COHO Act will be replaced by mutual arrangements between the individual CAS countries and the Netherlands." It also says "little will change in terms of content: the countries will continue to implement the so-called country packages, which include far-reaching reforms." The CAS countries also hope to negotiate partial forgiveness, or at least better repayment terms, for the liquidity loans they've already collected. That debt totals more than a billion euros.

Bonaire marched to an entirely different drummer than the CAS islands following 10-10-10. Having chosen a new form of autonomy - that granted to municipalities within the Netherlands nation - Bonaire also accepted new governing responsibilities too. Good management of its finances is one of the most complex functions a government performs. Therefore the Public Body Bonaire has been climbing a steep learning curve. But its performance has improved steadily, year after year.

DMR (Dossier Kingdom Relations)

The King, Queen Máxima and the Princess of Orange visit the Caribbean Netherlands

King Willem-Alexander, Queen Máxima and Crown Princess Amalia will visit the Caribbean Netherlands January 27 to February 9. The royal party will be accompanied by Alexandra Van Huffelen, State Secretary for Kingdom Relations and Digitization. The royal tour begins with a two day visit to Bonaire.

The King, Queen Máxima and the Princess of Orange will arrive on Bonaire Friday afternoon, to be greeted at the airport by Island Governor Edison Rijna. On Saturday morning, the Lieutenant Governor will receive the party in the official residence, where the members of the Island Council and deputies will also be present.

After the meeting, the royal party will visit the slave huts at Witte Pan, which stand as evidence of Bonaire's past slavery. They will tour along the west coast and visit Nos Zjilea in the Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei. (See page 13 for Nos Zjilea's program.) During a lunch held at Arawak, residents of Bonaire will talk about current themes, such as climate change, agricultural development and poverty reduction.

In the afternoon the royal party will visit Sorobon beach at Lac Bay for a windsurfing demonstration. The Royal Couple and the Princess of Orange will talk to junior rangers from the Bonaire National Parks Foundation about nature conservation of the coastal area and its mangroves. The group will take a boat trip through the bay and the mangrove area.

The visit to Bonaire ends in the evening in Kralendijk with a visit to 'Taste of Bonaire.'

After they leave Bonaire the royal party will spend time in Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius and Saba.

The news release did not say whether the royal family will have to pay Bonaire's Visitor Entry Tax.

(New Release. Photo: RVD – Martijn Beekman)



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How to Find Us

Read us online:
<https://bonairereporter.com>
<https://www.facebook.com/TheBonaireReporter/>
 Available in 70 locations
 Printed every two weeks
 Next edition: February 1, 2023
 Contributor's Deadline: January 27, 2023
Stories, tips, questions, ideas & ads:
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 Distribution: , Divi-Divi Airline, Errol Winklaar
 Printed by: DeStad Drukkerij, Curaçao
 Founders: George and Laura DeSalvo
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Fight cancer. Join the Ride for the Roses January 29, 2023

Uslu recommends culture coaches



The perfect photo with cultural dancers Donny and Monique, State Secretary Gunay Uslu and 'Grupo Palu Grandi'

On her recent visit to Bonaire and other Dutch Caribbean islands, State Secretary of Culture and Media, Gunay Uslu announced culture coaches will be selected to encourage participation, connect and support culture.

Uslu said, "Eighty percent of the Dutch municipalities have a culture coach... I am convinced that culture coaches can play an important role in the development of cultural life... the islands can decide for themselves how to deploy the coaches."

She expects and hopes the coaches will be selected from local individuals.

An investment of 300,000 euros per year is earmarked

for the cultural infrastructure of Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao, St. Eustatius, Saba and St. Maarten. The library network, preservation of monuments and the culture coaches will play in this investment.

To learn more about Bonaire's culture, heritage and activity in modern creativity disciplines, Uslu visited the Bonaire School of Performing Arts, the library and Magazina di Rei. She met with representatives of the executive council and the public entity (OLB) to discuss major concerns and basic funding for sectors of culture.

Uslu enjoyed an evening at SKAL for a 'meet and greet' with active culture organizations to discuss and

exchange ideas about the field of culture on Bonaire. Uslu and her staff took a museum tour, sampled local food and drinks, heard music of the 'kaha di organ', saw a cultural dance by Monique and Donny Winklaar and danced to the music of Grupo Palu Grandi.

Story/photos Julie Morgan



L-R: Deputy of Social Affairs Elvis Tjin Asjoe, Sec. of State Gunay Uslu and Director of SKAL Felix Thomas



Sec. Uslu has some fun dancing with Donny Winklaar

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POLICE REPORT

Property crime

Jan 14/15. Between Saturday and Sunday thieves have stolen from various cars license plates numbered B-964, B-1544, B-8423 and V-7049.

Jan 14. Theft was reported at two homes in Lagun Hill. A scooter was taken from one house and three men were caught at another house when they were stealing garden and household tools. The scooter and some of the items were found in the nearby mondi. A man, 51, was arrested but the other two men escaped.

Jan. 9. A light brown/gold Hyundai car, model Santa Fe, registration number B-15658, was reported stolen.

Arrests

Jan. 8. In the evening a fight took place at an entertainment venue on Kaya Bonaire. One man was injured and taken to hospital. The other man, 22, was arrested for assault. The brawl arose after the men's cars collided and one driver drove away. Both cars were seized for further investigation.

Dec. 31. A man, 51, was arrested on Kaya Korona for public intoxication. The man drove on a road that had been closed off by the police. His car has been taken into custody.

Traffic accidents/violations

Jan 16. A scooter collided with a car when the scooter driver didn't see the oncoming car and smashed into its passenger side. The scooter driver was injured and taken to hospital for medical treatment.

Jan.8. Around 6:30 p.m. a car and a moped collided at the entrance to Rincon near Mangazina di Rei. The driver of the car was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. The driver of the moped was taken to hospital for medical treatment. The accident halted traffic entering and exiting Rincon for a while.

Jan. 7. At about 12 noon a single-vehicle collision occurred on the Kaminda di Rincon just after the turn at Gurubu. The car entered the mondi after the driver lost control due to a wet road surface. The

driver of the car was checked on the spot by the ambulance staff and was then allowed to go home.

Jan. 4. In the evening hours, two cars collided on Kaminda Gurubu. The driver of one of the cars had a cut and was taken to hospital for medical treatment. Other occupants were unharmed.

Jan. 1. On Kaya Monseigneur Nieuwindt the driver of a scooter stated that she drove through a pothole and lost control of the wheel, causing her and the passenger to fall. Both were taken to hospital by ambulance for medical treatment.

Dec. 30. A scooter driving towards Playa on Kaya Internashonal lost control and fell into a pickup truck that was driving from the parking lot of a tourist accommodation. The scooter and the pick-up did not hit each other. The driver and passenger were taken to hospital by ambulance for medical treatment.

Dec. 30. Around 7:30 a.m. on Kaya Internashonal the driver of a scooter lost control, skidded and fell. The ambulance took the driver to hospital for medical treatment.

Public order

Jan. 16. The medical examiner confirmed the natural death of man in a house on Kaya Kobalt. The man with initials B.Mc.C. was born February 15, 1954 in the United States.

Jan. 2. Around 12:50 p.m. the central control room received a report about a male diver, 63, who got into trouble on the south coast of Bonaire. The paramedics started CPR in vain. The coroner pronounced the death.

Fire

Jan. 6. A fire was reported at around 6:40 p.m. in the kitchen of a restaurant on Kaya L.D. Gerharts. The fire brigade arrived on the scene and extinguished the fire. Employees of the WEB switched off the power. The road was closed to traffic for a while. No one was injured.

sponded, "we are working on an extensive substantiation of the additional expected income from the tourist tax, with a substantiated explanation." It said it would get back to the Cft. *DMR*

BES still weak on domestic violence and child abuse measures

The Hague is not fulfilling certain international treaty obligations because BES has not instituted adequate social support and protective measures for victims of domestic violence and child abuse. The Netherlands Institute for Human Rights issued a Decree declaring BES Islands need to institute regulations, create an advice and reporting center, and obligation organizations to establish a protection code for domestic violence and child abuse. These measures would help fill an important gap in the BES social support system.

