

FREE**BONAIRE**
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Making a splash from "Under the Sea" were L-R: Claire Sealy, Jo-Ann Thielman and Angelo Emerenciana. Photo Julie Morgan

Karnaval makes a big comeback

Karnaval's street parties, pageants, tum-bas and parades normally held prior to the onset of Lent returned to Bonaire in 2023. Gone were any thoughts of the Covid 19 pandemic that curtailed the world's oldest party since 2020. And what a party it was.

The events began in January with the election of Karnaval royalty, Tumba (music/dance), jump ins, jump ups and parades.

The Klave foundation was charged with the organization of events.

Nine groups participated in the parades: Span bo bula den, Uni den pura, Empire Carnival, Ohh La La Carnival, The Precious Diamonds, Deseo di Pueblo, Uni pa Gosa, Team Nieve/Thumelso and Miss Bonaire.

The various groups' 237+ participants, costumed in spectacular, sparkling colors, could be seen walking, dancing, smiling and having fun every foot of the way of the three major parades. Only a few of the groups joined the Rincon grand parade with the majority focusing on the grand parade in Kralendijk.

No age group was left out of the celebration. The kids were included with a 'Teen-er' parade on February 12 complete with costumes, princesses and panchos (the carnival prince). A small 'Grandinan' parade for Bonaire's elderly, was held on February 17 beginning from Park Tulei. The participants' spirit and their enthusiasm of carnival rivaled many of those in the grand parades (see page 8).

Here are a few highlights and descriptions

of the participants.

In the grand parades the 'Ooh La La' group theme was the Angkor Empire (The Gold City of Cambodia). The 30 participants were attired in lush costumes of yellow, fuschia, gold, green and blue. Trailing behind the dancers was a large road piece of Angkor Wat, a religious temple and one of the Seven Wonders of the world.

'Uni pa Gosa' group of 20 brought a fantasy theme to the carnival with 'White Tiger Explosion' designed by Orlando Ar-

caya. Group members were outfitted in tiger themes, dressed in black, white and silver.

'The Empire group' celebrated the 'Enchantment of the Amazon' with costumes symbolizing the jungle. Participants wore costumes of lush velvet and gold lame decorated with green leaves, flowers and rhinestones with a headpiece of either a jaguar, red macaw or toucan.

Group DJ Retonde's 'Deseo di Pueblo' (desires of the village) was the largest group with 70 participants. The group mem-

bers dressed as clowns and carnival barkers carried signs saying 'vote now.' Just in time for the upcoming election, they carried a large sign which displayed requests and wishes of the 'village': Affordable houses with a low-priced loan, Affordable water, electricity and gas, Land to build our own house and Help for our elderly.

'Under the Sea' was the theme of the 'Precious Diamonds.' The 35 participants wore sequined white, brilliant blue and pink dresses and jumpsuits with fantastic headpieces. To complete the outfits, they wore a wraparound body piece encrusted with beautiful sea creatures as if they were underwater. Each person was equipped with a trident.

The only fully decorated float this year carried Bonaire's Karnaval and island royalty: Karnaval Queen, Marjely Doran; runnerup, Maria Luisa Troncon; Carnival Queen Teener, Natasha De Palm; Panchito, Nelson Crestian; Miss Bonaire, Ruby Pouchet and Miss Tourism Bonaire, Caroline Porros.

The final night of Bonaire's Karnaval, known as Fat Tuesday, began at 8 p.m. The groups added lights to their costumes and retraced the parade route ending at the stadium. Music and video screens were set up for everyone to view the sacrificial burning of King Momo symbolizing everything that will be given up for Lent on the next day, Ash Wednesday. Photo/story Julie Morgan

(More photos on our Facebook page.)



King of Tumba, Luigino Molina leads the crowd in song following the burning of King Momo

Tourists being cheated by VET scammers, legally

Scammers who have created online portals similar to the public entity's official website are cheating Bonaire's tourists. And the practice is entirely legal. According to the law, the scammers are simply "resellers" who are providing a legitimate service by paying the Visitor Entry Tax on a visitor's behalf.

They collect \$95 (or more) from the unsuspecting visitor and forward the applicant's completed VET form to the authorized website. They also pay the required \$75 fee. In return they receive the QR code, which they forward to the visitor. The visitor legally deplanes on Bonaire with proof they have paid the tax. But they have been tricked into buying a free service, and the scammers have banked an illegitimately earned \$20.

According to Guus van Eerde of the Finance Department, "The cyber department of the Political Caribbean Netherlands Corps has conducted an investigation and it emerged that it is not illegal. Nothing can be done about it legally." The company that designed the official web page, IBIS Management Associates (IBIS) in Curaçao, doesn't seem to have found a way to close the leak either.

Dossier says, "The OLB cannot say how many visitors have been misled, but internal information shows that there were at least many hundreds in December alone. It is unclear who is behind websites such as Bonairetax.org and Tourismtaxbonaire.us. Company and contact details are not mentioned. The suggestion is made that the providers operate from the US, but it is suspected that closer to home - on Bonaire or Curaçao - should be sought."

According to Dossier, entirely different legal issues were raised earlier regarding Bonaire's VET website. The OLB had asked for permission to adapt and tryout a collection website concept the Dutch Waddencard Foundation had already developed for the Wadden Islands. Waddencard agreed, expecting to have an opportunity to tender later for Bonaire's project. It wasn't invited, however, and its lawyers subsequently challenged the product IBIS developed for Bonaire. Dossier says the Tourist Corporation Bonaire, which was closely involved in the tender, reached a settlement with Waddencard.

DMR (Dossier Kingdom Relations)

The election in a nutshell

The government press release says:

On March 15, eligible voters can vote for the Island Council elections and, if suitable, for the Electoral College. It is essential to know the difference between these elections, the usefulness and necessity of going to vote, and everything you need to know as a voter before you go and vote.

So, on the one hand, there are elections for Bonaire's Island Council. Together with the Executive Council, they form the island government. The island council indicates what should happen on Bonaire and supervises the work of the Executive Council. The inhabitants of Bonaire elect the Island Council. This happens once every four years. By voting, you and other voters decide what the Island Council will look like for the next four years.

On the other hand, there are electoral college elections. The electoral colleges consist of people's representatives of the public entities who, together with the members of the provincial councils and the members of the electoral college for Dutch voters abroad (non-resident electoral college), vote for the elections to the First Chamber. By voting for the Electoral College,

you indirectly influence who is elected to the First Chamber and the decisions taken there. And therefore also indirectly influence the findings in the First Chamber that affect Bonaire.

