



Photo Julie Morgan

## Over 800 support Ride for the Roses

Bonaire proved its commitment in support of cancer patients, and family and friends affected by cancer in a big way with over 800 participants in the sixth edition of Ride for the Roses held January 29. Ride for the Roses took a hiatus from the fundraiser athletic event for the last two years due to covid.

Ride for the Roses is a healthy way to help Bonaire residents affected by cancer. Most everyone on the planet has been touched by this horrible disease in some manner and Ride for the Roses has proved a great way to give support and have some fun too.

The fundraiser originated in 1997 with the Lance Armstrong Foundation in Austin, Texas in support of the famous cyclist who beat cancer and went on to win the Tour de France seven times. The first fundraiser was known as Race for the Roses but by 2002 it evolved into 'Ride' for the Roses. And within just a few years the popularity of the idea had spread worldwide providing cancer awareness and support.

Curaçao picked up the fundraiser in 2005 and it has become the biggest charity event they hold attracting well over 10,000 cyclists in 2019. Bonaire adopted the idea in 2016 thanks to Ride for the Roses president Jursi Marshall and John Soliano formerly of ORCO Bank.

Bonaire took the idea and ran with it expanding the 'Ride' to include not only cyclists but walkers, runners, swimming and this year sailing was added. Unfortunately, the weather didn't cooperate and the sail for the kites and the surfers had to be cancelled.

President Jursi Marshall said, "The sunfish and sail boats did arrive safely at the harbor and Kas di Regatta but the kite and windsurfers couldn't start. We are working with the organizations to set a new date for this part of the event."

All 44 cyclists and 631 runners/walkers began at the stadium while the 60 swimmers started at Kas di Regatta and swam 700 m (.4 miles) to Karel's Beach Bar. The cyclists had



Cancer survivor participants proudly wore a red 'I survived' T-shirt'

a choice to ride either a long or short route of 21k (13 miles) or 14k (8.7 miles), runners/walkers could take either a long or short route of 9k (5.6 miles) or 7k (4.4 miles).

Some 40 volunteers worked the registration and T-shirts pick-up, sold tickets and handed out water along the walk/run and cycle routes. The water was donated by Bonaire Logistics and the traditional ceremonial roses given to each finishing participant were provided by Van Den Tweel.

ORCO Bank continues their overwhelming support for Ride for the Roses for the sixth year.

Ride for the Roses requires a lot of planning and preparation which the board began last year in March. We can all thank the hard work of the board members who put the event together: Jursi Marshall, president; Anne-Marie Mercera, treasurer; Marga van Lieshout, secretary; Charles Lont, member; Frondaly Martina, member; Patricia Gerritzen, member and Coen van Gennip, member.

To date, tickets and donations are still being calculated.

Thank you to everyone who supported Ride for the Roses with auxiliary donations: Cuba Compagnie, The Public Prosecutors office, Bonaire Logistics and Wholesaler, MAC Enterprises, Caribe Watersport, Sunbelt Realty, Tempo, Marketeers, Rentofun, Xtreme Bonaire, People's Choice Consultancy and Recruitment, MTech Electrical Supplies, Bonaire International Airport, Indebon, Fundashon Wega di Number Bonaire, Warehouse Bonaire, Ox & Wolf Legal Partners, Between 2 Buns, Massive Productions, Luciano, Hites, Yogaribba, Yoga Sensible Bonaire, Freewieler and Safe Box Storage Center. On the day of the event the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations donated an additional US\$ 5000.00 to the Foundation.

Story/photos Julie Morgan

For more photos of Ride for the Roses 2023 visit The Reporter's Facebook page.



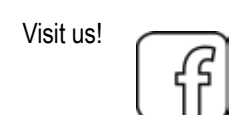
This Issue's Stories	
Ride for the Roses 2023	1
eZone 10years on Bonaire	3
Fast ferry service	4
Covid-19; Week 2	5
Reef ID, Amy Lee	6
Outplanting boulder coral	6
Four to Antarctica	7
Anti-discrimination laws	7
STINAPA rules	8
DCNA meets Dijkgraaf, Minister of Education, Science & Culture	10
Tourism numbers recovered	10
Royals visit	11
World Wetlands Day	15
Funride De Freewieler results	16
First Quarterly Clean-up 2023	16

**Our Facebook page and The Reporter's Online Updates** bring you news that arrives between issues

Departments	
Who's Who in The Reporter	2
Flotsam & Jetsam:	
COHO ends; Voting in March; BonLab	2
Fraudulent VET website; Coast Guard;	
Shopping price controls	5
Ask Bob (Furnished)	4
Police Report	4
Letters/Opinions: Valentine to Mother Nature;	
Island corruption	5
Piss and Vinegar (Vehicle congestion)	7
Sky Park (James Webb space telescope)	7
Reef Glimpses: (Coral. It's complicated)	8
Foodies' Dining Guide	9
Optimal Health (Focus control)	10
A Garden? (Red)	11
What's Happening (Events; Cruise ships;	
Flights; Gov. Dates; Oranje Fonds for Neighborhood Initiatives; Ballot card)	12
Business Directory	14
Accessibility (Have a heart)	15
Pets of the Week	
(Cats - Vincent & Valentino)	15
Shelter (Adopt)	15

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## COHO ended? The baby went out with the bathwater, critics say

*Dossier Kingdom Relations* reports that VVD and CDA, two parties in Rutte's governing coalition, have expressed surprise "that politicians in Curaçao, Aruba and Sint Maarten have responded so 'triumphantly' to the recently announced termination of COHO." COHO, the Kingdom Act Caribbean Body for Reform and Development, was created as part of the restructuring of the Netherlands Antilles when the BES Islands departed to become municipalities of the European Netherlands. It has been an ongoing issue of contention. At a recent meeting between State Secretary Van Huffelen (Kingdom Relations) and the CAS Prime Ministers, all parties jointly agreed to terminate COHO and renegotiate separate "mutual arrangements."

A product of extended discussions with the CAS governments at the time of separation, COHO was intended to create an independent body through which the Dutch could continue to support CAS financially, but in exchange for commitments from the island politicians to enact specified financial and political reforms. The Netherlands was willing to send money, but it wanted assurance that the money was spent responsibly and to achieve the intended objectives. The independent body created by COHO would monitor the performance of both CAS and The Hague under the reform and financing agreements. The CAS politicians have long objected that COHO violated their islands' "sovereignty."

In the view of the VVD and CDA parties, COHO was serving the CAS countries well. It provided them with protections and assurances they are sure to lose when the new "mutual arrangements" are negotiated. Instead of working through an independent organization mandated to monitor both sides when disputes arise, each CAS Island will now be going one-on-one with the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations. The ministry will be free to make whatever choices it wants.

Van Huffelen said of the new arrangements, "We will do the supervision together and if we do not agree on something, we will bring someone in who can solve it." Later she acknowledged that the last word remains with the Netherlands.

Under COHO, the CAS governments, desperate for financial assistance during the covid pandemic, ran up huge debts with the Dutch, plus obligations to achieve specific substantial reforms. Under the new arrangements, those agreements will remain in effect. Aruba alone owes The Hague 900 million guilders, due to be repaid in full in October. It also owes the Netherlands a list of uncompleted reforms.

While the government parties VVD and CDA find fault with the dissolution of COHO, they did say they will support the legislation in parliament.

*DMR (Dossier Kingdom Relations)*

## Are you registered to vote? At the correct address?

On March 15 registered voters on Bonaire will vote in the Island Council Election and the Electoral College Election. Ballot cards have now been mailed to voters who were registered as of January 30, at the address where they were registered.

According to a press release issued by Department of Communication Public Entity Bonaire on January 23, you needed to register to vote or change your address by January 30. Those who had not registered by January 30 will not receive a voter card. Those who were registered at a mailbox which is not findable and accessible will not receive one either.

Are you unsure whether you're registered as a voter, and at the correct address? You can contact the Civil Affairs Department to find out. If you find you're not registered, and if you meet the criteria, you can submit a request for revision of your registration. (The press release does not say whether you would then be able to vote in March.)