DMR (Dossier Kingdom Relations)

Ask Bob

Bonaire real estate advice



Hi Bob.

Are counter-offers not used on Bonaire? I started off with a low offer and the Seller just rejected it, and didn't counter offer. I raised it a little and they rejected it again. How do I know what price they'll take if they don't counter offer?

Thanks, Jeff

Hi Jeff,

Counter offers are used here on Bonaire, so I'm guessing if you received two rejections to your offers, the offers were simply too low for the Seller to want to enter a negotiation. If you currently live in an area where Sellers overprice their homes because they expect buyers to offer a much lower price, I can see why you're using the strategy you described.

However, homes on Bonaire are usually priced for sale at their market value, or close to it. Most homes on Bonaire sell at

the asking price, or within just a few percentage points of the asking price. If you do some research and look at more than one house you will usually have an idea of the market value of the house you want to buy. If you make an offer close to what you think the house is worth and it is rejected twice by the seller, then it is likely that you and the seller are just too far apart on your price expectations, and you might want to look for a different house. If you really like the house, then have a serious conversation with your broker to try to determine if you are really offering close to the market price, or you are just trying to get a deal.

We are a small island with a limited number of properties for sale and you have a lot of competition from other buyers who want to own here, especially in the below \$300,000 market. Low offers are often not a good strategy here. I understand wanting to "get a deal" but try to re-set that thought to consider that the best deal is owning a home on Bonaire. Best of luck in finding your Bonaire home, let us know if we can help!

*Bob Bartikoski, Broker/Owner
Re/Max Bonaire*

If you have a real estate question or want to buy or sell property, email me at bob@bonairehomes.com or call or WhatsApp me at +5990786-7362

Upgrades to continue at Flamingo International

Passengers arriving at Flamingo International are going to have a roof over their heads and will collect their luggage from a new and larger baggage belt. People with mobility issues will safely board or leave their plane via an ambu-lift. A solar park will also be constructed. These are among the major upgrades included in the agreement Bonaire International Airport recently signed with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management.

During 2022, the airport handled 424,284 arriving and departing travelers, 11 percent more than during the 2019 pre-covid baseline year. *DMR*

Multi-birth mothers to get more support

An average of 280 women give birth in the Fundashon Mariadal hospital every year. Fewer than ten of them bear twins. Under the Collective Act 2023 of Social Affairs and Employment, those mothers now are entitled to 20 weeks of pregnancy and maternity leave rather than the usual 16 weeks.

Multi-birth pregnancies carry an increased risk of complications, premature birth, or caesarean section. Even longer maternity leave is possible if the newborns remain in the hospital for more than seven days after delivery.

Paternity/partner leave may also be granted in the Caribbean Netherlands in the near future. *DMR (Bonaire.nu)*

Supermarket food price controls being considered

The Public Body Bonaire has explained at length why it is difficult to enforce price controls on the supermarkets during periods of inflation. It talked about the various measure that have been attempted on Bonaire in the past and why they failed to work. Nevertheless, the government promises to try again in 2023. It will announce how it will put a ceiling on food prices as soon as it figures out a way to do it.

DMR (Caribbean Network)

Politicians must be ballot-ready by January 30

Parties and candidates who intend to compete in the March 15 elections of members of the island council and electoral college of Bonaire must have completed their registration by 5 p.m. on January 30.

All the required documents must be submitted by that date: the lists of candidates, the declarations of consent of the candidates with their candidacy, the authorizations to place the designation of the political group above a list of candidates, the authorizations to place a designation formed by merging the designations of political groupings or abbreviations, and finally statements of support for a list of candidates.

The necessary forms are available free of charge up to and including the day of nomination at the administrative office at Wilhelminaplein 1 and at the Civil Affairs department at Kaya Neerlandia 40.

DMR (BESreporter)

FLOTSAM and JETSAM continued

The Cft says wait, but the Public Body decides to spend

The Financial Supervision Board (Cft), which is known to be biased in favor of budgets, believes that chickens should not be counted until the eggs have hatched. The Executive Council disagrees. Having created a golden goose (the Visitor Entry Tax), the Public Body has decided to spend, despite Cft advice to the contrary, 2.5 million euros of the anticipated new VET revenues subsidizing 50% of people's electrical bills. Public Body will also subsidize a major portion of the remaining 50%, although the Island Council has yet to decide where that other 2.5 million will come from.

As of the first of the year, the Public Body is continuing to reduce the fixed rate on Bonairean's WEB bills to 0. The new variable rate, \$0.407 (vs last year's \$0.39 per kWh) means people will be paying slightly more this year.

When the Cft asked why the anticipated VET revenues are higher than the earlier projections the Public Body re-

Grabbing for Gold: The Alphaville Deceit

For years, the Bonaire Petroleum Company oil storage (BOPEC) on the North Western edge of the island has been a concern to everybody involved in (or worried about) local ecology. A myriad of things could potentially go wrong there: A spillage of crude oil on the reef, a fire, a crack in one of the behemoth single walled tankers mooring on the derelict jetties: the facility (owned by Petroleos de Venezuela SA, PdVSA, a state-owned company) posed an immediate risk to Bonaire's ecosystem.

Everyone living on Bonaire at the time still has a vivid memory of the fire that started on September 8, 2010, keeping the island, amid dark red explosions, under a blanket of thick black smoke, absorbing the sunlight, and causing the coolest September days in ages. The water and the chemical agents used to extinguish the fire ran off into Goto Lake, turning the color of the water into a lead-like grey, and making most living creatures to disappear for the better part of six years.

The fire proved that upholding BOPEC as an industrial site in a natural area posed a danger to the environment. Besides: the decay of the ill maintained facility exacerbated rapidly in the following years, mainly because the boycott of Venezuelan oil products initiated by the US left PdVSA penniless. Consequently, in October 2019 the Department of Infrastructure and Water Management (RWS) prohibited the use of the jetties until repair works had been performed.

That kind of pushed BOPEC over the edge: in March 2021 the company was declared bankrupt. A bridging loan to uphold a small part of the payroll was issued by the Bonairean government, meant to pay the wages of a maintenance crew watching over the safe storage of the oil that was left in the tanks: according to Amsterdam's Financieel Dagblad (Nov. 28, 2022), about 384,000 barrels of crude oil still remained.

Those 'leftovers' were meant to be auctioned off, the yield meant to settle debts with tax service and creditors, and to pay off the bridge loan supplied by the island government. The market price of the oil was, at that time, about \$70 a barrel, the total value of the remainders hovering around \$26 mln. Because of BOPEC's added

storage fees (over \$13,6 mln at the time of the auction) and some technical issues concerning the oil lines that had to be solved, the market value was expected to be much lower. To make sure the potential buyer would pay his dues the auction rules included the provision that BOPEC had the right to in-voke her right of retention: no pay, no oil.

That's when Alphaville came in. Alphaville was founded on the Seychelles as an 'International Business Company', in June 2019. The company was inactive, except on Bonaire, where a local representative was present. The firm showed a warm interest into BOPEC's remaining 384.000 barrels, and during the auction, organized by the curator settling BOPEC's bankruptcy on December 2nd, 2021, the company, offering NAfl. 200.000 – slightly over \$110,000 -, became the new owner of the oil. It seemed most creditors would get their overdue pay after all, including the island government and the remaining BOPEC staff.

But alas. The curator, sending Alphaville invoice after invoice, didn't receive a penny. On the contrary: the company started a lawsuit against him, contesting the right of retention, an implicit refusal to pay the storage fees. Or, more precise: playing BOPEC and Bonaire a trick and get a load of oil worth \$26 mln for 100 grand.

The story is ongoing. By the end of October 2022, Alphaville sold the oil (which she didn't have) for \$700,000 to a Venezuelan company, and - shortly afterwards - was declared bankrupt because of the non-payment of dues (a decision overruled by a court on Curacao in December). The oil is still in the tanks, and so far, no-one, not the island government, nor the tax service, nor the remaining BOPEC staff has received a penny.

According to the curator (a full report can be found on the site of HBN Law), the outstanding charges concerning BOPEC's bankruptcy amount to approx. \$40 mln., more than half of the island budget for 2023.