Everything you need to know about these elections and issues, such as when, how, where, and why to vote, can be found on the website www.BonaireStemt.nl.

Election FYIs

The elections are on Wednesday, March 15, 2023. On that day, you can vote from 7:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. at any polling station on Bonaire.

Voting passes will mailed by the week of March 1. People who do not receive a voting pass can get theirs from the Civil Affairs Department beginning March 6.

Voting by proxy okay, but. Voters may ask someone to cast their vote on their behalf. But asking another person for permission to exercise their proxy is illegal.

The government will tell people to VOTE in four languages. The information campaign to encourage voting that will be launched on the March 15 will be communicated in Dutch, Papiamentu, English, and Spanish. DMR

What to do with the island's waste? Compost it

Bonaire waste products will soon to be composted and sold on the island, increasing agricultural production and decreasing dependence on imported compost. Selibon, Agritera and the Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (LVV) are joining forces.

Selibon will install a shredder at LVV and will supervise the waste separation process. Eighteen customers have agreed to provide organic waste, such as grass, branches and leaves, that will supplement animal manure and grass collected by Selibon. Sewage and soil will be added. Then natural processes, given time, will turn the mixture into compost. Agritera estimates that a bag of Bonairean compost will cost no more than \$10. DMR

Human remains found near Rincon

The remains of a human skull were found in the Rincon area at the Kaminda di Washington Park the morning of February 16. The police have sent the skull, plus an additional bone of uncertain origin found nearby, to the Netherlands Forensic Institute for further investigation and identification. Ludwig Cicilia, an older resident of Rincon, has been missing for several weeks, and his car was found abandoned in the area. The police and family are awaiting the results of the forensic investigation. DMR

Too many butts not enough seats flying CUR > BON

Divi Divi and EZ Air do not have enough capacity to fly everyone who wants to travel between Bonaire and Curaçao. For some days in the coming months all seats on all flights are fully booked for certain days. A few days were book up weeks ago.

This month JetAir Caribbean inaugurated service between Bonaire and both Curaçao and Aruba. It is offering only two flights per week, however, and is more expensive.

DMR (Bonaire.nu)

The Venzie fruit boats are returning



Bonaire's maritime border with Venezuela will reopen on April 3. Initially the import of fruit, vegetables and building materials will be resumed subject to arrangements that need to be made by Venezuelan shipping companies and ports of departure. The possibility of reopening of the airspace will be determined by further discussions.

Venezuela unilaterally closed its borders with the ABC Islands on February 19, 2019, and closed its airspace again until April 30, 2023. The islands have signaled that they are willing to resume contact, but not especially eager. They are making sure all the i's are dotted and the t's are crossed regarding conditions, requirements and procedures. Curaçao and Aruba have also agreed to similar reopenings, although on their own schedules and according to their own terms. DMR

Flotsam & Jetsam, continued on page 4

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Visit us!



Experts say Bonaire reefs are doing okay (Part 2: The Fish)

"We are the stewards, and we have to do a good job because if we don't we will lose what we cherish. Joni Mitchell said, 'You don't know what you've got till it's gone'."

Callum Roberts

Scientists Erik Meesters, Callum Roberts and Julie Hawkins returned to Bonaire in January not for research but to join an interactive workshop to discuss the condition of the Bonaire National Marine Park (BNMP) ecosystem. The workshop was organized by MaCoBios (Marine Coastal ecosystem Biodiversity and Services in a Changing World) and STINAPA. This is part two of a conversation about Bonaire's reefs.

Roberts said, "When we here in 1994, we were checking the impact of scuba diving... on sites around Klein. We were checking the coral and fish communities... and the number of divers per site. At the time there were about 4000 divers per year [per site] and that was our recommendation, and they didn't listen. We were worrying about the coral and it was important at the time."

Roberts and Hawkins estimate that today certain sites receive up to 100k per year.

Coral reef coverage is gauged from very good to critical. More than 40% of coral coverage is very good, between 20-40% is good, 10-20% is okay, 5-10% is

bad and below 5% coral is critical. The scientists have rated Bonaire as 'okay'.

Roberts said, "The habitat is a bit rough, very little in the shallows and patches in deeper water. One of the reasons is the central complexity of the reefs on the island. It's three dimensional and now there are no hiding places for the fish."

In 94' Roberts and Hawkins did fish counts and would find large groupers in every fish count taken within a 10-79 sq meter area but there are essentially none now.

"I think with protection they can come back. It's not too late... Fish that are generally protected will bounce back and in future years the fish population can come back much larger. I think by looking at the predators, you are looking after the whole ecosystem," said Roberts.

Another reason for the lack of large predator fish is poaching in the 'no take' zones. Roberts believes the number of existing zones aren't enough and should be spread around the island in the north, east and Klein to safeguard a return.

"We dived three times on Klein: Carl's Hill, Forest, Jerry's Jam and then the 'no dive' zones, Karpata and Slagbaai and Canyon. We also did Tolo and Buddy's and Bari. The parrotfish were looking really happy... The parrotfish are really

Bonaire's reef and its fish
continued on page 7



Top: Margates circle a healthy reef on Bonaire's east side.
Bottom: January 2021 coral bleaching on Bonaire. Photos Julie Morgan



FOR SALE Ocean View Apartment Grand Windsock Apt. B09



- Located in Belnem, steps away from the ocean
- Living area: 137 m2 / 1475 sq. ft.
- 3 bedrooms / 2 bathrooms / owners closet



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Virtual 3D tour



Asking price \$565,000 US Dollar

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http://www.facebook.com/REMAXBonaire



Dive chamber not operating

Divers requiring recompression will now have to be flown to Curaçao for treatment. Dr. van der Vaart retired at the beginning of 2023. He was the only qualified dive doctor on the Bonaire. The board of the Recompression Tank Bonaire Foundation, not yet finding a replacement, had to close the recompression tank as of February 20, 2023 because it can no longer guarantee 24/7 service. The Board is searching for both an immediate and a longer term solution. *DMR*

Brain surgery now available on Aruba

For the first time in the ABC islands, brain surgery has been performed using the StealthStation neuronavigation system. The navigation system uses diagnostic recordings of the patient to create sort of a GPS map of the brain. The map provides the surgical team with accurate and less invasive navigation of a patient's surgical treatment area. For example, it can help the neurosurgeon navigate to a tumor in the brain.

The surgery was performed at Aruba's Horacio Oduber Hospital by Aruban neurosurgeon Dr. Greg Laclé, together with neurosurgeon Dr. Pierre Robe from UMC- Utrecht. They successfully removed a brain tumor using neuronavigation. Eighteen patients are now candidates for similar surgery on Aruba who otherwise would have to travel abroad. ZJCN regularly sends patients from the BES islands to Aruba for more complex treatments and operations.