To be eligible to vote in the Island Council Elections, you must be at least 18 years old and be a resident or have a valid residency permit. To be eligible to vote in the Electoral College Elections, you must be 18 and a Dutch National who is resident on Bonaire. *DMR*

**ELEGIBILITY TO VOTE**  
FOR THE ISLAND COUNCIL

You must:

- be a resident or hold a valid residency permit
- be aged 18 or older
- be registered on Bonaire
- not be excluded from the right to vote

**ELEGIBILITY TO VOTE**  
FOR THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

You must:

- be a Dutch national
- be aged 18 or older
- be registered on Bonaire
- not be excluded from the right to vote

## BonLab prepares to fight back

BonLab has a newly appointed temporary director, Anneke Visser, who has been tasked with helping save BonLab from closure by the central government. The Health Care Insurance agency (ZJCN) has announced it will terminate its contract with Bonlab on July 1. The Hospital (Fundation Mariadal) would then become the island's sole provider of medical testing services. The island government, which owns BonLab, opposes the closure and wants Visser to help BonLab create a new and sustainable role for itself the island's medical care system.

The insurance people say BonLab should be shut down because it is expensive to support and provides the island with redundant services. They have also questioned the quality of the lab's work at times. BonLab responds that it provides the community with testing services beyond those provided by FM (Fundation Mariadal). It also says that a single lab would not be adequate, given the island's growing population, and that Bonaire would be better served by labs in competition with each other.

Sorting out the acronyms: BHM (Bonaire Holding Maatschappij NVL) and POB (Public Entity Bonaire) are the shareholders of BonLab (Bonaire Laboratorium NV). ZJCN (Zorg en Jeugd Caribisch Nederland) manages the BES health insurance programs on behalf of VWS (Ministry of Health, Welfare, and Sport). *DMR*

## Bonaire medical practice receives top certification

Doctor Jan Schröder's practice on Bonaire has been recognized as meeting all European Dutch standards for general practice care. It is the first general practice in the Caribbean Netherlands to receive NPA certification. The NPA auditor who visited the practice praised dr Schröder, practice manager Anna ter Braak, and the entire staff for delivering high quality care to the people of a small Caribbean island. He also noted the practice was well organized and continuing to develop. *DMR (Bonaire.nu)*



# Celebrate 10 years with eZone



Front L-R: Natya Hernandez and Kelsey Domacasse.

Back L-R: Carl Fielmich, Dave Wefer, Bart Fielmich, Nathan Anthony and Farley Hernandez

Ten years ago, back in 2013, eZone made the correct choice in bringing Bart Fielmich on as their new Bonaire agent. Since then, the shipping company has improved and grown by leaps and bounds. Previously packages that air flighted from Miami to Curaçao were brought to Bonaire by the post office, but eZone's new agent switched gears. Back then Bart reduced the time and increased the efficiency of eZone deliveries that arrived in Curaçao by first using pleasure boats from Curaçao

to Bonaire and then eventually using the Don Andreas.

Bart said, "That first shipment left on a Thursday from Miami and arrived in Curaçao on February 21. I thought I was receiving 60-70 packages, but they took a photo [of the shipment] and there were more. I called Miami, they had shipped them all and while unloading we counted 143 and realized there was a double shipment."

The system changed after that when Bart called Farley Hernandez in Curaçao to help figure how to make

it all work. Farley came over and has been here ever since. The shipments grew every month and by November 2013 eZone Bonaire was delivering 500 packages a month to residents.

In 2015 Fielmich and Son's eZone was awarded "Most Promising" by the company. And in 2018 Bart was named #1 out of 25 eZone agents.

Bart said, "We try to be as efficient as possible, but Bonaire is difficult because of no direct flights. Goal is to get shipments as quick as possible... American Airlines (AA) to Curaçao has limits in the cargo hold and from December to January there is a ban on cargo shipments."

Today things have changed once again. eZone is now sharing a plane with FedEx and receiving two shipments a week. Customers will notice many of the packages now have a white FedEx label that is bar coded allowing customers complete package tracking. This bit of modernization is more efficient for both the company and customers.

**eZone** continued on page 4



(L-R) Bart Fielmich and son, Carl

## FOR SALE Classic Bonairean Villa Kaya Amsterdam 35



- Lot size: 833 m2 / 8966 sq. ft. lease land
- Living area: 250 m2 / 2691 sq. ft.
- 3 bedrooms / 2 bathrooms / storage room



- Pool, covered back and front porch
- Great rental income

Virtual 3D tour



**Asking price \$529,000 US Dollar**

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Carl Fielmich, one of the sons of Fielmich & Sons joined the business two years ago and will soon be taking over as the official agent with Bart serving as a consultant. Carl, who is stepping in to modernize eZone, has had a big impact since joining the company.

“One of my goals is to promote the EZ process, with the eZone app. Using the app makes it possible for customers to get tax credit and get the tax back,” said Carl.

eZone’s celebration is not only for 10 successful years but also to welcome Carl as Bonaire’s new official agent.

The celebration takes off on February 15 by welcoming the first 100 customers with a prize and everyone is welcome to drop by for a slice of cake. The big party is February 23 with a band, dance performance, brass band, a surprise singer, food and drinks. Three lucky eZone customers using eZone services from now to February 20 will be announced as winners of one of three big prizes: the top prize

of a weekend at Delphins; second prize – dinner for two at Chefs or third a \$100 voucher for eZone.

eZone currently receives shipments from Miami, Amsterdam, Canada and London. They are moving forward to improve the efficiency of shipments from Amsterdam. During high season eZone, Bonaire receives approximately 2000 packages per week.

There are six full time employees and 10 part time who work to pack, sort, scan and deliver your packages. eZone Bonaire is one of 24 locations in the Caribbean and South America and it is always rated as one the top three. The company will soon be expanding to include locations in Africa. For more information about eZone visit, <https://getezone.com>. Ezone is open Mon-Fri 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sat 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. It is located at Fielmich & Sons on Bulevar Julio A. Abraham #51, +599-717-6161.

*Story/photos Julie Morgan*



A look in eZone’s backroom package storage from 2018 - it is even bigger now

# POLICE REPORT

### Arrests

**Jan. 20.** In the early hours of the morning at about 4 a.m. police stopped a car on Kaya Grandi for a check. Neither the driver nor the passenger had a valid driver’s license with them. Because the car smelled of marijuana, police searched the car under the Opium Act BES. Cash was found in the car and seized. During the check, the driver, 30, started insulting the police officers, after which an arrest was made.

### Traffic

**Jan. 22.** Around 7 p.m. a car and a scooter collided on Kaya IR. Randolph Statius van Eps. The driver of the scooter was taken by ambulance to the hospital.

**Jan 17.** During a traffic check of 3 to 4 hours in Playa, 17 fines were handed out for driving without a seat belt on and using a mobile phone behind the wheel.

The KPCN also checked if the necessary documents were in order. The fines for the above violations vary between \$30 and \$225.

### Fire

**Jan. 19.** Around 6:15 a.m., the police station received a report of a vehicle on fire in the yard of a house on Hanchi Amboina. The fire brigade arrived on the scene and extinguished the fire. No one was injured. Cause of the fire is unknown.

### Money laundering

**Jan. 25/26.** The detective department (PGO) of the KPCN searched a house in the neighborhood of Republiek in connection with money laundering. Some articles were confiscated; no one was detained. The investigation continues.

# Ask Bob

## Bonaire real estate advice



**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?**

**Hanna**

Hi Hanna,

Many properties on Bonaire are sold furnished or partially furnished. If you purchase a property that is furnished you will be provided with an inventory list of everything that is included in the sale.

Some properties are sold excluding the furniture, or you can be told that the sale of the furniture is negotiable. If you are interested in buying the furniture, make sure to tell your broker that your purchase is offer is for the real estate AND the furniture, just to be clear. Make sure

you know which furniture is included and excluded. You can also purchase the property excluding the furniture if you prefer.

If you are buying an unfurnished or partially furnished property, you can usually purchase almost anything you need on the island, including furniture and appliances. The selection is limited for some things, 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, but keep in mind that you will also have to pay the shipping costs and an 8% import duty on most things. You may also find used items for re-sale from people on the island, there are a number of Facebook groups where you can buy and sell used household items.

Good luck,

*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](mailto:bob@bonairehomes.com) or call or WhatsApp me at +5990786-7362**

# Fast ferry service coming to Bonaire maybe, to Suriname maybe

Separate proposals are being considered for providing fast ferry service to the southern Caribbean. A United Nations plan would create a network of ferry services in the region. One route would connect Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao. A second route would connect Suriname and Guyana with Trinidad and Tobago. That route is considered the most important node in the network and the one likely to be launched first. Another service, proposed by a pair of entrepreneurs, would provide a fast ferry connection between Bonaire and Curaçao.