Why is it that Bonaire is victimized, time and again, by individuals and companies like Alphaville, that are hungry for easy money? Is it because we are naïve? Corrupt? Or just stupid? Or, I almost forgot to mention, is it because it's in our nature?

Gijs Borsten

Why Incompetency?

BES Islands still learning financial management. The Financial Supervision Board says that, even after twelve years of supervision, Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and (to a lesser extent) Saba are still struggling to put their financial management in order. State Secretary Van Huffelen has set the bar high. She says all three of the islands have yet to submit an unqualified auditor's report. DMR (Dossier Kingdom Relations) The Bonaire Reporter January 4 to 18, 2023, Issue 1, page 4.

Doesn't anyone other than I, get embarrassed when reading these articles in newspapers? Have you heard the expression, "hitting one's head against a brick wall." Why do it? It appears to me; The Netherlands is requiring the bookkeeping and auditing be done their way, with certain benchmarks and on time. What is so difficult about this procedure?

The Financial Supervision Board in The Netherlands should visit Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba for a 2- or 3-weeks course with local department bookkeeping and financial departments on these three islands. (I'm assuming this has not been done previously?) Use PowerPoint presentations to take them step by step through how the program is set up and managed per The Netherlands for unanimity from each island. Provide examples explaining every facet; collecting the raw data, interpreting the data, putting data into final figures and then filling out the forms and other documents that need to accompany the final results and submitting it in advance of the deadline. All the employees in these departments

need to see the same presentation from the manager of the department to the newest employee.

How many cycles of records have to be submitted just to be denied? Isn't 12 years long enough? Embarrassing yes. Education of the workforce would put an end to this archaic system. Continuous learning and education are so important.

If one desires Respect, slovenly office work is not how that is accomplished. Poor work habits will carry Bonaire only as far as their department managers' ability. Possibly more emphasis on management competency selection? Do management nominees have an understanding of the job they are selected to perform and how to go about doing it? What are their background training and experiences?

Do Bonaire governing institutions managers understand that Bonaire wants to advance as a recognized Country for more than its beaches and reefs. I don't think we need to sacrifice our "Blue Destination" goal to achieve this. As extremely important to the economy as "Blue Destination" is, I interpret Bonaire's end goal is broader than this.

Again, poor decisions are acting as albatrosses keeping the island in chaos. Learn to listen to the everyday conversations going on all over the island. Residents are demanding more transparency from their local government. Does anyone wonder why? Bring it (transparency) on. Don't rely too heavily on what ancestors achieved. Your grandchildren and great grandchildren are relying on what you accomplish today for their benefit.

Masha Danki, Earline Wasser

In the first week of 2023, fewer Covid-19 tests were again taken than the previous week. The number of positive tests remained almost the same. The finding percentage remains around 50%, which means that one in two Covid-19 tests that are taken via the PG-GGD test street come back positive. This also suggests that Covid-19 is still circulating within the population of Bonaire.

Age groups At week 1 of 2023, approximately 35% of all patients were 60+. This is also the age group that, due to a declining immune system, is more likely to become seriously ill or die. Only 20% of this age group has had a repeat vaccination. (See *The Reporter's* online update pages.) Because a repeat vaccination reduces the risk of serious illness, it is especially important for this age group to get it.

Hospitalization and Mortality. In week 1, one new patient was hospitalized with Covid-19. Although not all patients were hospitalized due to the Covid-19 contamination, more measures are required for all patients with Covid-19 due to the isolation procedures.

New variants. For several weeks now, the omicron variant BQ.1.1 has been the most common virus variant on Bonaire. The XBB.1 variant seems to be slowly dying out.

Going with a Bang

Flying is safe, statistics say. The chance of being killed on a plane is minimal. That is, when passengers obey certain regulations. No firearms, chemicals, bombs and the like are allowed on board to ensure flight safety. Perfectly clear. Carry-ons are always thoroughly checked; however, I started doubting the way safety checks take place concerning luggage in the hold.

During the early evening hours of January 9, Belnem was rocked by a number of loud explosions, much to the annoyance of dozens of local residents and their dogs. Judging by the loudness of the explosions, it was not just your normal homegrown fireworks. They sounded, volume wise, like the avalanche inducing flares they use in the mountains.

Immediately, Facebook exploded. According to conversations unfolding, the uproar was caused by a number of Dutch tourist children, accompanied by their tourist parents. When asked what they were doing and where the hell they got the explosives from, they told the bystanders that they brought the stuff themselves. From the Netherlands. On a plane.

The all-overwhelming stupidity that made them decide to take fireworks with the explosive force of a number of hand grenades, pack them in a suitcase, and have them put in the hold of a plane in which they themselves were to travel, is beyond belief. Although spontaneous combustion isn't likely, just taking the risk of killing 400-plus fellow passengers proves their complete madness.

Remarkable is the fact is that the airlines (KLM, TUI) apparently don't check all luggage for dangerous items. Their assumption that nobody will hand in a suitcase full of - for instance - dynamite for fear of blowing himself up, seems somehow naïve. They seem to ignore the fact that a passenger can be suicidal, or, as in this case, just profoundly brainless.

Today, people are accustomed to question every rule existing, even those that really make sense. Maybe it's not enough just asking them not to take any dangerous stuff. Check their luggage for the sake of flight safety. They can get killed, and so can we.

Gijs Borsten

Reserve half of the earth for biodiversity

It is not without reason that ecologist E.O. Wilson's book is named Half Earth. In 2016, he wrote that by protecting at least half of the Earth, we preserve the biodiversity and ecosystems necessary for our own survival.

However, at the Biodiversity Summit in Montreal, it was decided to protect 30 percent before 2030, the "30 by 30" target. Coenraad Krijger, director Netherlands of the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN), hopes that Montreal will be 'a dot on the horizon for biodiversity' (Trouw, December 7).

'Unfeasible'

Is thirty percent ambitious enough? More than two-thirds of natural scientists agree that if we are to successfully tackle the mutually reinforcing crises of global warming and biodiversity decline, it is imperative that we protect at least half of the land and protect half of the world's sea.

What exactly is at stake if we fail to protect the planet's biodiversity? Loss of biodiversity not only means that species of animals and plants are disappearing, but also that the food supply, health and security of humanity are at risk. In short: without biodiversity, no oxygen, no fresh water, no bees, no pollination, no food.

We must prioritize the life cycle of plants and animals on at least half of the earth's sur-

face, how we do that is up to us to decide. Only the boundary is not set by us, but completely determined by the needs of nature. Why not set aside half the planet now, when it is ecologically better to do so, and work creatively within these boundaries to create a truly sustainable society?

The reason why we can't protect half the Earth, at least not yet, is politically and economically driven: "It's just not feasible in such a short period of time."

Not in 2050, but now

In reality, it is probably much easier to achieve half the Earth's goal in the short term than in the (distant) future. By 2050, the world is expected to add 25 million kilometers of roads – enough to circle the Earth 600 times. Combined with a doubling of the urban area to house the nine billion people, the question is where will there be room for nature in 2050 if we do not act now.

From an ecological point of view, we are now much better able to achieve the 'Half' target than in 2050. We still have (albeit barely) a planet with about half of its nature intact. Is it really a choice we can afford to postpone to the future? Because to reach Half in that future we will have to restore nature on a huge scale and cannot bring back the thousands of species of animals and plants that have become extinct by then.



The consensus '30 by 30' is an important milestone on the way to half. In addition, it would be a major step forward to give nature its own rights, as laid down in the constitution in Ecuador and also happened for the inland sea Mar Menor in Spain.

has nature been so fragmented and weakened. We are on the edge of the abyss and should we fall into that abyss, there is no guarantee that we can climb out.

Can we afford to wait for the will of some political parties, even as the ecological fabric of our world disintegrates?

On the edge of the abyss

The main obstacle to achieving a healthier relationship with our planet is our lack of ambition. Environmental ambition is not an easy choice. However, the alternative is much worse. At no time in history

Wilma Nijland
Foundation Save Plantation Bolivia
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De Freewieler's next mountain bike Fun Race is set for Sunday, January 22 in the Yatu Bacu back country of Bonaire. With a start time of 8 a.m. riders can choose either the Fun route of 4.7 km x 5 or the Elite route of 11 km x 3. Helmets are required for all cyclists. Registration begins a half hour prior to race time. The cost is only \$10 and sports drinks and water will be available. For more information visit De Freewieler or Bonaire Xtreme MTB on Facebook.