DMR (Bonaire.nu)

Sargassum update

Bonaire saw a Sargassum influx mid-February but with almost three kilometers of booms STINAPA was able to direct a lot of the incoming Sargassum to the extraction points at Lagun, Punta di Kalbas and Foodies. With heavy equipment the Sargassum was successfully removed out of the water and from the beaches.

Sint Maarten and Saint-Martin finally draw the line

Sint Maarten and Saint-Martin will soon know where each ends and the other begins. Since the Treaty of Concordia divided the island between the Netherlands and France in 1648, the exact locations of some sections the border between them have been uncertain. The two countries have finally agreed to a permanent demarcation line, pending "further elaboration of technical details."

In an effort to minimize conflicts, the Netherlands, France, and their respective island governments have long agreed to maintain the status quo pending the

final determination of the border. Nevertheless, disputes broke out from time to time, most recently when, in 2016, French gendarmes raided a Dutch restaurant in a contested location to halt a renovation for which no permit had been issued.

DMR (Dossier Kingdom Relations)

Group to consider BonLab's future

A working group will study medical laboratory services on Bonaire and advise the Public Entity Bonaire and the central government regarding the future of BonLabs. Care and Youth Caribbean Netherlands Directorate (VWS), the ministry that manages government health insurance in the BES Islands (ZJCN), intends to terminate its contract with BonLabs. That would leave Foundation Mariadal, the hospital, as the only medical lab serving the island. The Public Body and the public in general strongly support the continuance of BonLabs.

The decision to create the working group was made during a positive discussion between deputy Tjin Asjoe and Herbert Barnard, director of VWS. The group will be chaired by Dr. Izzy Gerstenbluth. Constructive deliberations are predicted. *DMR*

Saba youth now have their very own sexual health website <https://www.sabalovin.com>

As reported in *Dossier Kingdom Relations*, "With the launch on Valentine's Day of the information-rich website SabaLovin for young people, Saba breaks the stubborn taboo in the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom to speak openly about sexuality. In addition to practical information, the site also discusses sexual diversity, homosexuality, bisexuality and transgender people."

According to various spokespersons involved in the project, the website: "Is a platform for young adults to connect and engage with others, to ask questions and receive support from experts in the field. The website also provides resources for parents, teachers, and other adults to support the sexual health education of young people."

"As young adults are in the process of discovering and exploring their sexuality, it is important that they have access to accurate, reliable information. This website has been developed to provide teenagers with the tools and resources they need to make informed decisions about their sexual health. It covers a wide range of topics, from sexual anatomy to relationships, consent, and prevention of sexually transmitted infections."

"This website aims to raise awareness and it gives our young people the opportunity to access information about their reproductive wellbeing in a positive and healthy way. Youngsters are now afforded the opportunity to access information where they can see their needs reflected."

DMR (Dossier Kingdom Relations)

Ask Bob

Bonaire real estate advice



Bob –

Dutch insurance law differs from North American insurance law and many homeowners don't know the difference. Can you explain to me the "under insurance" penalty that could happen when you file a claim?

Thanks, Barbara M.

Under Dutch insurance law the insurance company might not pay your insurance claim in full if they determine that you have willfully decided to under-insure your property. For example, you might own a property with a rebuilding value of \$500,000, but since it's a concrete house you might choose to insure it for only \$250,000 to save some money and assuming that a concrete house will never be a total loss. If you did this knowingly and had a large loss the insurance company could choose to only pay

half of your claim (\$125,000) since you had only insured your house for half of its real rebuilding value.

Although this rarely happens, it does demonstrate the importance reviewing the status of your homeowners insurance policy on a regular basis. You should touch base with your insurance agent at least every two or three years to make sure you are adequately insured.

This can happen very easily if you have owned your home for four years or more. Rebuilding costs have increased by at least 50% during that time, so you might want to check with your insurance agent to make sure you are adequately covered. At the moment you should have your home insured for a value of at least \$2,000 per square meter. Keep in mind that the rebuilding value only covers the cost to repair/rebuild your home. Other items like solar panels and furniture usually need to be covered separately.

If you have further questions, I encourage you to get in touch with your insurance broker.

*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

POLICE REPORT

Carnival 2023

Feb. 11. The children's parade in Rincon was uneventful.

Feb. 12. On Sunday in Playa, just at the start of the parade, three people were arrested for driving under the influence when their car drove through the barricade on Kaya G.F. Croes. All three were taken to the station for a breath test. Following the outcome, the driver's license was revoked for an indefinite period of time and all three men were held on the station until the carnival parade was over.

Feb. 18. The big carnival parade went off without any problem in Rincon.

Feb. 19. An arrest was made during the big parade in Playa. The suspect did not respond to police demands.

Feb. 21. During the big farewell parade there was a brawl on Bulevar Julio A. Abraham in which two men (aged 21 and 18) and a girl (17) were arrested for public violence.

All in all, it was a quiet carnival period. The population once again showed that together we can ensure a pleasant and safe carnival. KPCN would like to thank everyone for their contribution and emphasizes once again that we share responsibility for a safe island.

Traffic

Feb. 22. A traffic check was held at Kaya Industria in the late afternoon. A total of 18 vehicles were checked. Three processes were written; two for driving without valid insurance and one for driving without a license plate.

Feb. 22. In the night hours on Kaminda Sabana Piedra Krus a car drove into the

mondi. The driver and passenger were taken to hospital by ambulance for medical check-ups and treatment. The driver was issued a ticket for driving without a valid driver's license and valid insurance papers.

Feb. 20. Around midnight, two cars collided on Kaya Internashonal. One of the cars flipped over and landed on its side. The fire department was called in to get the driver out of the car, but he climbed out of the car himself. The driver (56) was found to be under the influence of alcohol and was arrested. The passenger of the other car was taken to hospital by ambulance.

Feb. 18. A man, 38, was arrested on Kaminda Tra'i Montaña for driving under the influence. A patrol on duty saw the car zigzag on the road. The driver could not show a valid driver's license, insurance document or a valid identity card.

Public order

Feb. 23, Around 2 p.m. the central control room received a report that a body was floating in the water in the vicinity of the Salt pier. An employee of the salt company at the location took the person out of the water where they immediately started resuscitation. But this was in vain. The man with initials A.N.S. from the United States, born on September 2, 1951, passed away.

Do you see anything suspicious?

Call 717 8000

or

the anonymous tip line 9310

Letters & Opinions

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.