According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Suriname -Trinidad route predicts the best profit margins among the routes it is proposing. One fast ferry could make two sailings per week. Trucks loaded with fresh agricultural products and other goods could be transported as well as passengers.

Under the UN plan, countries that want a ferry connection must make extensive preparations before service can begin. They need to provide good quay facilities and sufficient port capacity in order to assure short turn-around times. They must also make sure their customs and immigration rules and authorities can expedite the transfer of people and goods.

Separate from the UN plan, two com-

panies have jointly proposed a local fast ferry service at a news conference. The ferry would connect Bonaire and Curaçao. One company, Instituto pa Desaroyo Ekonomiko Boneriano (IDEB), is chaired by Caryl (Hans Els). It was described as a lobby organization with an activist investment vision. The co-proposer, Caribbean Fast Ferry Company (CFFC), was represented by Erich Perigault Monte. “It would be a company with 30 years of experience in Maritime transport,” according to the information proved at the news conference.

Els and Monte say the ferry’s main office will be on Bonaire. The ferry they intend to use will be a newly built catamaran designed by a Dutch designer. The vessel would make the trip in three hours travelling at 22 knots and would be capable of handling waves of up to four meters.

“A good connection with a fast ferry for passenger transport and any urgent packages will make a major contribution to the transport between the islands for both the local population and any tourists who want to use it,” the proposers said.

Els and Monte acknowledged the start-up would require a significant investment. They did not say how the project would be financed. *DMR (Bonaire.nu)*

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The opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed by the various authors and forum participants do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints of The Bonaire Reporter.

## Valentine's Day for Mother Earth: A Commitment to Protect Nature

Valentine's Day is a time to show love and care to those around us, but why not extend that love and gratitude to Mother Earth as well? She provides us with everything we need to survive, from the air we breathe to the food we eat.

However, in recent times, nature has been greatly impacted and damaged by human actions. On this Valentine's Day, let's make a commitment to do more to protect and preserve the planet for future generations. Show love and compassion towards Mother Earth by living in harmony with her and supporting initiatives that give nature its own rights, such as the constitutional rights in Ecuador and the protection of the inland sea Mar Menor in Spain. Let us also not forget to support the preservation of Plantation Bolivia, which is in danger of destruction due to development.

Love can be defined as "sustained compassionate attention" and that is exactly what our planet needs from us. Let's give Mother Earth the love and appreciation she deserves.

Wilma Nijland

## To King Willem-Alexander, the Editor, and all it concerns:

I trust you are well and you enjoy the beauty and joys that Bonaire has to offer. Unfortunately, for both you and all Bonaireans, all is not well here.

It has been quite a year.

We, on Bonaire, have seen roads being improperly built, beaches being illegally and improperly built, buildings and land being improperly authorized against all common sense and spatial planning rules, a Governor who is given a two week hiatus while an investigation takes place which never takes place while touting "I am here by the King", and hope to be elected officials are running without any announced platforms.

The roundabout on Kaya Amsterdam has reportedly been 'investigated and clearly there are illegal and improper actions that have taken place by both the Government's and builders' workers, yet nothing is disclosed, and no actions are being reportedly taken to bring a proper result to the people of Bonaire. The Prosecutors should be actively involved in correcting and bringing justice for the people but it seems that they are just pro-

tecting those criminally responsible from having to correct the situation. Who suffers? The people of Bonaire and, by extension, the Netherlands.

The Spatial Plan was put into effect to protect and rehabilitate the natural environment of Bonaire which is deemed to be the main driver of our economy. It is blatantly ignored for personal gain by some who have governed allegedly to protect the nature. International designations (RAMSAR sites) are ignored in violation of not just Bonairean laws. These are criminal acts yet what is being done: NOTHING! The prosecutors, again, should be involved to ensure that the rules of Bonaire are properly applied and those that break them are not allowed to continue to do so. Does it happen here? Sadly, no. Again, Bonaire looks bad and, by extension, the Netherlands.

Elected officials say "Forget about the past, focus on the future" but there will be no good future unless the wrongs of the past are righted and the bad actors are stopped from acting badly, again. Others say: 'If you don't like the government leave' but this only makes it worse for everybody as the bad actions will only get worse without proper correction. This is, again, a reflection on you and the Netherlands.

Personally, I have had land illegally taken under false/illegal pretenses that blocks the long-standing use of my property and causes flooding, yet when I seek reversal by asking the Governor and the Executive Committee to reverse its wrong and improper decision, my requests are blocked by the Governor and ignored by the executive committee. This is not how a proper government should work and we, as Bonaireans, must see that it does not continue. Netherlands has to be reminded that all is not proper in Bonaire even if the problems stem from a few Dutch people gaining from these improprieties. Bonaire is harmed, the Netherlands reputation is slandered but a few connected wealthy, continue to accumulate more wealth at all our expense and our and your detriment.

The Prosecutors, Ombudsman, many specific Ministers and NL workers have all been involved without noticeable positive change.

What will you do to correct the situation that clearly reflects poorly on your choice to lead this island? Removing Gov. Rijna is a beginning but is not enough as the corruption runs deep.

I look forward to your response and hope the best for all Bonaireans, and, by extension, the Netherlands.

Respectfully, Charles M. Baltayan

Translated from

<https://bonairegov.com/inwoners/update-covid-19>

In week two of 2023, we saw a decrease in the number of tests taken, as well as a significant decrease in the number of positive tests. The finding percentage and the incidence have also decreased as a result.

**Additional surveillance systems** No elevations were seen in the syndrome surveillance (diseases that may indicate infections, passed on by the general practitioners of Bonaire). A normal mixed picture of respiratory infections was observed in the laboratory.

**Hospitalization and Mortality.** In week 2, no new patients were hospitalized with Covid-19.

**Vaccination.** Vaccination protects against serious illness. With a repeat injection, the protection remains better and the chance of hospitalization decreases. People with reduced immune systems and certain diseases and the elderly are more likely to become seriously ill and to be hospitalized.

The vaccination table on *The Reporter's* online update pages shows that the vaccination coverage for the autumn injection in the group of people over 60 was around 20% a month ago. In the meantime, no significantly more autumn vaccinations have been administered. With a view to the festivities surrounding carnival next month, it is important that we protect the elderly and vulnerable people on Bonaire as well as possible against any disease.

**Vaccinations are given every Thursday afternoon at the Public Health Department.** An appointment can be made for this via 0800-0800. The latest bivalent vaccine is used, which is good for refreshing our defenses against all known omikron variants.

## Coast Guard to get bigger, better

The Ministry of Defense's 2023 Annual Plan for Caribbean Coast Guard foresees the service growing to approximately 265 employees, most recruited in the Caribbean, in the next few years, while new equipment being purchased and existing equipment being upgraded.

In the Caribbean the Coast Guard performs search and rescue operations in addition to detection and surveillance against counter-terrorism and especially drug smuggling. It also enforces border control, and combats human trafficking and illegal immigration.

DMR (Bonaire.nu)

## Healthcare Insurance provides two new coverages

ZJCN Healthcare Insurance will now cover the cost of providing at home hoists for patients who have mobility difficulties.

ZJCN will also pay for paramedical restorative care for severely affected Covid-19 patients. Primary paramedical restorative care consists of physiotherapy, remedial therapy, speech therapy, dietetics or occupational therapy. DMR

## "Shopping Basket" idea resurrected as price control attempt

Several years Unkobon, the island's consumer organization, tried to combat high food prices by sending observers to the supermarkets to record prices. Then it told the public what the total cost would be at each store of a hypothetical basket of basic products. Now the Bonaire public body (OLB) is going to compile a basket of 38 basic products, then tell the stores a maximum price they should not exceed for each product. The basic basket consists of, among other things, vegetables, fruit, rice, coffee, meat and canned goods, baby food, and also sanitary towels and diapers. DMR



## Warning! Fraudulent website is collecting tourism tax

### Tourismtaxbonaire.us is a scam, scam, scam.

### The address leads to various phoney pages that look official because they bear the InfoBonaire logo.

### Visitors should pay only at: [tourismtax.bonairegov.com](https://tourismtax.bonairegov.com)

(The official site can be accessed directly or from the TCB website, <https://bonaireisland.com>)



# Who knows what is down there?

When you work for REEF (Reef Environmental Education Foundation) and travel a lot for your job to exotic dive destinations, where do you go on vacation? If you are a dedicated REEF Fish surveyor like 32-year old Amy Lee, you go to Bonaire, of course. Her goal was to learn to dive deeper to identify even more fish than those found at recreational diving limits.