A Garden?

Just Do It!

by Angliet, Nature Lover

It looks like we can expect the end of the rainy season soon. Not that it's not going to rain at all, but I noticed in the last two weeks that the rain is not as heavy. And the plants are already starting to get dry and drop their leaves. Other ones are hanging at half mast like a flag. I talked to them and asked how it's possible that they are getting dry after so much rain for so many months. It's like spoiled children. The more you give the more they want and are never satisfied. So my plan is not to water them every day. I began a type of training for them, watering every four days. Who will make it? Sorry, WEB does not have more water. The weak ones will go and the strong ones will get used to less water and survive. Remember there are also one year plants that are dying because their one year is up, end of story. Don't worry about them, let go and buy new ones which will beautifully flower for one year.

What really surprised me is that 'pies pies' (white fly) are already under the leaves and flying over the plants. The rain isn't over yet, but everything is there to remind me of the next dry season. So be prepared and start to protect your plants against this terrible fungus. Make neem tea and spray your plants weekly with it.

Making Bonaire Accessible

by Ria Evers-Dokter

Looking good, feeling good.

Recently my niece posted a picture on Facebook of our grandmother and her sister. This made me smile but also made me sad. They looked really nice dressed in a green coat and beige shoes with silver-gray hair. In the photo, I could tell they had walked from south to west and that means they had been to the graveyard to check on the graves of our loved ones. And then finished with a little walk.

Their hair was always done twice a year and took a long preparation to the other side of our island. Because in those days there was only transportation when the ferry came to and from. When arriving home, they proudly showed their hairdo. It was always a nicely cropped, tight little perm and light purple (due to the silver-shampoo). I loved their hair, especially the color. Nowadays I would call it cool. There were no shops on the island yet. Twice a year some salespersons of a well-known shop would come, and you could shop at home.

We used to own an establishment that only opened in summer. It was in the dunes, close by the beach. Because a lot of tourists frequented, we always had to be nice and presentable. Granny and her sisters loved that. For we children, it was the same. We could not afford much, so Granny's sister made us great clothes from clothes the adults did not wear any longer. You could not see that they were handmade, and we wore them proudly.

I have always loved nice clothes and was never afraid to dress differently by combining cool colors. And I still do.



The 'pies pies' are all over my pumpkin vines. What a pity because there are five pumpkins growing on the vines. I want them to grow nice and big and yet, with this fungus I don't know what will happen. One can spray little plants with neem tea but I don't know if I can spray under each and every leaf on such large, bushy vines. And the pumpkin vines crawl and hook on everything in their way. They grow in all the trees like the guyaba tree and hang down because of the heavy pumpkins.

Another thing I noticed is there are fewer blossoms on all the fruit trees. Even the trees which are normally full of blossoms like the starfruit. I don't know

My blue glasses I have had for almost 20 years now and I never grow tired of them, but I think it is time for a change though.... I saw really cool glasses on Facebook and I made an appointment to go to that optika. I really look forward to that.

Never be afraid to stand out when it comes to clothing. Dressing does not have to do anything with age. You should dress the way you like and not give a care about what others say. Dare to be different. Whenever I see someone wearing clothes and a style I like, I always compliment them. When you look nice, it makes you feel good.

One often sees elderly that dress nicely, but it is as if they all have frequented the same store. Maybe someone else shops for their clothing? Asking your grandchildren to shop with you is a good solution.

I love to watch Iris Apfel. She is in her 80's, but she does not look that way. She dares!!! And should Mrs. Apfel dress a bit too sharply for you, you can always tone it down a bit. Leggings, jeans, T-tops and kaftans that are always in nice bright colours that fit the Caribbean vibes. And change the hairstyle while you are at it.

I wish you all a colorful and sharp 2023. Dare to stand out.

Ria Dokter is living happily on Bonaire, where she also used to work as a director at the FKPD and started Special Olympics Bonaire. She took care of her husband (R.I.P) for many years and feels that accessibility is the most important issue on our island.



if you have the same experience, but the blossoms came off from the heavy rain showers.

What are doing very well are the plantain and bacoba plants. All still have big bunches of fruit. They will still take at least a half year to mature.

Yet, it's time to start with trimming and yard cleaning. I asked some gardeners or yard cleaners what it will cost to do my yard. Don't fall apart when reading this, but they first said \$600 dollars and when I looked at them like forget about it, they came up with \$400. I will try to do it myself and maybe some friends will help me with the more difficult parts. It's totally ridiculous that this is the normal price for a small yard cleaning. Maybe we gardeners should start a collective yard cleaning group. We can help each other to clean our yards on a free Saturday morning or afternoon. Many hands together make a job go fast and give big satisfaction and create nice friendships. Sharing and caring, that sounds good, right?

Last but not least, the project at LVV where people have their own plot and grow all kinds of vegetables is a big success. I have seen many pictures of the fresh vegetables and fruits. There is a lot of yambo (okra) melons, sweet and hot pepper, string beans, ginger, yuca, corn, beans, peas, herbs, tomatoes, eggplant and papaya. Yes, it's a great success with good results due to a good rainy season and enthusiastic gardeners.

Finally, I want to mention something about a fantastic initiative of youngsters who gathered together and started a Nature Cooking school. This project teaches young children and youngsters to garden nature friendly (urban agriculture). They learn how to make a delicious, exciting meal from their own homegrown vegetables and fruits.

Isn't this an amazing idea for youngsters to grow together for a healthy, happy, green Bonaire? One can visit the Nature Cooking School Bonaire on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089237405686>

So go ahead, start the year with healthy minds for healthy gardening, Just do it.



Angliet grew up in the Surinam jungle, moved to the Netherlands as a teen, where she trained as a teacher, then in Alternative Healing. She has traveled the world - north to Russia and Alaska, south to Tierra del Fuego and Africa and all points in between. Returning to the Caribbean with her young family, she taught in St Eustatius and Bonaire. Everywhere she has lived, she has planted a garden and grown her own food.

Climate Table talks begin



The climate table quatermaster, Ed Nijpels, met with Bonaire's nature conservation organizations.

In an effort to make Bonaire more resilient to the ever-growing effects of climate change, Bonaire's Executive Council has created a Climate Table. Ed Nijpels, former member of the House of Representatives of the Netherlands, is heading up the table as quatermaster. He was asked to organize a possible climate agreement for Bonaire by getting input from the public and various groups.

Public meetings held in Rincon and Kralendijk attracted low attendance but spirited conversation. Another meeting was held with Bonaire's nature conservation colleagues including STINAPA, Reef Renewal, WWNF, Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire, Mangrove Maniacs, DCNA Klimaat Bureau Bonaire and Greenpeace.

In the Kralendijk meeting, Nijpels explained the Climate Table is divided into five tables: mobility, housing, agriculture, industry and electricity. Most of these are relevant to Bonaire, Saba and St. Eustatius.

A few major contributors to climate

change are greenhouse gases, primarily carbon dioxide (Co2), electrical generation, deforestation and transporation. The world is now left to deal with rising sea level, warmer oceans, destructive storms, drought and flooding.

Nijpels said to the group, "Bottom line is I want to listen to everything, see who wants to participate and what do I have to know."

Effective change could come by reducing building/construction and the number of ships, cars and airplanes frequenting the island. Electric powered transportation is moving forward on Bonaire but fossil fuels are currently needed to produce the electricity. Creating a new way to produce electricity is key. Bonaire currently has 12 wind turbines in place and seven more are coming. Producing electricity through the power of the ocean is a possibility.

Solar panels are becoming more common on Bonaire. But as one Individual attendee noted, solar users receive as

Climate Table Talks,
continued on page 10

Reef Glimpses

by Dee Scarr

What's So Bad About Feeding the Fish?