Vote For Nature

Nature is our lifeline. It gives us everything we need to live healthy and fulfilling lives, like fresh water, nutritious food, clean air and a beautiful home. On Bonaire, nature is the heart of our economy, attracting tourists from all over the world and providing us with a bright future for our children and our children's children. Without nature, we would lose everything that makes our island special. Hence, it is imperative that we prioritize the protection and preservation of our natural environment to ensure a sustainable future for all.

Since the last elections nature became less and less of a priority. The past four years have witnessed a concerted effort to grant as many building permits as possible on Bonaire, resulting in a blatant disregard for regulations aimed at safeguarding our natural environment. Sadly, this has also meant that the needs and desires of the island's residents have been largely ignored. For example, very little progress has been made in ensuring reliable and safe infrastructure and providing affordable housing for locals. Instead, most of the new construction has focused on big resorts and housing designed to appeal to investors.

Regrettably, the government's single-minded pursuit of economic growth has come at a heavy price for Bonaire's natural environment. Rather than prioritizing the long-term well-being of the island, the government has instead focused on short-term economic gains for a happy few. This has led to an alarming situation where the unique natural beauty of Bonaire, along with its culture, is being put at risk.

As we approach the March 15th election on Bonaire, it's crucial to consider how the candidates plan to protect the island's natural environment for current and future generations. Bonaire's economy and way of life depend heavily on its unique and beautiful nature, including its coral reefs, tropical dry forests, mangroves and wildlife.

With climate change and other environmental threats on the rise, it's more important than ever that our government takes effective measures to protect our island's natural environment. Despite the lack of clear (written) information on the intentions of the political parties on Bonaire, it's important to learn as much as you can about the environmental policies and initiatives of each political party to make an informed decision on election day.

By electing a party committed to protecting Bonaire's natural environment and promoting sustainable development for our citizens, we can help to ensure a bright future for ourselves and future generations. It's our responsibility to hold our leaders accountable and demand a sustainable and environmentally responsible approach to governance.

Since nature doesn't have a voice of its own, it's crucial that you speak up for it on March 15th. If you care about the protection of our natural environment then consider voting for PDB, the only political party that has unequivocally opposed any form of development on Plantation Bolivia. With a leader like Clark Abraham who believes in 'walking the talk' we fully expect him to remain steadfast in his support for protecting Plantation Bolivia and upholding his promises to voters.

*Foundation Save Plantation Bolivia
Wilma Nijland*

Changes seen

Impressions (unfiltered) from a 30-year repeat visitor, upon return following 32 month absence

Bonaire seemed "tired" during the 1990's. It was a great site for divers, most of whom were like-minded when it came to respect for the reef and obedience to the traditional rules of responsible diving (i.e., "Don't touch, Don't take")

It seemed change came slowly, prodded by "Lenny" and "Omar," who turned the island on its side and on its head, literally, decimating coral and topside properties with seemingly wanton disregard for what came before, what existed presently, and what would emerge in the future.

As time moved into the decades of the 20's, fresh coats of paint, refurbished roofs, repaired walkways and new "life" decorated the island. Jolted by the arrival of gigantic cruise ships, the island responded with smiling homage to the tourist trade and tolerance, albeit reluctant at times, for the disrespect shown the reefs, the landscape and the Bonairean people.

But hope was on the horizon. More residents formed groups to support the true essence of Bonaire, the love of the sea, the love of the land, the love for creatures of all shapes and sizes, and the promise of the youth who will be the future caretakers.

Once, visitors came to the island, a divers' paradise, seeking escape from work lives and obligations, embracing the calm and wonder of the undersea and its inhabitants. They were wrapped in a sense of welcome, met with a slower pace, colorful surroundings, lively, joyful music and dance. Today, the expectations of island visitors are as diverse as the individuals themselves. The spirit of the Bonairean people will respond, with characteristic grace, pride and smiles.

Change will continue, but Bonaire will not disappoint.

C. Connor/Maine

Would you like to participate in the Commission for Environmental Assessment? Let us know as soon as possible!

Send us an email with your motivation and cv before March 13th 2023. You can send your documents to

milieueffectrapportage@bonairegov.com.

You can find more information about this vacancy at our website

<https://bonairegov.com/inwoners/natuur-milieu/mer-eng>



BFT, Bonaire's best kept secret, promises transparency

A new chief executive officer, Walter Wattenbergh, took over Bonaire Fuel Terminals on February 1. The former chairman of the Supervisory Board, Wattenbergh promises BFT will adopt a new policy of transparency regarding its operations. "We want to be as transparent as possible," he said. "That is part of a state participation." The people of Bonaire are waiting with many questions.

When approving the creation of Bonaire Fuel Terminals BV in 2021, Parliament tasked the company with securing Bonaire's future fuel supply. As an afterthought, it also tasked BFT with promoting sustainable energy on the island. Subsequently created by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate, BFT'S sole shareholder, and financed by government grants approved by the same ministry, BFT has kept its business plan so secret that, according to Dossier, "MPs had to sign a confidentiality statement to be allowed to view it [the business plan]."

Initially capitalized to tune of \$23 million, and further enriched by a \$10 million grant from the Ministry, BFT so far seems to have devoted its resources to getting organized and conducting studies. Its flagship project, construction of a major island fuel terminal located at the airport, is reportedly still on the drawing board. BFT also seems to have preempted control of Bonaire's sustainable energy projects from the Public Body and WEB.

Wattenbergh promises 80% of Bonaire's electrical consumption will be produced by wind and solar by 2025. The OLB and WEB say the island would have reached that goal already if the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate had not ignored a proposal it submitted several years ago.

DMR (Dossier Kingdom Relations)



Desishon 2023 a ser krea pa "Nos Pueblo, Pa Pueblo" di Bonaire pa tin akses na tur informashon i un diskushon habrí informal i ANÓNIMO.

Desishon 2023 was created by "We the People, For the People" of Bonaire to have access to all information and an open, informal, and ANONYMOUS discussion.

Desishon 2023 is gemaakt door "Wij, het volk, voor het volk" van Bonaire om toegang te hebben tot alle informatie en een open, informele en

www.Desishon2023.com

Dia di Rincon returns

Bonaire's Karnaval celebration has ended, and it is time to move forward to what Bonaireans say is the biggest festival of the year, Dia di Rincon.

This year the organizers are going all out by returning to a month-long celebration of cultural events preceding the big day on April 30.

In a press conference at Chichi Tan Museum in Rincon on Feb. 24, Xenah Cecilia said, "We are really making it a true cultural celebration this year by returning to the past."