A Canadian who grew up in land-locked Pennsylvania, Amy said, “I’ve been interested in the ocean all my life. I used to have every coffee table marine photo book all over my room.”

She wanted to go far away for college and ended up at Univ. of South Carolina completing a four-year journalism degree and she finally learned to dive. After briefly working at the South Carolina bar she returned to school to fulfill her dream of working in a marine/ocean related field. In just one and half years she completed a degree in marine conservation and science. On a trip to Roatan she discovered REEF.

“Everything they are doing is something I wanted to be a part of, so I applied for an internship. A month later I was working in Key Largo (at REEF headquarters),” said Amy.

That was 2014 and in 2015 she became the program manager coordinator for all science-based dive trips which eventually morphed into communications. Amy has led trips to the Red Sea, Palau, Solomons, Philippines, Fiji and all over the Caribbean. She’ll add four more destinations to that list this year. Amy sets up the trips, and conducts reef surveys, teaches fish ID and classroom work for the participants. Since the Covid pandemic, she has worked remotely which helped make this ‘vacation’ trip to Bonaire possible.

Amy enrolled in classes with TDS (Technical Diving Services) owned by Zach Richardson and Lucia Podlipny at Captain Don’s Habitat. She completed three courses: TDI Advance Nitrox, Decompression Procedures and Side Mount all of which allow her to go deep beyond recreational limits to survey even more fish.

“As you get deeper into fish ID, you want to see other more unusual fish. The tech diver percentage is small for reef fish ID. Scientists want to find new species and who knows what is down there?”, said Amy.

She explained she is a ‘proof of life’ photographer with her little Olympus camera. Her photos help to engage others with the stories of her finds and will hopefully attract new fish ID enthusiasts.



Cave Basslet 4 inches at 145 ft. Photo Amy Lee



Candy Basslets between 2 - 5 inches at 145 ft. Photo Amy Lee



Misty Grouper, 3 inches at 150 ft. Photo Amy Lee



Amy Lee Photo Julie Morgan

### A few of Amy’s big finds and her notations:

**A Cave Basslet at 145 ft. - 4 inches** that is more common in other parts of the Caribbean and less common in Bonaire; so cool to see here!

**Candy Basslet - 145 ft. at Red Slave - 2-5 inches** - similar to the more common Peppermint Basslet but brighter and more neon, also more elusive and tends to be deeper.

**Misty Grouper - 150 ft. - 3 inches** - reported on 0.01% of surveys in the REEF database. To give an idea of how rare that is, there are more than 184,000 surveys in the Tropical Western Atlantic. This was the first time I have ever seen this fish, so it was really exciting, and exactly why I wanted to be able to dive deeper!

Amy said, “Bonaire is my favorite place to dive in the Caribbean. All you have to do is put your face in the water and see blennies and clingfish. I’d like to live here part time.”

To learn more about REEF, join a fish survey or do one on your own, visit REEF.org. *Julie Morgan*



RRFB volunteer outplants multiple colonies near the boulder coral nursery. Photo credit: RRFB

## Outplanting boulder coral, for a more resilient reef

For the first time in history, three species of boulder coral have been outplanted back to Bonaire’s reefs: lobed star coral (*Orbicella annularis*), mountainous star coral (*Orbicella faveolata*), and great star coral (*Montastraea cavernosa*). In late 2022, Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire (RRFB) began outplanting boulder coral fragments that were propagated via fragmentation almost two years prior and then reared in nurseries. All three species of boulder coral, two of which are endangered, are key building blocks of the marine ecosystem and will bolster the resilience of Bonaire’s reefs for years to come.

At their inception in 2012, RRFB initially focused on two species of branching coral: staghorn coral (*Acropora cervicornis*) and elkhorn coral (*Acropora palmata*). The foundation has since expanded their restoration efforts to more species, first through their larval propagation program and now with a fragmentation technique, as well. It is crucial to maximize the

### Outplanting boulder coral, continued on page 13



Trays of boulder coral fragments in the nursery. Photo credit: RRFB



# Piss and Vinegar

by Gijs Borsten

## An everlasting congestion

Coming to the island, early in this then new century, I found a Bonaire that still was unhurried, unspoiled and unforgettable. Compare it to the blessed days of COVID, but with less coughing. Everybody was friendly to everyone, and tourists still knew how to behave. And to dress, as well. There wasn't much going on besides diving and surfing, and the traffic consisted mainly of a bunch of rusty clunkers. The roads were terrible, but there was enough space to avoid the potholes, and it didn't rain much. It was the time that everyone greeted everybody, flipping up their index finger from the steering wheel as a way to say hello to every oncoming driver. Nice & quiet. No hassle.

I remember that, in those days, the B-license plates reached to about 5000 (I'm not quite sure; I used to drive a V-licensed rusty clunker, in fact), and the V-plates came as far as something like 2500, the last couple of hundred made of small wooden planks, probably because someone forgot to order the next batch in time, or forgot to pay for the first one. Like I said: unhurried.

Together with the motorcycles, BF at the time, some Ds and a couple of TXs, the total amount of rolling stock on the island in those years counted approximately 8500 units.

The number of vehicles grew under the influence of lowering interest rates, immigration, cheap Japanese RHD junk, and all kinds of weird vehicles that aren't allowed on public roads anywhere in the world except on Bonaire. Consequently, somewhere during 2018, the Bs reached 10.000, the V's 5.000 and the MFs went over 2.000. All together over 17.000 license plates had been issued, doubling the earlier numbers in 16 years' time.

It didn't stop. Immigration exploded, and the immigrants all wanted their own car, preferably of brands and sizes that they weren't able to drive in the motherland. (This puzzles me a bit. Why do you need a \$50,000 car to negotiate an island measuring 25 by 5 miles? I have no clue. Well, OK, maybe it's an effective way to show how tremendously successful you are...).

And so, as we speak, the Bs are on track to reach 17.000 or maybe 18.000 this year, as the Vs are heading towards 8.000. Add 4.000 MFs and a couple of hundred Ds and TXs, and lo and behold: the 30.000-threshold is coming in sight, almost doubling the 2018 numbers (within 5 years!) and quadrupling those of 2003. And there's no end to it, judging the incredible speed the license plates numbers are growing.

As a consequence, the roads are overfilled, and, ex-

acerbated by the insecure way of Bonairean driving (tourists are used to drive around with their heads up a very peculiar place, which doesn't speed up the process very much), daily traffic jams are everywhere, especially during the abundantly available rush hours. Construction sites, new rental companies, all kinds of weird vehicles unsound for public road use: it all adds up to the 24/7 congestion the island is suffering from with the ever-growing population.

An obvious way to solve these problems might be the enforcement (finally) of the *Wegenverkeersverordening* (Traffic Bill) 2019, which offers plenty of tools to kick every vehicle that doesn't meet legal standards of the road. It probably rids us of most trucks, every RHD car and golf cart available, most scooters, and whatever else there is that doesn't have legal headlights fitted. Too difficult? The abovementioned document offers a zillion other ways to deny license plates to non-compliant vehicles.



Gijs Borsten

And BTW, is there someone among all you super clever foreign investors, with your brilliant ideas on how to make money and weed the island of cash, who think it might be a great idea to build a gas station where you don't have to stand in line for hours to fill your tank? My pleasure. No thanks.



Four of Bonaire's conservationists and entrepreneurs are going to Antarctica this month. The group, composed of Elly Albers, Elisabetta Maccari, Lorenzo Mittiga and Bert van Oort, are going as ambassadors on the ACE 2023 climate change expedition with Ocean Geographic. They will participate in the expedition as contributors by collecting images and information of evidence of climate change.

## Dutch anti-discrimination protections to become enforceable in the BES

The Hague is going to make the Netherlands Equal Treatment Act enforceable in the BES Islands. The Ministry of the Interior expects the introduction of the law will "catalyze the acceptance of diversity and equal treatment on the three islands, Bonaire, Saba and Sint Eustatius." The Dutch want to embed the same protections against discrimination that prevail in the European Netherlands and are required by international commitments.