Last week, Hannah and her dive buddies noticed a snorkel excursion boat apparently putting food into the water to attract critters. Hannah knew that wasn't supposed to happen here, so her group later notified the Bonaire National Marine Park (BNMP), which is exactly right. It would have helped if they could have phoned the Marine Park at the time, which they couldn't do since they hadn't brought their phones. If they'd had a camera, land photos of the event would have been exceptionally useful, showing the BNMP which group needed to learn that they shouldn't put food into the water, and why they shouldn't put food into the water.

Ah, the reasons why.

In the mid-1980's, it became popular for divers to feed the fish at Sampler. There were interesting consequences of this, which the boat's snorkelers certainly didn't know, and neither did their guides. Initially the nibblers at Sampler were sweet little trunkfish, French angelfish couples, scrawled and whitespotted filefish, and the occasional small, shy yellowtail snapper. This cast of characters changed as more and more fish feeding events took place. The nibblers were jostled out of the way and replaced by gobblers, who were primarily incredibly bold yellowtail snappers. Those yellowtails grew to maximum sizes; they knew food

was coming not only by seeing the food; they also learned to watch for divers who slowed down or hovered, because that behavior preceded most feedings. Since it was also what photographers did when they took a photo or two, yellowtails were photo-bombing before the term even originated.

The yellowtails of course competed with each other. This resulted in chomped fingers on divers who weren't feeding, but whose pale fingertips simply looked like possible food.

"Get it first, you can always spit it out," was apparently their code.

Curious about this, I brought a balled-up wad of paper down with me, and threw it (pushed it, more accurately; you can't really throw underwater) forward. It was a perfect size for gobbling, and hung in the water like food. Several yellowtails raced up and the winner sucked down the paper – and spit it out. Another pushed in and grabbed the paper, and also spit it out. In all, six individual yellowtails tasted that paper before the rest decided not to bother!

The other gobblers were spotted morays, a few of whom began swimming up off the bottom to join in the fun. When the morays adopted the "Get it first," code, one diver was bitten pretty severely. A spotted moray, enthusiastically seeking food, mistook her exhaust bub-



That's me, fish feeding on San Salvador, in the Bahamas, in 1979. The look in my eyes says, "Someone's going to bite me soon – but who?"

bles as edible. It bit through the bubbles and onto her lip, and how she managed to get through that I can't imagine, but she did. Brave lady.

Sampler was closed for several years to give the gobblers time to calm down. All that feeding had resulted in a population of yellowtails that couldn't be maintained without the extra food. The yellowtails followed divers at neighboring reefs for years, but luckily the morays didn't move much. The BNMP prohibition of fish feeding was re-emphasized.

In the last few years, lionfishing has

awakened the gobbler in some morays – not just spotted morays -- on Bonaire. When thinking about feeding the fish, a person might consider the possibility of themselves, or their buddies, being welcomed by the sharp teeth and bad eyes of a six-foot (2 m) length of muscle known as a green moray.

Reef Glimpses,
continued on page10



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Lieutenant Governor Edison Rijna held his traditional New Year's celebration on January 12 on the patio of Bestuurskantoor. Guests enjoyed live local music, food, and drinks. "We have had a tough period, but we got through it well together. Let's take the good things from that crisis: solidarity and caring about the other," said Lieutenant Governor Rijna. After the Lieut. Gov.'s speech wishing everyone a successful 2023, a magnificent fireworks show ended the evening. Photo Julie Morgan



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Reef Glimpses, continued from page 8

Rules make a lot more sense if the reasons behind them also make sense. Not feeding the critters results in more natural behaviors on their parts, and safer swimmers, snorkelers, and divers.

To report a fish feeding incident or anything else that doesn't seem right in regard to respecting our marine park call the BMP Watch telephone +599-777-8444.

Next issue: Why is coral said to be fragile?



Dee has been guiding divers on Bonaire since 1982. She's written about her undersea experiences in her books, *Touch the Sea*, *The Gentle Sea*, and *Coral's Reef* (for children); in *Dive Training Magazine* from 1990 to 2000, with "Coral Glimpses" in the *Bonaire Reporter*; and now with "Reef Glimpses." The *Bonaire Reporter* is delighted to bring "Reef Glimpses" to you free of charge through touchthesea.com.

Climate Table Talks, continued from page 7

little as 2 cents per kilowatt from WEB although WEB charges 50 cents per kilowatt. Realizing an investment in solar panels is currently expected to take seven years.

Another person stated building codes in the Netherlands require every building to be insulated but Bonaire continues to construct everything with concrete. No insulation is required which increases the need for more air conditioning units and thus electricity.

An attendee asked, what are we doing to protect our reefs that are being destroyed daily by run-off from development and flooded roads?

Another attendee stated that at one time building in the southern part of Bonaire was banned due to possible rising sea level and nature protection but the politicians let it happen anyway. Individuals questioned the building of yet another pier when there are already four in place.

Traffic was discussed. The claim was made that there

are as many cars as people and because fuel is subsidized people can afford to drive.

An individual queried, why do we have bus stops but no buses? Electric fueled public transport would go a long way to ease the carbon emissions filling our atmosphere.

Other attendees stated that Bonaire has grown so fast needs have grown so big. People need to know what kind of things we can do. We don't know what's going to happen but we have to do something. We have to do it together.

No mention was given of a further meeting for input to the Climate Table.

Nijpels was joined by Luella Maters of OLB and Tibbe an den Nieuwenhuizen of Twijnstra Gudde.

Julie Morgan

Join the Ride for the Roses, January 29, 2023

January 29, 2023 is the date of the sixth annual Ride, Walk, Swim & Sail for the Roses. As with the past five editions, Orco Bank organizes 'The Ride' to raise money for the Cancer Fund Bonaire, adding its own donation to the monies raised by the participants.

The Ride for the Roses consists of four parts. Walkers can choose to walk 7 or 9 kilometers. Bikers can ride 13 or 20 kilometers. Swimmers enter the water at Kas di Regatta and leave it at Spice Beach, a distance of 700 meters. The Sail (in anything that floats) starts at Atlantis Beach in the south of Bonaire. If you are really sporty, you can combine the Walk and Swim or the Ride and Swim.

You choose your activity to purchase your ticket. You can choose a Ride ticket, Sail ticket, Swim ticket, Walk ticket or Combi ticket. Each activity ticket costs \$20 per person. If you want to participate in several parts, a combination ticket costs \$25.

You can pay by credit card on the website <https://www.ridefortheroses.org> or upon arrival. Kids tickets are also available. Tickets can be purchased at various places on Bonaire: Gas Station Rincon, Freewieler Bonaire, Yogarriba or from the board members of the organization.

You can Pick Up your t-shirt and bag from Orco Bank - January 26, 27 and 28.

Photo Julie Morgan



Creating optimal health

by Irene da Cunda Costa
K.I.S.S. K.I.S.H.

Keep it super simple to keep it sustainably healthy.

Technology and advances in medicine have allowed us to extend our life expectancy and, in many cases, improve the quality of life. On the other side in recent years the diseases typical of affluent societies have rapidly increased.

We have access to a lot of information on how to lead a healthy lifestyle, but 24 hours a day are hardly enough to earn a living and carry out all the recommended routines.

Understanding how moving away from our biological rhythms and habits that are detrimental to our general health is key to finding the way back. Nowadays we create artificial strategies to compensate for the loss of the behaviors typical of our species, but sometimes those strategies are complicated and time consuming.

The Western diet, despite its abundance of calories and its apparent diversity, has failed to keep us healthy, so countless diet trends have emerged. Some of these diets are fundamentalistic and hard to sustain in time. The observations of Weston Price (1870 -1948) in his book "Nutrition and Physical Degeneration" (1939), showed that isolated populations that maintained their tradition-

al diets, had fewer cavities, better bone structure and better general health and immunity. These populations, ate what was produced locally, did not need to resort to superfoods imported from distant lands, nor to supplements or exotic adaptogens. These populations ate simply and were in excellent health proving healthy eating shouldn't be complicated. According to his findings one should stay away from super processed foods and minimize consumption of polyunsaturated oils, refined sugar and refined wheat flour. Diet should favor fresh and locally produced foods as well as healthy fats.