Beginning March 25, an invitation to Rincon Day will be sent out to other islands and this year various competitions will return including the songwriting/singing contest and Rincon Day pageant.

Various organizations will be charged with setting up historical demonstrations of breadmaking, foods, medicine, house construction, toy making and representations of the Simadon harvest. Visit the website DiadiRincon.org for details.

Photo/story Julie Morgan



Dia di Rincon organizers gather at Chichi Tan Museum in Rincon to announce plans to date for a 'grand' Rincon Day 2023.

Nos Zjilea Simadon -The harvest festival

With the traditional harvest season of Simadon beginning, the February edition of Nos Zjilea at Mangazina di Rei featured farmer Bernardo Emerenciana. This year the Simadon festival will last from March 25 until April 30.

Bernardo Emerenciana explained how maishi chikitu (maize/sorghum) was harvested in the past. The maize was planted in October and harvested from February – May, a time period known as the Simadon harvest. Neighbors, friends and relatives literally lent a hand as there was no machinery to do the work.

In the early days the maize farmers would lay down a tarp and 'stomp' the maize until the seeds would fall off onto the tarp. The stalks and leaves were sep-



Mangazina di Rei experience coordinator Izain Mercera (L) translates Bernardo Emerenciana's (R) presentation about the maize/ sorghum harvest.

arated and used to feed the goats or other livestock. Once the seeds were removed,

they were cleaned and ground into a flour which was measured with a 10 x 10 x 10

cm box called a Kana. The maize /sorghum flour was stored at Mangazina di Rei and then distributed to the government workers/slaves.

Emerenciana had several bags of the maize/sorghum flour for sale after his presentation.

Guests enjoyed live music from Nel & his Gang and Kulturando along with cultural dancers Monique and Donny Winklaar. Local craft artists and plants were available for sale along with fresh homemade food from the Mangazina kitchen.

Nos Zjilea is held the last Saturday of the month with a unique cultural presentation, local music and food. Visitors can enjoy a visit to the Mangazina museum to learn even more about Bonaire culture.

The next Nos Zjilea will be Saturday, March 25. Information on the next edition will be available on the Mangazina di Rei Facebook page and in *The Bonaire Reporter*.

Photo/story Julie Morgan

eZone celebrates 10 years

Fielmich & sons, agent for eZone international purchases and shipping celebrated 10 years of success on Bonaire with a party on February 23.

Bart and his son Carl organized live music, a brass band, fully costumed drum band and twirlers to entertain and thank their loyal customers.

Guests enjoyed drinks and snacks before Bart and Carl announced three big prize winners: First place, Melissa Abdul won a weekend at Delphins Resort; second, Rhoderick Djaoen received din-

ner for two at Chefs and third, Madelin Perdomo Pinedo won a \$100 credit at eZone.

eZone Bonaire has won awards on three separate occasions in the eZone company since beginning in 2013. In 2015, Fielmich and Son's was awarded most promising, in 2018, Bart was named #1 out of 25 eZone agents and this year Bonaire eZone picked up third place of all locations.

Bart said, "If you have a dream, you can make it happen."

Photo/story Julie Morgan



Bart Fielmich (L) and son Carl award Rhoderick Djaoen the second place prize of dinner for two at Chefs.

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Piss and Vinegar

by Gijs Borsten

The Faustian closeout of Bonaire: it's here

In June, 2021, a delegation of Bonaire officials took part in the 'Miami return to Sail Summit', a cruise show organized by the Florida Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA), founded by the 23 assorted cruise ship companies sailing the Caribbean. At the time, the cruise industry tried, after Covid, to restore the reputation cruise ships got during the pandemic as boosters of the disease - floating petri dishes - and as luxury prisons once an infection was discovered.

Purpose of the delegation's Miami visit was, according to deputy Hennyson Thielman, to 're-establish the connection, and to communicate Bonaire's new vision on cruise tourism in accordance with its Tourism Recovery Plan'. The number of large cruise ships visiting Bonaire was to be reduced, and the 'visitor-quality' was to be increased, by introducing smaller ships carrying wealthier passengers, interested in the island's nature and/or culture. Blue Destination, remember?

They returned with flying banners and roaring drums, although no specific details were given (transparency is predominantly absent in Bonaire's politics). The trip had apparently been a tremendous success. At an unspecified moment the head tax would go up from \$2 to \$3.50 to \$10, and only smaller and cleaner ships were to dock on Bonaire. As an extra incentive, the cruise ship companies promised – a fact that gives every sensible person the living creeps - to create a 'Go Local' concept. They probably meant that the island was to be annexed completely, or at least converted to an image of the Bonaire the crusaders have in their heads. Like a Disney World for grown-ups, with plenty of opportunities for the industry to increase their already obscene earnings.

Well, the unspecified moment has arrived. The Head Tax went up to \$10 on Jan. 1, and, per mid April, only one ship per day will be allowed to dock (unless, of course, there are more). They won't be smaller, and the passengers are still of the low budget type, but what the heck.

I'm sorry to say, but I think the efforts of the Bonairean delegation, though heroic (and a fun opportunity to do some serious shopping at the Hialeah Walmart) have proven a complete failure. They didn't get a penny more than the industry allowed them to get. They were played like puppets.

Face the facts, Bonaire is a tiny island with a \$75 million budget and no local representative whatsoever bright enough to form a worthy adversary to the cruise industry. The delegation, sadly, didn't realize they were underqualified. They thought they did a great job, and that's just because that's what the cruise industry wanted them to think. But, they sold Bonaire's beauty and uniqueness to the devil.

The assorted cruise companies represented by the FCCA, featuring a net worth of about \$220 billion (slightly less than Finland's GNP, and about 2,935 times Bonaire's budget) have learned to elevate their manipulation of the Caribbean islands to a scientific level. Their employees, richly adorned with PhD's in marketing, psychology and every other discipline necessary, boast all the qualities to have delegations of poor small islands like Bonaire's for breakfast. So, they got precisely what they wanted, and we got conned. They don't care for Bonaire's beauty. They only care about their profits. And they're good at it. The cruise market is one of the most profitable industries in the world.

The celebrated Head Tax increase is nothing more than a handout. In 2018, Bermuda charged \$63, the Bahama's \$43, the BVI charged \$18, Jamaica \$15, and Puerto Rico \$13,25. Compare those numbers to the Alaskan harbors, charging at least \$50, and Cambridge Bay (Canada), US\$75. I repeat, in 2018. In general, the Head Tax on tickets for Caribbean cruises represent 14% of the ticket fee. For cruises docking in harbors in the US,

it's 33% (data: tweeklynews.com). The difference, the level of organization.