An anti-discrimination facility, with a hotline, will likely be created on each BES island to provide public advice and information regarding the anti-discrimination laws, as well as easy access to assistance for people who feel they are victims of discrimination. These facilities will be supported by an office in the Netherlands and backed up by the powerful Human Rights Board. Supporters hope these facilities will become part of a broader legal support structure which is now being created by the Ministry of Justice and Security in The Hague.

The Ministry of the Interior has made 300,000 euros in structural funding available to the project, plus another 200,000 to cover the involvement of the Human Rights Board. The Ministry of Justice and Security has earmarked 300,000 euros annually until 2026 to provide first-line legal assistance to discrimination victims. It expects to begin budgeting structural funds for this purpose after 2026.

If requested, the Ministry of the Interior is willing to help the politically autonomous CAS islands initiate their own forms of anti-discrimination facilities via reciprocal consultation.

DMR (Dossier Kingdom Relations)

## Bonaire's sky park

Trace Dominguez of stargazersonline:

The James Webb space telescope is one of the most astonishing telescopes of modern times and part of what makes it stand apart from others are these iconic yellow honeycomb mirrors. So what do these mirrors do exactly? Well, without getting too bogged down by the mathematics – we'll leave that to the NASA experts – the mirrors significantly help scientists see objects that are billions of light years away and they do this because light

is sort of like rain. When it is raining a big bucket captures more rain than a small bucket, right. Telescopes are the same, which is why astronomers sometimes call them "light buckets." Bigger mirrors mean more light captured and thus we see clearer pictures, but JWST's mirrors aren't the ordinary kind. They have two distinctive features. They're bright and golden in color and they're hexagonal in shape. The gold color comes from gold. Each segment is made up of a metal called beryllium but then this metal is coated in a very thin layer of gold. The gold significantly increases the reflectivity of a telescope in infrared red light which

helps the telescope see things more clearly. The honeycomb shapes though, that's pretty awesome. The arrangement of the hexagons is distinctive. We didn't have a rocket that could launch a telescope with a mirror as big as the whole thing, so we had to fold it up. The segments allow for Webb to have the largest possible reflective surface to make observations and it has the least amount of dead space in between each mirror once unfolded. Overall this incredible engineering has made for a really cool-looking telescope which has already started sending up some really cool-looking images.



# Reef Glimpses

by Dee Scarr

## Coral: It's Complicated

Lately, divers have reported seeing other divers setting a camera on a coral head to take a selfie. I'm hoping that the reason people feel comfortable doing this is that they don't have a clue about how corals grow. After all, coral rock and coral heads are both solid; it's easy to assume they're equally invulnerable.

Here's the difference, and it's a considerable difference: the skeleton of the coral is what's rocklike. Living tissue covers the skeleton of all live stony corals, all the time, whether the polyps are extended or retracted. So, if a person rests anything on a live coral head, for a selfie or anything else, they slice the living tissue of the coral against its own skeleton.

The individual coral animal, called a polyp, secretes its skeleton one cell layer at a time, so the blades of coral are very sharp. They might scratch a person's camera housing or cut the person's skin, and they will certainly cut themselves against their own skeleton when a housing or a person rests on them.

"So, what's the big deal about a little coral cut?" an unaware person may ask.

If the cuts are on a person, they can give a nasty infection. They're usually not too much of a problem, though, because a human being is a single organism and coral cuts are usually very small in relation to the size of the human.

The relative size of a human-caused cut on a coral is very different, since a

coral head is a colony, not an individual organism. A single coral head could be comprised of hundreds or even millions of polyps, each connected to its neighbors by tissue. The cuts from a camera or person resting on them can easily kill several coral polyps. If an area as small as 1" square dies, the colony cannot heal over the space. The resulting bared coral spot is a hospitable settling place for larval corals, or for algae, sponges, and other organisms. Some of these organisms eventually smother or otherwise kill the live coral surrounding the dead spot. If enough members of a coral colony die, they all die.

Corals, especially the stony corals, are amazing animals. They're so different from any other creatures that they're really tough to explain. Here are a few facts that might make you want to learn more:

- Stony corals are the main builders of the coral reef, yet they grow more slowly than everything else and are the most vulnerable to disease and injury.
- Coral polyps don't die of old age. Disease can kill corals (see *Bonaire Reporter*; Issue 25, Dec. 21, 2022 – Jan. 4, 2023 article by Caren Eckrich). Injury can kill corals. Smothering by sand can kill corals. Old age? Never.
- Every polyp in a coral colony is a clone of every other polyp.



The clean-looking, tan coral on the right of the photo is alive and healthy. On the left, the coral polyps have died, leaving only skeleton with some early growth. The sharp blades of skeleton are visible on both sides, but eventually the dead skeleton will wear down.

- Corals are animals, and each polyp hosts algae. The algae make food from the sun and the polyp's waste, and the polyp gets food from the algae's waste. That's why corals need the sun and grow toward it.
- Individual coral animals use the waste oxygen from their algae, which uses their waste carbon dioxide.
- A stony coral colony takes 200 to 300 years to grow to one meter (39") in diameter.

Those legislated rules that the BNMP enforces aren't there for our convenience. They're there to preserve the health of our marine residents, and the safety of our divers, snorkelers, and swimmers, now but also into the future. I hope a bet-

ter understanding of the reasons behind the rules will enable people to trust that obeying them all is best for all of us – and our kids and grandkids.



*Nurture nature.*

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](http://touchthesea.com).



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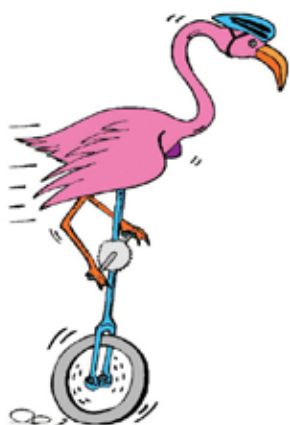
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# Minister Dijkgraaf and DCNA exchange ideas on science in Dutch Caribbean

On Friday, January 20th, 2023, Minister of Education, Culture and Science, Mr. Robbert Dijkgraaf, visited the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) office on Bonaire. DCNA was given the opportunity to highlight the importance of research and monitoring, local nature conservation organizations and working together to safeguard nature within the Caribbean part of the Dutch Kingdom.

Arno Verhoeven, director of the DCNA, stressed that there are only a few remaining cooperative bodies between the six islands of the Dutch Caribbean, and that the main reason DCNA works is a common understanding of nature and a willingness to share knowledge. "Actually, the Dutch Caribbean has a lot when it comes to science and research. All these passionate people working in conservation on the islands have one thing in common, their drive to protect nature – and nature has no boundaries. The knowledge and skills they accumulate in this network is enormous and their willingness to share is part of this drive. With six major nature organizations, we are an important regional knowledge centre," says Verhoeven.

The Dutch Caribbean is home to a wide variety of unique animal and plant species. Many of these are endangered due to loss of habitat, pollution, overgrazing and the impact of invasive species, climate change and other stressors. To manage the islands' natural resources wisely and sustainably, knowledge about the complex and fragile ecosystems in the Dutch Caribbean is essential. Especially when these resources are used to support local communities and form the basis for the



Minister Robbert Dijkgraaf visits the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance office on Bonaire

economic wellbeing of the islands. Therefore, research, monitoring, communication, and outreach play a crucial role. Science is a strong component in any nature programme, and when looking for more funding, it is a cornerstone of any application.

The DCNA is a non-profit organization created to protect the natural environment and to promote sustainable management of natural resources, both on land and

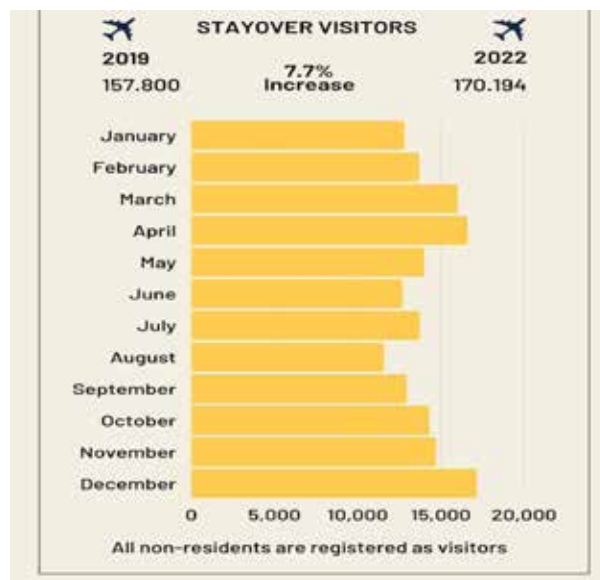
in the water, on the six Dutch Caribbean islands. The alliance works with local park management organizations (parks) and other nature conservation organizations. It is also a representative for the local parks when dealing with governments, policy makers, or when engaging with regional or international organizations on a multi-island level.

*Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance*

## Bonaire's tourism recovered from the pandemic

An estimated 170,194 international visitors traveled to Bonaire in 2022, an increase of 12,394 more than in 2019, the pre-pandemic level. Strong pent-up demand, improved confidence levels, the lifting of restrictions in source countries, and an increasing airlift to the island boosted results.

The island welcomed 17,162 stayover visitors in December, making it the best-performing month of 2022. The second half of 2022 saw an entry fee exceeding \$5.6 million, higher than anticipated. The Netherlands continues to send more visitors (47% of the island's total), followed by the United States (26%) and Curaçao (12%). In terms of age, most international visitors be-



long to Generation X and Boomers (45 to 65+). They came to dive, relax, and rest, and they stayed between seven and fourteen nights on Bonaire. They spent the most on accommodation, food and beverage, and transportation.

The cruise industry reached 66% of its pre-pandemic level in 2022: 304,298 (based on the actual cruise visitors on ship) cruise visitors compared to 457,700 (based on the maximum capacity of the ship) in 2019.

In partnership with OLB and BONHATA, one of TCB's main objectives is to attract a more affluent and eco-conscious visitor and to increase the demand from the North American market. According to the TCB CEO, Mr. Miles Mercera, "2022 was a watershed year showing a strong rebound and recovery of the tourism sector. TCB recognizes and applauds the partnership and commitment of all stakeholders in realizing these results." *TCB*

## Creating optimal health

by Irene da Cunda Costa

### Control your focus

#### 'Move your focus to improve your well-being'

It is possible to hear hundreds of news stories every day about disasters, tragedies and injustices. All this material can make for a bitter day. Heroic acts also happen daily but don't seem to have the same marketing impact and most of them don't make the news. We also witness firsthand a series of wonderful events, many of which we take for granted because of their daily appearance. To mention one that we hardly ever think of, consider the healthy functioning of our kidneys. Where we put our focus depends how we are going to tone our day and our life. This does not mean ignoring what is happening in the world. Although if we do so, the world will continue to spin without changes. What can we do with this information? In other issues I have talked about the circle of influence and the circle of concern. Most of the news we hear about the world is outside our circle of influence. But we can also determine what daily acts we can perform, even if they have a minimal impact.

For example, we can make decisions in relation to the purchases we make. If we buy locally or remotely, what are the implications? We can also take different actions in terms of what we discard. The way we dispose of the packaging of goods and whether we reuse or recycle them. There is always an option to actively collaborate with a humanitarian cause or if you don't have time, you can always make donations.

To a certain extent we can also use some of the calamitous news we hear daily to contrast with our reality and cultivate gratitude for what surrounds us. Since humans are characterized by appreciating what we have lost, we can do the exercise of valuing what we still have.

In the same way, in our private life and our most intimate relationships, we can focus our attention on what bothers us and thus make our lives and those around us miserable. But we can also put more time, interest and energy into cultivating what nourishes us and helps us grow.

Regarding what bothers us in our private lives, we should determine what we can change and what we can't. For example, unless people want to change, we cannot change them; we cannot change their way of thinking, their way of seeing reality or their way of re-

acting. What we can change is the relationship and our way of seeing the other person.

In short, we can use our focus to increase or decrease our general well-being. The recipe for feeling miserable: focus on everything negative that happens in the world, on all the things we don't like about the people around us and on everything we don't like about ourselves. The way to constructively use our focus is to actively seek information about the good that is happening in the world such as scientific advances or works of humanitarian aid organizations. Regarding our relationships, the constructive thing is to focus on the good things about the people we have chosen to be around and take the challenge to improve the relationship by being more empathetic and less judgmental.



*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.*



# The Royals visit Bonaire

Excitement on Bonaire was over the top with the visit of the Netherlands' King Willem-Alexander, Queen Maxima and Princess of Orange Catharina-Amalia. The royal family embarked on a two-week tour, January 27 – February 9 to introduce the Princess to the six islands of the Caribbean Netherlands beginning with Bonaire. They were accompanied by Secretary of State of Kingdom Relations and Digitalization Alexandra van Huffelen.

The royal party flew into Bonaire on Dutch Air Force One, reportedly co-piloted by King Willem-Alexander himself, on January 27. The party was welcomed by Lieut. Gov. Edison Rijna, partner Masoumah Hosseini, state representative Jan Helmond and CEO of Bonaire International Airport Maarten van der Scheer.

Bonaire's media and 35 individuals of the Dutch press covered the arrival and visit. The Dutch team will continue to follow the royals throughout their trip. On January 28, the royals began their day long island tour with an official welcome to Bonaire by Lieut. Governor Rijna, his partner and daughter at his official residence. The short visit included a formal introduction to various Bonaire party leaders, island secretary, registrar and executive council.

## White Slave

Next stop was White Slave. Historian and chairman of Fuhikubo, Boi Antoin, spoke of the historical significance the site and how slavery has affected life on Bonaire for centuries. Culture and Youth advisor for OLB, Jennifer Pocorni-Martis, read a poem for the royal visitors.



The Royals are greeted by Lt. Gov. Rijna and Bonaire's tradewinds.

## Nos Zjilea

Timing was perfect for the royals to visit Nos Zjilea, the celebration of Bonairean culture that is held the last Saturday of every month at Mangazina di Rei. The royal party was met by general manager, Danilo Christiaan, and several youngsters dressed in cultural dress who sang and offered traditional handmade gifts. The King, Queen and Princess received a brief explanation of the historical and cultural significance of Mangazina di Rei. Author Delno Tromp presented his book Marka indjan, a collection of historical Indian cave drawings. Tromp has reinterpreted the drawings in bright colors, bringing them to life.

The Royals, continued on page 13



The Royal group takes part in the dance and song of Simadon with the cultural dancers at Nos Zjilea

## A Garden? Just Do It!

by Angliet, Nature Lover

Do you wonder why my story is about the color RED? The reason is Valentine's Day, the worldwide celebration of Love as it exists in many and different ways.

So I was thinking, how to make a nice interesting Valentine's Day story. You will be surprised; I found it in the color red.

Yes, red is the color of passion, love, sexuality, beauty, joy, hearts, attraction, happiness, luck, energy and vigor. Red draws attention like no other color and radiates a strong and powerful energy that motivates us to take action.

Red also corresponds with positivity. Seeing the color red can inspire us to take action because of its magnetic energy. Its effects are attention, motivation, stimulation, caution and it's connected with health and sports. Red is a primary color and the first color babies see as their eyes develop. It's a dominant color in all societies around the world and a favorite color in garden landscapes and floral gifts.

In the language of flowers, the color



red traditionally conveys deep emotions and commands attention.

This is why red flowers are associated with feelings of true love, passion and romance. They send a strong message from the romance of red roses to the beauty of hibiscus, the red faja lobi for love and the whole year round red flowering bougainvillea and red pride of Barbados. When given in floral gifts, these blooms tell a

story with an important message. Red roses mean I LOVE YOU, red Salvia stands for, forever mine. Red tulips are a declaration of passionate, eternal love.

Red flowers add a bright splash of color to the landscape and even liven up floral gifts. Red blooms are popular, but not the most common color in the plant world. In fact they are one of the least common colors. While there may not be that many red species naturally, botanists and gardeners have cultivated thousands of hybrids and varieties of plants that bloom in red and now red flowers grow worldwide. Red blooms are commonly found in tropical and temperate climates. Each plant's specific pigments determine the color of its blossoms. Three chemical compounds, anthocyanins, carotenoids, and to a lesser extent, betalains are responsible for most red blooms.

Red roses play a role in several spiritual traditions. To Christians - red poinsettias, well known as Christmas star are a symbol of Christmas holidays. For Buddhists - a red lotus represents compassion and love. Hindus worship the goddess Kali using red hibiscus. Red blossoms also appear in literature and song, well-known artworks, printed clothes, and

household goods.

In art humans have used the color red since Neolithic times, with red pigment made from ochre, a reddish brown clay. The color and red flowers have had meaning associated with the most basic of human activities, life, death, battle and love as well as vigor and power.