Regarding physical activity, Joan Vernikos, in her book "Sitting Kills, Movement Heals" (2011) says that it is not by going to the gym what will keep us active and autonomous. Instead, she recommends practicing the natural movements that our ancestors carried out daily. Out of necessity they walked, cleaned, collected, worked the soil, harvested and built. The most important movement is something as simple as standing up from the seated position. Just by creating strategies to avoid sitting long hours, we are already doing a lot for our health. Nothing wrong with going to the gym, but that alone will not suffice.

The rush and demands of the 21st century added to the hyper exposure to multiple stimuli through television, computers, and the cell phone. They have exacerbated our lack of connection with the present moment, with those around us and even with ourselves. We have lost

the contemplative capacity. The moments of silence, peace and calm that were naturally part of the lives of our grandparents and previous generations, barely exist nowadays. This is why it seems that the practice of meditation and mindfulness is the only way to reconnect with the present moment. Nothing wrong with practicing mindfulness, but just think that is not what our ancestors did.

The people who live in the blue zones still practice ancestral behaviors in a natural way. The blue zones are those places on the planet where the highest concentration of healthy and active long-lived people are. Their food is simple and local. They do not consume super-processed or ultra-refined products, but they do not follow fundamentalist diets either. They do not visit gyms, as the need for movement arises naturally from their daily activities. They don't go to mindfulness workshops, instead contemplation is practiced daily through the cult of spirituality and committing enough quality time to their loved ones.



Irene is passionate about health, neurosciences and personal growth. Originally from Uruguay, she is an Integrative Psychotherapist (PNIE), Life Coach (ICF), Master in Nutrition(IUSC) and Yoga Instructor.

KiniKini christened in ceremony



Officials and guests take a ride on the KiniKini along the waterfront. With this new acquisition, Customs and the Multidisciplinary Maritime HUB Bonaire (MMHB) are now even better prepared for border control and protecting the safety of Bonaire residents.

In September 2022, Bonaire's Customs (Douane) took delivery of a 12 m (39.3 ft) custom built Eduardono 380. On January 11 dignitaries watched as the boat was christened in a ceremony at the Custom's Pier. Communication Advisor for the Caribbean Netherlands Police Force, Caroll Ann Soliano, led the ceremony. Priest Marc Hooijschuur of La Birgin di Coromoto Catholic Church blessed the boat. The blessing was followed by speeches and a catered reception.

Named the *KiniKini*, (Falcon in Papiamentu) the boat is built for Caribbean waters with three 300cc engines. Reaching speeds up to 45 knots (52 mph) it can easily get to Curaçao in 51 minutes. The KiniKini is designed for five personnel but will carry up to 12 passengers and can be expanded. The boat was built in Colombia and accessorized by Imix Marine in Curaçao.

Story/photos Julie Morgan



Director of Belastingdienst Anneke van den Breemer and Lieut. Governor Edison Rijna christen the *KiniKini* with a bottle of champagne



On December 7, *The Reporter* published a story about the opening of an exhibit called Trippin' Tuna by artists Fred Ros and Ron Moret at the soon to be open restaurant/bar at Hilltop. Fred has added to this project by producing 20 small bronze Trippin' Tuna. On January 12, Fred displayed a few of them and Susi and Ronald Komen were the first to purchase one of the little works of art. For more information visit Thetuna.nl or Trippin-tuna.com. (L-R) The artist Fred Ros and Susi Komen. Photo Julie Morgan

Sunday, January 29



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What's Happening

Animal Shelter: Mon-Fri 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; 2-3:30 p.m. Sat. 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. phone/whatsapp: 701 4989 or 717 4989. Email: animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com

Arts & Crafts Market in Wilhelmina Plaza. Weekly schedule can be found at: <https://www.bonaireartsandcraftscruisemarket.com/market-schedule> or <https://www.facebook.com/BonaireArtsandCraftsCruiseMarket/>

Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei in Rincon: Tuesday - Friday -10 - 4

Library: Mon. 12-5; Tues. to Thurs. 8-5; Fri. 8-4:30; Sat. 8-12. Kaya Gramel 715 5344. Anyone can become a member. Free for residents between 0 and 18 years. Adults \$6 a year. Members can borrow ebooks online. www.onlinebibliotheek.nl

Pakus di Pruga (Animal Shelter flea market. Central Kralendijk): 8- 4 Saturdays.

Terramar Museum Mon-Fri 9-2. Kaya J.N.E. Isla Riba 3. Admission \$10. Residents \$5. Tours \$20. Children under 12 free. <https://terrarmuseum.com>

STINAPA headquarters: Mon-Fri 8-4. +599 717 8444. +599 777 8444.

Washington Slagbaai Park: Open every day. 8-5 (entry up to 1 p.m.)

Friday, Jan. 20	Meet the Artist, Joel Muzo: 7 - 9 p.m. MoltenWolf Glass. Kaya J.N.E. Craane Terramar 8 +599 701-1880 www.MoltenWolf-Glass.com
Saturday, Jan. 21	Quarterly Clean up Dive, Dive Friends Everyone is welcome. If you don't dive, you can snorkel; if you don't snorkel, you can help out on shore. https://www.divefriendsbonaire.com/eco-activities/quarterly-clean-up-dives/
Sunday, Jan. 22	Mountain bike Fun Race in the Yatu Bacu back country. Start 8 a.m. See page 6.
Jan. 28/29	Royal visit See page 2.
Saturday, Jan. 28	Nos Zjilea Cultural Event 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei, Rincon. Enjoy the music, dancing, crafts, amazing food and drink. Theme. "The Value of Cultural Heritage for our Identity." See page 13 Taste of Bonaire 2022 Starts at 6 p.m. @ Wilhelmina Park. Food, culture, local handicrafts. Signature dishes of well-known restaurants offered at special prices.
Sunday, Jan. 29	Ride, Walk, Swim and Sail for the Roses. Raise money for Cancer Fund Bonaire. See page 10. For more information and to purchase tickets online, visit: https://www.ridefortheroses.org

Government dates

Ombudsman on Bonaire: Jan. 18 from 9 - 11 a.m. at Jong Bonaire, Jan. 19 at 4:30 p.m. in Rincon at Cocari, Jan. 21 from 9 - 11 a.m. at Jong Bonaire. No appointment is necessary.

Annual road tax due. The motor vehicle tax can be paid in two equal installments, the first due before 1 April 2023, the second before 1 July 2023. See *The Reporter* online update pages.

Election Day March 15.

Coming Up

Lora Roost Count Usually end of January (TBA) The first roost count of 2023 is coming up. Twice a year, Echo holds a count of the yellow shouldered Amazon parrots, an endangered species on the island. There are multiple observation stations and each one needs two volunteers to observe.

Karnaval 2023. Selected dates from Jan. 28 through Feb. 21. *The Reporter's* online update pages have the complete schedule. <https://bonairereporter.com>

Bon Doet, when the whole island volunteers, is Friday and Saturday, March 10/11. If your organization needs volunteers, register at <https://www.bondoet.com>

First Annual Bonaire International Sport Week March 24- April 2, 2023. See page 13

Bonaire Rum Week, June 12 - 16. Tastings, parties, bartending, competitions, dinners & cigars.

International Flights to Bonaire	
Amsterdam (AMS)	KLM Daily flights connecting through Aruba TUI Daily
Atlanta (ATL)	Delta has a weekly Sat. flight.
Miami (MIA)	American Airlines. Three weekly flights on Mon. Wed. and Sat.
New York (EWR) & Houston (IAH)	United. A weekly Sat. flight from both Newark, New Jersey, and Houston, Texas. Return flight on Sunday.
See <i>The Reporter's</i> online update pages for TCB's chart of flights to Bonaire.	

Events & Meetings

12 steps meeting: 12 Step Meeting, Wednesdays at Kaya Den Haag 30 in Hato. Meeting starts at 7:15 p.m. till 8:30 p.m. Info: 12stepsbonaire@gmail.com

Alcoholics Anonymous open meeting Every Thursday, 7 - 8 p.m. International Bible Church Kaya Papago 104 in Hato (Behind Bon Bida Spa and Gym and Bon Bida apartments). All welcome, regardless of primary addiction or no addiction at all.

Beach Tennis Bonaire can now be found at its new location, the Kaminda Djabou (direct left from Kaya Neerlandia --behind Budget Marine). It is open daily until 10 p.m. People can play for free or register for training and tournaments for a fee.