Practically every cruise ship company sailing the Caribbean is a FCCA-member and is thus represented by an army of well-paid specialists, hired to manipulate the destination islands into sacrificing their natural beauty to the cheap hordes flooding them. The reward, a fee, like a toddler getting a lollipop.

The islands lack two vital faculties to deal with the industry: knowledge and organization. All destination islands act individually, and not one of them has the power, nor a clue, how to oppose them and how far they can go negotiating without the ships leaving.

The only approach towards the cruise companies should be one of an organized resistance supported by a thorough knowledge of the market and a bunch of merciless lawyers. Thus, the only solution opposing the domination of the cruise ship industry is creating a CARICOM-like conglomerate (the 'Caribbean Community and Common Market') of the Caribbean islands victimized, and hiring, collectively, a bunch of mercilessly qualified negotiators.

Don't tell yourself we need the cruise ships for the money they generate. That's sheer nonsense. It's the other way around. They need us, the Caribbean islands, to air their obese payload and to boost their earnings. We provide a service they need; they have to pay for it. Simple. So, get together, get organized and find someone to deal for you. You can't do it on your own.



Gijs, originally from Leiden (NL), has been living on and off on Bonaire for about twenty years. He has no clear focus, and loves to be surprised by actors in politics and administration. Originally into The Fine Arts, then a career in (forensic) accounting, then a PhD in German Philology, now operating rake & shovel at Mangasina The Storehouse.

Bonaire's reef and its fish

continued from page 3

coming back and are about the same as in 94'," said Roberts.

(Grazing fish like parrotfish and algae eating sea urchins are extremely important for the survival and growth of reefs.)

Coral reefs worldwide are suffering more from the collective impact of climate change than almost any other ecosystem on the planet. Major pressures are coastal development and pollution. Local pressures include population, infrastructure management, tourists, coral abuse, sewage treatment and run-off.

The scientists say that climate change temperatures which have caused major coral bleaching in past years are much less of an issue than the coral reef diseases. The diseases derive from multiple causes including seawater pollution which makes the corals more susceptible to disease.

Meesters said, "If we make the environment healthy, it is more able to withstand stress. If it is already stressed and having too warm water, then it can't be healthy. Reduce the local pressure then it is more resilient to global pressure. It sounds very logical but if you aren't healthy then you get sick and have problems."

According to Meesters, last year Roy Martina, R&O director, requested help from the Netherlands for rainwater management. A project is now in development, but it is another waiting game.

Meester explained that ultimately all the solutions have to happen on the land. There needs to be a system to catch the water and sediment. In the past when it rained, the water flowed into the Salinas where it was slowed down allowing the sediment



Rare sighting of a Tiger Grouper on Bonaire's west side.

to sink to the bottom. Some salina areas have been developed or have filled with sand from runoff attributed to development and grazing goats.

"The priority is to fix what we know. We need to have effective sewage treatment and develop in ways where there isn't runoff. I think ... is the problem is getting worse very fast – conditions are deteriorating – just like climate change we have to deal with this fast, we can't wait another 10 years. Luxury of time is now gone, but the thinking is we've got plenty of time. Science is all about pointing out what the obvious is, accelerated pressures require accelerated response," said Roberts.

"I think it is very hard when you're faced with bigger problems than local. The only thing we can guarantee is that if we do give up on management they will go to hell. Future generations will not forgive us for abandoning coral reefs in their hour of need," said Roberts. "We have worked all over the world and the park [STINAPA] is a world class effort. In 94, they were protecting both land and sea... and are still at the forefront of efforts globally. Hats off, it is actually a world-class management effort to look after the environment. They have been in charge for a long time and the reefs are healthier than in other parts of the Caribbean."

Meesters, Roberts and Hawkins first came to Bonaire in the early 1990's on different projects and now after almost 30 years their individual research is ongoing. All three are a part of the MaCoBios team working independently on the project collecting and analyzing data to see how the coral reef community has changed.

Story/Photos Julie Morgan

Make Bonaire Accessible

by Ria Evers-Dokter
Old but not Dead.

Carnival is over and Ash Wednesday has come and gone. We can look back on a lot of activities and many happy people. After all the sadness and loneliness that was caused by Covid 19, the feeling of freedom was wonderful.

Just like before Covid, islanders who live abroad came back to their beloved island to celebrate with their friends and families.

And maybe it was because of all this happiness that carnival had never looked more colorful and beautiful.

I have always wanted to participate in a carnival group. But somehow, I never got the chance, till this year. The “Zorg & Welzijn Group” celebrated their 40 years of existence and closed a series of festivities with a Jump Up on Friday last week. The foundation “Akse-so” was invited to join the fun. And since I form part of the “60 + Wednesday-group” that gathers every week in Sentro di Bario Nort di Saliña, I was one of the first who raised a hand when we were asked, ‘would we like to join.’

Everything was well organized. We were asked for our specific needs and got our tastefully decorated T-shirts on Thursday.

I am not able to walk such a long distance, so I had

asked to borrow a wheelchair and Bonaire Mobility Services and RoRo very gracefully lent me one!

The person who was supposed to push me in my chair could not make it, but her absence did not cause a problem because “Akse-so” had many people to volunteer.

It was a sight for sore eyes. At 6 o’clock we all gathered at Parke Tului. I don’t think I have ever seen such a large group of elderly together to participate in a Jump Up. Mind you one walks and dances the whole route!

We had our own music, carnival-tumba’s from the 70 and 80’s, so everybody could sing along. And for a bit of extra pep there were some good old Calypsos to enjoy. The boulevard had public at both sides and you could really see and feel that everybody loved our group. At first, they watched us a bit skeptically... but when they saw and heard us, everybody smiled, sang and danced along.

I don’t know what happens to a person when participating in such an event. At first you are kind of shy and don’t know how to act. But we all did not feel like showing the elderly behavior. We all felt young again and sang and danced our hearts out. I must admit, I was happy to be safely in that wheelchair.

If you don’t believe it... there are many pictures taken. We all gathered at Wilhelminaplein to “cool down,” have a few more snacks and a drink. Everybody had fun. When it was time to go home and rest, we could think back with a broad smile.

See you again next year! Once more we have showed that we are a force to be reckoned with. We are old, but not dead.



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.

Join the Walk-a-thon, March 5, 2023



Directional Flags are posted along the entire route so you won’t get lost and you can ask for or get assistance along the way. The Red Cross, selected walk-a-thon board members and volunteers will be stationed along the route to keep everyone safe. For more info contact 796-0909 /525-7080 <https://www.facebook.com/SpecialOlympicsBonaire/>

It’s that time again to support Bonaire’s very special Special Olympics athletes who will be traveling in May to compete in the World Special Olympics in Berlin, Germany.