Now that you have read this story, you know how wonderful it is to treat your beloved ones with RED flowers because it tells them a story about your love. Just do it.

Happy Valentine's Day.



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.



# 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](mailto: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](http://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://terramarmuseum.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.)

**Karnaval 2023.** *The Reporter's* online update pages have the complete schedule with locations (but no start times, unfortunately). <https://bonairereporter.com>

February. <b>2 - 5</b>	<b>Karnaval 2023.</b> Jump-up (2nd); Election Queen, Prince & Servant (3rd); Tumba Festival - Adults (4th) and Youth (5th).
February. <b>10 - 12</b>	<b>Karnaval 2023.</b> Teener Parade & Jump-in (10th). Youth Parade in Rincon (11th); Youth Parade in Playa (12th).
February. <b>17 - 21</b>	<b>Karnaval 2023.</b> Oldsters Parade & Jump-up (17th). Adult Parade Rincon (18th); Adult Parade Playa (19th); Farewell Parade Youth & saying goodbye Rincon (20); Adult Farewell Parade (21st).
Thursday, Feb. <b>2</b>	<b>World Wetlands Day</b> 5 - 9 p.m. Plaza Wilhelmina. There will be information booths, videos, a photo exhibit, drinks and snacks and a guided coastal bird tour. See page 15.
Sunday, Feb. <b>12</b>	<b>Clean Coast Bonaire.</b> 4-6 p.m. Piedra Pretu. Donate your time by working as a citizen scientist to collect marine litter & data. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=clean%20coast%20bonaire">https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=clean%20coast%20bonaire</a>
Friday, Feb. <b>17</b>	<b>Art Talk, Jessica Semeleer-Welch will be presenting for the first time:</b> 7 - 9 p.m. MoltenWolf Glass. In English. Kaya J.N.E. Craane Terramar 8 +599 701-1880 <a href="http://www.MoltenWolfGlass.com">www.MoltenWolfGlass.com</a>

## Government dates

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

**Election Day March 15.**

**Personal Income Tax.** The time period for submitting your annual income tax return is from March 1 to April 30, unless you or your accountant request an extension (uitstel aangifte) by May 1.

## Coming Up

**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.

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

International Flights to Bonaire	
<b>Amsterdam (AMS)</b>	<b>KLM</b> Daily flights connecting through Aruba <b>TUI</b> Daily
<b>Atlanta (ATL)</b>	<b>Delta</b> has a weekly Sat. flight.
<b>Miami (MIA)</b>	<b>American Airlines.</b> Three weekly flights on Mon. Wed. and Sat.
<b>New York (EWR) &amp; Houston (IAH)</b>	<b>United.</b> 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.	



**BALLOT CARD**

MAKE SURE TO HAVE

- the right address details
- an accessible mailbox
- ID that is valid on March 15, 2023

# 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:info@echobonaire.org)



**Manta Monday** - Nicole Pelletier of the Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation Program. Presentations 7:30 p.m.: Feb. 6 Toucan Diving, Van der Valk Plaza Beach Resort; Feb. 13 VIP Diving; Feb. 20 Divi Flamingo. email: [Caribbean.Islands@mantatrust.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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. Feb. 1	CARNIVAL MAGIC	0800-1600	South	3646
Thurs. Feb. 2	NORWEGIAN EPIC	0600-1300	South	5186
Sun. Feb. 5	COSTA FASCINOSA	0800-2000	North	3800
Mon. Feb. 6	AIDAPERLA	0800-1800	North	3286
Tues. Feb. 7	MARELLA EXPLORER 2	0730-2000	North	2253
Wed. Feb. 8	CARNIVAL HORIZON	0700-1500	South	4683
	AIDABELLA	0800-1900	South	2500
Thurs. Feb. 9	NORWEGIAN EPIC	0600-1300	South	5186
Fri. Feb. 10	NORWEGIAN JEWEL	0700-1700	North	3000
Sat. Feb. 11	SILVER DAWN	0800-2300	North	623
Sun. Feb. 12	CELEBRITY EQUINOX	1000-1900	South	2852
	STAR LEGEND	0800-1800	North	214
Mon. Feb. 13	SEVEN SEAS SPLENDOR	0500-1300	North	754
	VISION OF THE SEAS	0700-1800	South	2435
Tues. Feb. 14	BRITANNIA	0700-1800	South	3674
Wed. Feb. 15	CARNIVAL SPIRIT	0800-1600	South	2680
	NIEUW AMSTERDAM	1500-2300	North	2735





**A dance performance was held for the visiting royals and heads of state at the special edition of Taste of Bonaire.**

A highlight of Nos Zjilea is traditional Bonaire food such as the bread freshly baked in an onsite stone oven. Princess Amalia assisted the bakers to remove the bread from the hot oven.

In the shaded picnic table area King Willem, Queen Maxima and the Princess met individually with representatives from Rincon and the different barios: Nort di Salina, Antriol, Playa, Nikiboko and Tera Cora.

Afterwards the royal group enjoyed traditional music and dances performed by Bonaire cultural dancers, coming to their feet to join the dancers in a traditional Simadon song and dance.

Lunch for the royal party was at Arawak where representatives of various social organizations discussed the crucial topics of climate change, agricultural development and poverty reduction.

#### **Sorobon and Mangroves**

Following lunch, the royal party took a tour to Seru Largu and drove through several of the barios on their way to their next destination at Sorobon and a windsurfing demonstration. Champion windsurfer Tonky Frans explained the disciplines for windsurfing. Several noted windsurfers demonstrated some moves as the royals watched nearby from a boat.

STINAPA director Jan van der Ploeg introduced a conservation and photo exhibit by individual Junior Rangers. The youths' photos represented environmental images of the encroaching sargassum, Sabal Palm project, Mangrove Maniacs work, Reef Renewal and Echo. The party took a boat trip along the bay and surveyed several channels of the mangroves cleared by the Mangrove Maniacs.

#### **Taste of Bonaire**

The final event of the day was a special edition of Taste of Bonaire. The King, Queen, Princess and entourage walked through the crowd visiting various food booths and stopping to taste some of the traditional fare. Full of smiles they paused occasionally to shake hands with many admirers in the huge crowd. Before the large bandstand a section was set up for the royal visitors and Lieut Gov. Rijna's party. The musical groups Tutti Frutti and Foyan Boys took the stage to perform as dance groups the All Star Dancers, Bonaire Folkloric Dancers, Grupo Maskarada and others performed.

#### **Diving**

On their final day on Bonaire the King Willem-Alexander, Queen Maxima and Princess Amalia took a day off for a dive at Rock Pile on Klein Bonaire with host hotel Harbour Village's Great Adventure dive shop.

Dive shop manager Jose "Pepe" Mastropaolo said, "They were all great divers, very experienced with perfect buoyancy".

Dutch royals continued their trip of the islands on January 30 to Aruba.

*Story/photos Julie Morgan*

## **Outplanting boulder coral:**

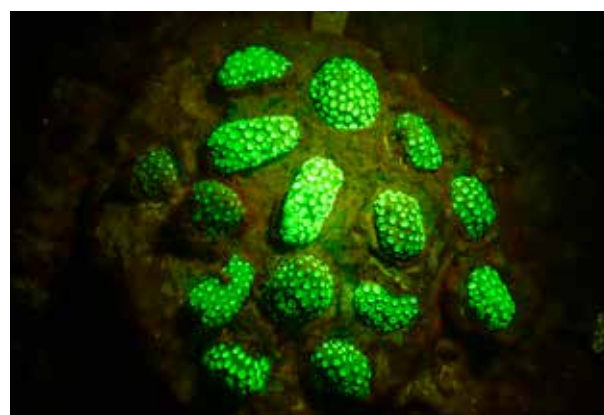
*continued from page 6*

number species that benefit from restoration to ensure that future reefs are as genetically diverse and resilient as possible.

In 2019, Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire, with a government permit and input from STINAPA, collected a few boulder coral fragments from four wild colonies around the island. These fragments were hung on specially-designed nursery trees and closely monitored for indicators of disease, bleaching, and other stressors over the following two years.

In December 2022, the first "reef-ready" boulder corals were taken to various restoration sites on Bonaire and outplanted using a novel, cement-based attachment technique. Fragments are pressed into small domes of fresh cement and secured to sand or rock; once hardened, these structures become part of the reef, where they will be monitored for the coming years by the Reef Renewal team. Although RRFB has been propagating boulder coral larvae for years, this is the first time that colonies were reared and fragmented in a nursery setting before being outplanted.