Bridgeclub Bonaire organizes a bridge evening Wednesdays from 7:15 p.m. You are welcome, whatever level you play. Contact us via phone 796 2819 or email peejeesee@gmail.com. See <https://www.facebook.com/BridgeclubBonaire>.

UW photography workshops at Buddy Dive Resort with Lorenzo Mittiga. Jan. 21 - 28. <https://bonaireisland.com/events-calendar/buddy-dive-resort-x-lorenzo-mittiga/>



Echo Conservation Tours - weekdays at 8 a.m. or 5 p.m. and Saturday 8 a.m. To reserve email at info@echobonaire.org



Manta Monday - Nicole Pelletier of the Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation Program. Presentations 7:30 p.m.: Jan. 9 Toucan Diving, Van der Valk Plaza Beach Resort; email: Caribbean.Islands@mantatrust.org



Reef Renewal Bonaire. Sundays 5:30 p.m. Blennies Restaurant - Buddy Dive Resort. Free. Open to everyone. Want to learn about coral reef restoration on Bonaire? Come listen to a staff member, instructor, or volunteer give an informative presentation about Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire and the importance of restoring and protecting Bonaire's coral reefs! Questions? email: info@reefrenewalbonaire.org



Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB). Free public presentations at Yellow Submarine, every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month, at 8 p.m.

Neighborhood Initiatives can apply for Appeltjes van Oranje 2023

The Oranje Fonds is searching for exceptional projects eligible for an Appeltje van Oranje 2023. This year's theme is Neighborhood Bridge Builders. Successful neighborhood initiatives bridging differences and truly connecting residents have a chance to win one of the three "Appeltjes van Oranje" which will be awarded for the 21st time. Each of the three winners will receive a bronze statuette made by Princess Beatrix and a cash prize of € 25.000, which can be freely applied towards the winning initiative's objective. Organizations can apply at oranjefonds.nl/appeltjes for a chance to win the cash prize. The Appeltjes van Oranje will be presented by Queen Maxima in October 2023.

Tentative cruise ship schedule				
DATE:	CRUISE SHIP	TIME	PIER	CAPACITY
Wed. Jan. 18	CELEBRITY EQUINOX	0700-1600	South	2852
	CARNIVAL SPIRIT	0800-1600	North	2680
Thurs. Jan. 19	NORWEGIAN EPIC	0600-1300	South	5186
Sat. Jan. 21	ENCHANTED PRINCESS	0800-1900	South	3660
Mon. Jan. 23	VISION OF THE SEAS	0800-1800	North	2435
Tues. Jan. 24	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	0800-2000	North	2417
	EXPLORER OF THE SEAS	0800-2300	South	3840
Wed. Jan. 25	CARNIVAL HORIZON	0700-1500	South	4683
Thurs. Jan. 26	NORWEGIAN EPIC	0600-1300	South	5186
	SEVEN SEAS SPLENDOR	0700-1400	North	754
Fri. Jan. 27	CELEBRITY EQUINOX	0700-1600	South	2852
	STAR LEGEND	0800-1800	North	214
Sun. Jan. 29	NORWEGIAN JEWEL	0700-2000	South	3000
	SEVEN SEAS NAVIGATOR	0800-1900	North	530
Mon. Jan. 30	BRITANNIA	0700-1800	South	3674
	BOREALIS (ROTTERDAM)	0800-2300	North	1825
Wed. Feb. 1	CARNIVAL MAGIC	0800-1600	South	3646

Did You Know? *about the giant land snail sighting here on Bonaire?*

Did you know that we had the first sightings of the Giant African land snail (*Lissachatina fulica*) here on Bonaire? This giant African native was first reported in the Caribbean in the early 1980's and has already made its way to several other Caribbean countries.

The giant African land snail (GALS) really does its name justice. An adult snail can get up to 20 cm (7.9 in) in length! That's almost the size of a medium size watermelon and, due to its size, it is one of the largest land snails in the world. Even though this sounds pretty cool, it is not a very good snail to have reached Bonaire. GALS can eat up to 500 different plant species. This big appetite makes them a big threat to kunukeronan and the fruits and vegetables they grow. Due to the lack of a predator on Bonaire a giant snail population can grow very quickly. In other places like Florida where the giant snails have been present for quite some time, multiple eradication efforts have been put into action to combat the fast spread of this invasive species. Beside their big appetite, they are also known to carry a parasite with them that could cause harm to humans. Now that we know the snail and its destructive qualities, it's up to us to help Bonaire's ecosystems.

So, what can we do?

First and foremost, it is important to be able to recognize the Giant African land snail. This is very important and needs 100% accuracy because you don't want to confuse them with our own native and tiny land snail, the *Drymaeus elongatus*

a.k.a "Kokolishi Chubatu". To identify the Giant African Land Snail we will focus on distinct physical properties and their preferred living area:

The Giant African Land Snail has a light to dark brown shell with distinct vertical stripes near the pointy side of its shell. These strips are mostly a darker brown than the shell itself. When the snail is out and about, you will notice that its body is way longer than its own shell. They love moist habitats, so are most likely to be found in tropical backyards or well-watered gardens. Unlike our local Kokolishi which is much smaller in size compared to the giant African land snail. Other than size, our land snail's shell comes in a wide variety of colors. And is way better adapted to our dry forest landscape. That's why you would see them more on our native trees like the Wayaka.

When encountering the giant African land snail do not touch them with your bare hands. An easy way to eliminate them would be: using 2 cups of salt or bleach to four liters of water. Make sure there are no snails or eggs left, as they can lay up to 500 eggs!

Check out the infographic for a more compact comparison. *(A larger version of the infographic is on The Reporter's online update pages.)*

*Jilly Sarpong. STINAPA Washington
Slagbaai National Park senior ranger.
Connecting People With Nature*



Experience 'Nos Zjilea' The Value of Cultural Heritage for our Identity

Bonaireans are known for their friendliness and warmth. They are a mix of descendants of Africans, Caribbean Indians, Spaniards and Dutch. All these cultures have influenced the cultural heritage of Bonaire. With heritage we discover an image of ourselves. Every community likes to show

off its heritage as unique or regional. Organizations like UNESCO Workgroup Bonaire and FuHiKuBo work tirelessly to safeguard and preserve our traditions and customs so that they do not get lost.

The Saturday, January 28 theme of "Nos Zjilea" is "The Value of Cultural Heritage for our Identity." Liliane de Geus will present the new website of UNESCO Workgroup Bonaire and explain how it contributes to the island of Bonaire.

Through their heritage, Bonaireans exhibit their best image. Different families have been inheriting different skills and talents for many years passing the skills on from generation to generation. Come and hear about craftsmanship and knowledge which has been in the family tree of the local family Pourier for years. Come and listen to their stories.

At the beginning of the year we honor different traditions to welcome the new year. Leticia Beaumont will help us usher in the New Year with her incense she has prepared especially for this occasion.

The culture market will feature fresh products such as locally produced natural fruit juices, local herbal teas, local

delicacies and the local art. The kitchen opens at 10 a.m. with a wide variety of soups. In the afternoon, visitors have the opportunity to try the various local creole and seafood dishes, so don't miss it. All is available in a cozy atmosphere with a "live" performance by the youth bands "Talento Kultural," "Bonaire Child Orchestra" and the local band "Tutti Frutti."

Experience 'Nos Zjilea', the monthly cultural event of Bonaire, on Saturday the January 28 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Culture Park Mangazina di Rei. For more information, please visit Mangazina di Rei's Facebook fan page,

www.facebook.com/mangazinadirei.

By Izain Mercera

Bonaire's first annual International Sport Week will run in 2023

INDEBON (Sports division of OLB) in collaboration with the lottery Fundashon Wega Di Number Bonaire (FWNB) and Tourism Corporation Bonaire (TCB) is organizing a series of Sport Week events held from March 24- April 2nd 2023.

The sports week will adopt the Island's new theme: *It's in our nature* as TCB continues to promote the island as a sports and wellness destination for visitors from around the world.