The Walk-a-thon is set for Sunday, March 5. Walkers and bikers start their 30 kilometer journey at White Slave and finish it in Rincon. Bikers will leave at 5 a.m. and walkers will follow at 5:05 a.m.

Transportation to and from the route is available. Participants will meet at the Kralendijk Municipal Stadium for free transportation to the starting point. Buses will leave the Playa Stadium for White Slave at 4:10, 4:20 and 4:30 a.m. Then, at the end of the route, buses will leave Rincon at 3:30 p.m. to return people and bikes to Playa.

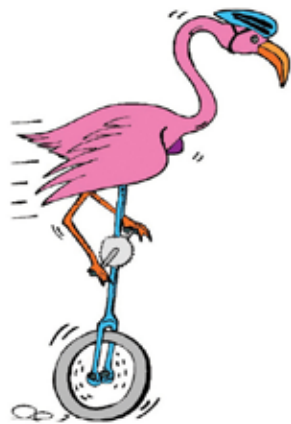
Registration is only \$15; included is a t-shirt, water, fruit and a breakfast courtesy of the Lions Club. Drinks and snacks will be stationed along the route for participants.

Pick up your T-shirt at the Special Olympics office (behind the big Catholic church in Playa) on Friday, March 3, 5-7



p.m. and March 4 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Walk-a-thon sponsors this year: Ennia, Guardian Group, WEB Bonaire, Playa Trading, Indebon, Krioya Paint, Wega di Number. Photos Julie Morgan

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Volunteer for BON DOET, March 10 & 11, 2023

On March 10 and 11, 2023, the BON DOET TEAM, in collaboration with the Oranje Fonds, will once again organize the largest volunteer event on Bonaire, BON DOET. In two days, dozens of jobs are carried out at foundations and associations and everyone is invited to participate. Registration is easy. You will find all 62 projects and the number of volunteers needed for each at:

<https://www.bondoet.com/en/all-jobs>

Most projects are on land, but one underwater project is the Fishing Line Clean-up at North Pier. They will meet 9 a.m. at Dive Inn. Hosts Dive Friends Bonaire will sponsor the air tanks (INT). You must bring your dive qualification cards, Marine Park tag, shears/line cutters and mesh bag. Permission has been granted by the Harbour Master but diving under this pier is entirely at your own risk. You can register for the fishing line clean up with BON DOET at

<https://www.bondoet.com/en/node/741>



Fishing line collected from the sea,
thanks to past clean ups by STCB volunteers.
Photo STCB.

BONDOET is organized by

The BON DOET TEAM organizes BON DOET on Bonaire and supports all participants; NGO's and Volunteers. Contact us today. Please feel free to call us at +599 785 4306 or e-mail us at bondoetteam@gmail.com. Visit: www.facebook.com/bonairedoet.

The Oranje Fonds spends around €30 million euros each year supporting organizations and initiatives that strengthen social cohesion in the Netherlands and the Caribbean part of the Kingdom. For more information visit www.oranjefonds.nl

NGO Platform Bonaire is a support point for foundations and associations as well as a volunteer center. NGO Platform helps year round with project proposals, grant petitions, promotion, administration and lots more. For more information visit www.ngobonaire.org.

Hasi bon, pasa bon! Nos ta on!



ROFFAREEF moves forward



Sander van Lopic

Sander van Lopic, Sr. Aquarist at Rotterdam Zoo returned to Bonaire to check on his RoffaReef fish breeding system that could very well be the answer to more fish in our oceans. The prototype has been stationed off the Pelican boat at Sand Dollar Resort since last fall. (see Reporter story Dec. 21 Issue 25)

On February 23, Sander presented an introduction and update on the project at Dolphins Resort.

Van Lopic says without the support of the Rotterdam Zoo, I would be nowhere.

The fishy idea began as a way to breed fish for the zoo's aquarium rather than purchase them.

Van Lopic said, "85 percent of all fish in captivity have never been bred."

The project is supported not only by the zoo but also World Wildlife Fund (WWF) which made the open-ocean prototype efforts in Bonaire possible.

Dive Friends Sand Dollar and STINAPA have helped out locally providing aid with people-power and support when needed.

This type of project has never been done before so everything required in the prototype is homemade.

The idea is to catch the eggs when the fish spawn by using a special homemade collection net with reservoir. The eggs are placed in the floating solar powered fish breeder to grow. Unfortunately, no one knows what the collected eggs are until they are matched to known DNA samples in a 'homemade' lab on the island or returned to

the zoo lab in Rotterdam.

Van Lopic said, "We don't know which egg goes with each fish so we are on an 'eggspedition.'"

So far, they have identified razorfish, wrasse, surgeonfish, garden eels and parrotfish.

Van Lopic plans to return to Bonaire in September for more work on the project.

To learn more about RoffaReefs log on to YouTube and watch this video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-jiOu-AYfn-Q> or visit roffareefs.com/Bonaire-pilot/

NOBO has produced RoffaReef DoNature tags that can help fund this project to support our reefs. The tags are available at all Dive Friends locations for only \$10.

Photo/story Julie Morgan



Program provides animal awareness for kids

DierenLot Kids, in collaboration with STINAPA, NOS TV, animal aid organizations and the public body of Bonaire, have made an educational television program about the animals on Bonaire. In the eight-part series, Bonairean children between the ages of 14 and 16 visit various animal aid organizations to learn more about the animals on our island.

On Feb. 27 the project was presented for attendees with short sequences from the program and the DierenLot Kids Doeboek with program related fun facts and assignments. Content will also be discussed in groups 7 and 8 of primary school. Project goal is to help raise awareness about Bonaire animals and this help reduce animal suffering.

The program is available to view at <https://www.dier.nu/dierenlot-kids> and the doeboek can be downloaded via: <https://www.dier.nu/uploads/pdf/print-dierenlot-doeboek-1-40-vdproof.8a3c6c.pdf>



Selibon opens new waste separation station in Tera Kòrá

Selibon NV installed the island's fourth Waste Separation Station to supplement those at Hato, Rincon and Amboina. The station, located Tera Kòrá, is a container where people can return plastic, cardboard, cans and glass separately. The station is on the corner of Kaya Valdivia and Kaya Monseigneur Nieuwindt. Selibon will place more of these containers in other neighborhoods to encourage the separation of waste for recycling on Bonaire. DMR

Invasive seagrass and native upside-down jellyfish are battling for space

Researchers from Wageningen University & Research and the University of Amsterdam report on a fascinating case of competition between an animal and an invasive plant. In tropical ecosystems, photosynthesizing organisms are continuously competing for space and light. The invasive seagrass *Halophila stipulacea* has been very successful in new habitats both in the Mediterranean and Caribbean seas.