Reef Renewal Bonaire will continue to grow and propagate boulder corals in nurseries and outplant them back to the reef. The Foundation's efforts guarantee that *O. annularis*, *O. faveolata*, and *M. cavernosa*, staples of Bonaire's marine ecosystem, will continue to thrive amidst growing pressures.



**A colony of outplanted boulder coral. The colony fluoresced when photographed under blue light with a yellow barrier filter. Photo: Ruth Winters**

The boulder coral project is important not only for the preservation of key species, but also for ensuring the resilience of Bonaire's reefs in the face of growing local and global threats. By expanding the quantity and species of coral they outplant, the Foundation introduces much needed diversity to degraded reef areas, allowing them to better withstand today's ever-changing environment and the uncertain conditions of the future.

*"Outplanting these boulder coral fragments for the first time was a critical step for us, one that was necessary to fine-tune our restoration techniques and establish proper operating protocols. From now on, our focus is scaling up their production to make sure that, with the help of our incredible community of dedicated volunteers, thousands of corals will be outplanted back to our reefs every year."*

*Francesca Viridis,*

*Chief Operating Officer |*

*Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire*

#### **About Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire**



Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire's (RRFB) mission is to help protect, replenish, and restore the biodiverse coral reefs of Bonaire.

We focus on implementing innovative, science-based programs that

expand and strengthen populations of keystone coral reef species. We do this so that the reefs of Bonaire can gain the necessary scale, genetic diversity, and resilience to thrive today and in the uncertain, ever-changing conditions of the future. Today, with the help of 11 partner diveshops around the island and a dedicated team of volunteers, Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire has outplanted over 50,000 corals back to the reef.

To learn how to get involved or lend support, please visit [www.reefnewalbonaire.org](http://www.reefnewalbonaire.org) or email [info@reefnewalbonaire.org](mailto:info@reefnewalbonaire.org).



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PARROTS AND PEOPLE



# Pets of the Week



Valentino

Vincent

## Will you be our Valentine?

Hi, my name is Valentino and next to me is my brother Vincent. We are almost 2 years old and we have lived almost our entire life at the Shelter. We came when we were two little boys of 8 weeks old.

We are really well mannered and serene cats.

We love being with humans without being pushy asking for attention.

It's time for us to find a good and cozy home. Of course, we are negative for FIV and leukemia. And we have had all our vaccinations and will be chipped the moment you decide to take me and/or my brother home with you.

I almost forgot, we are neutered too!

*Photo/story: Monique Degenaar*

**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](mailto:animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com)**

# Make Bonaire Accessible

## by Ria Evers-Dokter

## Have a heart

From the first day of coming to live in the Dutch Antilles, (many years ago), I heard about Valentine's Day. In the part of Holland where I originate, we did not celebrate this day.

The idea of celebrating such a special day I liked, but I did not really understand the concept. Telling or showing someone your love was something I liked. I never really practiced this though. In my mind doing something special for the ones I loved was enough.

And then I learned to speak Papiamentu. I never went to school or participated in a course to learn this language, I am a practical learner. I learned to speak and understand this special language while working, shopping and watching T.V.

An expression I really learned to love, was not in Papiamentu, but in conversations, on the radio and T.V., and I heard it a lot, "Have a Heart".

When these words were spoken I saw in my mind somebody holding a big heart offering this to a person he/she was talking to. And I know this had nothing to do with Valentine's day, but this mental picture has always stayed in my mind.

For myself, I have used this expression when somebody has done or said something wrong. He or she was confronted with this and got this heart as a token to make them show remorse and improve or change the situation.

Some things are easy to change and don't need many words or actions. Often a few words are enough.

In my mind I see a large group of people

with disabilities crafting hearts, using plastic, cartons, molding clay or crayons. They would make big hearts, small ones, thick ones, thin ones and hearts in all different kinds of shapes and colors. They would put all the hearts in big baskets dressed in a colorful way and just looking at them makes you happy. All the people are walking to Wilhelminaplein where a big crowd has gathered. Those who cannot walk are pushed in a wheelchair.

It is not visible what kind of disabilities they have and there is a band playing music, "Everything is going to be all right".

Then they take their baskets and walk around and offer every person present on the plaza a heart. Nobody gets the same heart. When offering the hearts they say, "Have a heart," and smile brightly.

The idea is that the recipients of the hearts start thinking, why did I get this heart, do I know this person, what should I do and how should I react?

All the recipients at some point in their life have done something to hurt a person with a disability. They may have not given them a chance, made decisions without considering the persons with a disability, made a fool of them, used their disability as a cuss-word and/or treated them badly and talked them down.

Getting a heart can mean that all they must do is change their attitude and point of view. Give what they really need, give them a heart. Happy Valentine's Day!



*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.*

## Shelter News

## Don't shop....ADOPT!



**Animal Shelter Bonaire has over 160 wonderful dogs that could be YOURS! We have every size, shape, color, sex and age to choose from. All are healthy, vaccinated and ready to be your companion. Please visit us and make their dreams come true!**



Bonaire's wetlands are one of the most biologically diverse areas on the island. From salinas to mangrove forests, these areas are ecologically, culturally and economically important. These areas provide critical habitat for a wide range of plants and animals while also providing other ecological services such as coastal defense, water filtration and natural carbon sink.

Although Bonaire is small, four of its wetlands are designated as Ramsar sites, signifying that they are wetlands of international importance. These areas are Washington Slagbaai, Klein Bonaire, Lac Bay and Pekelmeer.

This year, the Mangrove Maniacs will be hosting a World Wetlands Day

event to raise awareness about the importance of these fascinating areas. Join the celebration on February 2nd, from 5 - 9 p.m. in Plaza Wilhelmina. Representatives from nature organizations and other stakeholders have been invited to participate. There will be information booths, videos, a photo exhibit, drinks and snacks and a guided coastal bird tour. Come learn more about these valuable areas, the important work being conducted on Bonaire and maybe even find a way to get involved!

*When you have time, visit the beautiful website for World Wetlands Day 2023.*

<https://www.worldwetlandsday.org>





Frank Bohm of DeFreewieler. Photo Arjen van doorsten

De Freewieler's first Fun Race of the year on January 21 attracted 36 avid mountain bike riders to the difficult terrain of Yatu Bacu. The cyclists in the Elite category rode 11 km x 3 = 33 km course while the Funrace cyclists completed 4.7 km x 5 = 23.5 km. A mixed category of riders cycled two laps from the Elite and Funrace. Winners of the Elite were: first - Tom Homburg 1.12.19; second - Paul Kavilarange 1.12.39. Mixed category winners were: first - Henly Oly 1.33.30; second - Philip Blake 1.35.00. Fun Race winners were: first - Maikos de Lima 1.06.25 and second: Erik v.d Keuken 1.12.00. For complete results visit *The Reporter* update pages online.

# 155 kgs of trash removed from Te Amo

Dive Friends held their first quarterly underwater cleanup at Te Amo beach on January 21. An ambitious and energetic group of 74 divers participated. Te Amo is a popular beach for sun worshipping, picnics and parties. Some 150 kgs (331 lbs) of waste that is detrimental to our beautiful marine environment was removed from the ocean.

Divers recovered 55 glass beverage bottles and 29 plastic cups, plates and utensils at the site. Divers also removed 35 fishing nets or pieces of fishing nets; 16 pieces of plastic, 16 aluminum beverage cans and single digit numbers of fireworks, electronic device, clothing, books, newspapers, magazines, cardboard packaging, rope, rubber, tires, fishing line and hooks, pipes, caps/lids, plastic strapping, scuba/snorkel gear, pipes, carpet and plastic bottles and grocery or trash bags.

The beach cleanup held the same morning removed 965 pieces of trash and cigarette butts.

As always, Dive Friends had their thank you BBQ at the Hamlet location with a raffle of great prizes. Besides all the great food and comradery, raffle winners won: Two Tank Boat Dive for two people; Yoga class by Zest for Life; Reef Voucher for Flip Flops; Voucher for Reef Rashguard; Reef Hats; Reef shirt; Trashbags and a Caribbean Reef Life book.

The next quarterly cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, April 22. Mark your calendars now for the year. The third one is on Saturday, July 22 and the fourth on Saturday, October 21.



Underwater cleanup super heroes are ready

Photo/story Julie Morgan

## Happy Valentines Day



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