The week's highlight will be the first international Concacaf championship soccer (fútbol) game held on March 28, 2023 in Bonaire. A local Bonaire soccer team will play its first international Concacaf match in Rincon's soccer stadium against a team from Turks & Caicos. Concacaf, the Confederation of North, Central America and Caribbean Association Football, is one of FIFA's six continental governing bodies for association football.

Bonaire's International Sport Week will include:

March 23-26. Girls Fast Pitch softball bash. Several kids softball clinics will be given with players from Aruba, Curaçao and the Netherlands.

March 26. A Walk for All (Kaminata) for the community followed by a running competition and a fun bicycle event.

March 30 to April 2.

- Aqua Speed Pro Kids International. Introducing a new global point system to qualify with international competition regulations.
- Bolas (Bolas Krioyo) International Match with teams from the ABC islands.
- International Beach Tennis will be hosted on Bonaire for single and duo players with participants from the neighboring islands and the Netherlands.

During the week long sport events and activities, the partners will be organizing several cultural and musical events such as the Kralendijk Shopping Night on March 25 and a Taste of Bonaire, Sports & Culture edition on April 1.

Learn more by visiting www.bonaireisland.com for more updates and information.

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Echo
PARROTS AND PEOPLE

Woopsy



This is Woopsy!

She's about 2 years old and she was brought in three months ago, because sadly her owner didn't have time for her anymore, so she needed to go. When meeting her for the first time she was terrified to the point of nonstop trembling, but in just a week she showed huge improvement. Woopsy couldn't stop wagging her tail and jumping around and became a social butterfly. Like many dogs, when meeting someone for the first time, she needs to learn to trust you. And when she does trust you, you will have the most happy and friendly dog she can be.

Woopsy is good with other dogs of all sizes and ages and cats are fine too.

Photo/story Sanne Attevelt

Pets of the Week

This pretty tortie is called Daisy.

One morning we found Daisy left behind in front of the Shelter fence. She was about 8 months old at the time of course, a bit afraid. Daisy learned to trust people and now she has become beautiful and friendly adult cat looking for some nice, friendly people to live with. Maybe she's not that cat that comes running to when you enter our cat palace but if you give her some time she will come, sit next to you and ask for some attention.

Daisy is almost two years old, vaccinated, sterilized and already chipped.

After waiting 14 months at the shelter she's ready to go! Who will come over and meet this beautiful lady?

Photo/story: Monique Degenaar

Daisy



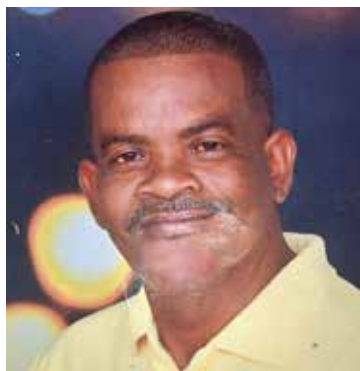
If you would like to meet our cats and dogs, please come to Animal Shelter Bonaire, Kaminda Lagun 26A. Open Monday - Friday 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 2-3:30 p.m. Saturday 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. nonstop. You can also call 701-4989 or 717-4989 to make an appointment, via whatsapp, facebook messenger, or email animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com

Bondigro importing eggs from Colombia as a trial

Bondigro is testing a solution to Bonaire's egg shortage. It is experimenting with importing eggs from Columbia via its usual supplier of Columbian fruit. The eggs that are currently being brought in from other offshore sources are small and white. Bonaireans prefer the large, brown Columbian eggs they are accustomed to.

The Columbian eggs are also almost 40% less expensive than other imports. Sold in boxes of 15 for \$4.99, they average 33 cents per egg. Imported eggs from other countries are selling for as much as 54 cents. *DMR (Bonaire.nu)*

Still missing



Ludwig Cicilia has been missing since Wednesday, January 11, when he was last seen near Rincon around 9 p.m. The man was wearing black pants and no shirt. Ludwig is better known under the name 'Speke.'

The KPCN coordinated a search on Saturday January 14 beginning from the road to Washington/Slagbaai National Park. The coastguard helicopter aided in the search but the missing man was not found.

Shelter News

Vacation planning for your pets and more



It's only January and your vacation plans may seem far off, but if you need to board your pets, NOW is the time to make your reservations. Animal Shelter Bonaire boarding facilities are almost full for the spring and summer holidays, only limited space remains. If you need to board your dog(s) or cat(s) please email us now at:

animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com to secure any spots we may have left. If we are already booked for your chosen dates there are some alternatives. You can contact Jellastone Pet Park which also provides boarding services for cats and dogs. To check for available space visit:

<http://www.jellastonepetpark.info>.

Another alternative is securing a pet

sitter to care for your pets at your home while you are away. This is often a better option particularly for older pets and cats. Being cared for in their own home alleviates the stress and anxiety of being in a strange place for an extended period of time. Please take note that if you bring your pet to board at Animal Shelter Bonaire the animal must be up to date with vaccinations, recently treated against fleas and ticks and they should also be sterilized. Arrangements can be made to have your pet sterilized for free while they are boarding with us. We will also need the name of your veterinarian in case of emergency or should your animal get sick while boarding. When boarding cats, the owners may have the

option of choosing between an individual kennel for their cat, or if it's a sociable cat, joining other boarding cats in a larger communal setting. Whether it's a dog or cat, please make your pet's vacation plans now to be sure they are cared for while you are gone.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

It's a new year and maybe one of your resolutions is to "give back" to the community by performing some volunteer work. Animal Shelter Bonaire has numerous opportunities for you. We are always in need of volunteers to help care for our dogs and cats at the Shelter. Assisting our staff a few hours on any morning of your choice (approx. 8-10 a.m.) would be an enormous help to us. With over 200 animals to care for we really need some extra hands and hearts. If you'd like to help please email us at animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com. Additionally, there are other types of volunteer opportunities besides working with the animals. We can always use help in yard maintenance, housekeeping and other areas with a more flexible schedule. Please email us at animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com if you'd like to help in some way. Pakus di Pruga, our "flea market store", open on Saturdays 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. can also use some extra hands in a variety of tasks. So stop by to see what you can do and don't forget to donate your unused books, furniture, household goods.

Jane Disko

Ride for the ROSES

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The right man for the job

In an official inauguration ceremony, the new KPCN (Korps Politie Caribisch Nederland) Chief of Police Alwyn Braaf took his oath of office before a large crowd on January 13 at the police station.

"This is the right man for the job" said Lieut. Gov. Edison Rijna.

Braaf was selected in December to replace the outgoing Chief of six years, Jose Rosales, who announced he was leaving in July 2022. Rosales will con-

tinue to act as an advisor as needed.

As part of the ceremony, Braaf's father, Henk Braaf, and Corps manager, Monique Commelin, attached the epaulettes designating Braaf's rank as chief.

Following the oath, Chief Braaf inspected the new police cadets in training with Ruel Pinedo of the Dept. of Detection.

The job of KPCN Chief applies not only to Bonaire but also to Saba and St Eustatius. He heads up the entire force



As part of the ceremony, the new chief's father, Henk Braaf (L), and Corps manager, Monique Commelin (R), attach the chief status epaulettes to Chief Alwyn Braaf.



Chiefs from other islands attending the ceremony were L-R: Chief of Police of Sint Maarten, Carl John; Chief of Police of Aruba, Ramon Arnhem; Chief of Police of Bonaire, Alwyn Braaf; Chief of Police of Curaçao, Mr. Raymond Ellis and Former Chief of Police of Bonaire, Jose Rosales

of 200+ on staff and is in frequent contact with the chiefs of all departments on the other islands. Police officers work on all three islands at different times for stints of three to six months. The officers can become better acquainted with the island's differences to provide better service. KPCN is the umbrella organization and is housed on Bonaire.

Braaf joined the force in 1995 and has worked through the organizational structure of KPCN until his present position as Chief of Police.

"In 2010, leading in the department

became attractive to me. Creating new leaders. We are all passing by and we aren't always here. We need to give new pros the chance to develop. We have an obligation to do that," said Chief Braaf. "It's important that we always think about public safety of the island and translate that to all the colors of the police force and everyone. We have to keep developing."

Following the ceremony, a full reception was held for all guests and KPCN staff.

Photos/story Julie Morgan



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