The seagrass can quickly colonize new habitats because small fragments break off, remain viable and spread via currents. In the new paper [Battle for the mounds: Niche competition between upside-down jellyfish and invasive seagrass](#) published in the scientific journal *Ecology*, the researchers report on their discovery that the invasive seagrass uses little mounds - created by burrowing animals as shrimp or seacucumbers - as a new habitat to settle and expand from. The mounds provide new space with sufficient light, opening up the dense meadows of native seagrass where the invasive seagrass otherwise cannot settle. From there, they observed that the invasive seagrass can spread.

High and open locations are in demand

But the researchers also found that this



Photo: Eric Wurz

can cause problems for native species. “The upside-down jellyfish (*Cassiopea* spp) lies upside down because it has photosynthetic algae in its tentacles. Therefore, these organisms also need light and prefer open spaces such as these mounds created by burrowing animals,” according to Fee Smulders of Wageningen University & Research, and lead author of the study. “Msc student Naomi Slikboer

recorded the presence of both invasive seagrass and upside-down jellyfish on many of these mounds on the island of Curaçao. She found that often the invasive seagrass pushes the upside-down jellyfish out of these habitats over time.”

Jellyfish move away more often

This probably increases the energetic costs for the jellyfish as it has to move more often due to rapid overgrowth of

H. stipulacea. Additionally, the authors hypothesize that the interplay between invasive seagrass and burrowing mounds will lead unstable, dynamic seagrass meadows, unfavorable for valuable native seagrass species. Smulders: “We need to keep a close watch on this invasive seagrass and investigate the impact on both native species as well as the seascape patch dynamics in Caribbean seagrass meadows.”

The DCNA

The Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) supports science communication and outreach in the Dutch Caribbean region by making nature related scientific information more widely available through amongst others the Dutch Caribbean Biodiversity Database, DCNA’s news platform BioNews and through the press. This article contains the results of one of those scientific studies but the study itself is not a DCNA study. No rights can be derived from the content. DCNA is not liable for the content and the in(direct) impacts resulting from publishing this article.

[Wageningen Environmental Research](#)

Reef Glimpses

by Dee Scarr

A Post-Karnaval Trash Quiz

Note: more than one choice may be correct – or none of the choices may be correct

1. Which of the following animals can be trapped in tires or other smooth-sided containers?

- a. dolphins
- b. marine turtles
- c. hermit crabs
- d. slipper lobsters

2. Which of the following have been found trapped in a discarded mop?

- a. sponge crabs
- b. sea cucumbers
- c. bar jacks
- d. goldentail moray

3. Which of the following have been found entangled in fishing line?

- a. brain coral
- b. triton trumpet snail
- c. marine turtles
- d. frogfish

4. Which animal can’t swim backwards, and could be trapped in the pocket of a pair of pants lying underwater?

- a. green moray
- b. great white shark
- c. reef squid
- d. goatfish

5. Which of the following could be smothered by a towel or t-shirt, a plastic bag, or even cardboard?

- a. bar jack
- b. star coral
- c. rope sponge
- d. creole wrasse

6. Which of the following is most likely to injure a diver who has good buoyancy control?

- a. sea wasp
- b. batfish



Lionfish, Photo Julie Morgan.

- c. jumping pillar coral
- d. sea anemone

7. A wetsuit would not prevent a sting from which of the following?

- a. sea wasp
- b. fireworm
- c. lionfish
- d. aquatic mosquitoes

8. The touch-me-not sponge is so named because:

- a. it’s astonishingly fragile; one touch can cause the entire sponge to perish
- b. barely touching one turns your fingers bright purple for a week, which informs Bonaire National Marine Park Rangers (and everyone else) of what you did. There’s no respect for the Purple Fingers of Fines.
- c. they’re harvested for sale as Sea Sponges
- d. barely touching one causes your fingers to itch or burn like crazy

9. Which of the following is most closely related to sea cucumbers?

- a. sea hares
- b. longspined urchins
- c. sargassum weed
- d. tube sponges

10. Which of the following are venomous?

- a. lionfish
- b. moray eels
- c. manta rays
- d. comb jellies

11. Which of these is most closely related to octopuses?

- a. sea stars
- b. barnacles
- c. oysters
- d. spiders



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.”

ANSWERS:

1. C. Hermit crabs cannot swim (with or without their shells). (B. I once saw a little turtle entangled in tire steel belting, but it broke free easily.)
2. A. The one time I found a mop underwater, two sponge crabs were stuck in it.
3. A, B, and C for sure.
4. D. Goatfish.
5. B and C.
6. A. Sea wasps hover in the water column and are often difficult to see; even divers in full suits can get stung on their faces or hands.
7. C. Lionfish spines can go right through a wetsuit. No matter how cute you might think they are, don’t hug them.
8. Happily, not A. B would be fun but it’s also incorrect. C is definitely not so, because D is correct.
9. Sea cucumbers are animals, in the same group as the brittle stars, sea stars, and urchins, so B.
10. Only A. Morays, manta rays, and comb jellies are not venomous.
11. It always amazes me that the answer is C, oysters.

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. Any one 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://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.)

Feb. 11 - Mar. 11	Terramar Art Exhibition, Renske Herder
Saturday, March 4	Bario Festival Tera Kòrà - 6 - 10 p.m. Tourists can get acquainted with Bonaireans, the island's culture and its products. With music groups Grupo Eso, Foyan Boys, Brass Band The Boys and a folkloric dance group. Entrance is free.
Sunday, March 5	Special Olympics Walk-a-thon. 5 a.m. \$15 Start: White Slave Huts Finish: Pasadia Kariño, Rincon. T-shirt pick up: El Mundo, 7 Kaya Grandi, Kralendijk Friday, March 3, 5 to 7 p.m. Saturday, March 4, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. contact: Tirza (+599) 701-1010; Earon (+599) 796-1010 Cyclovia Kids Street Park Wilhelminaplein 4 - 7 p.m. Free monthly event. Children can bike, scooter, skate or skateboard. Kaya Grandi is partially closed. Expect a bouncy castle, music and a hot dog cart.
Monday, March 6	Chamber of Commerce (KvK) election debate with party leaders 6 p.m. at the Courtyard by Marriott Bonaire Dive Resort. The debate will be broadcast in the media on television and Facebook. Following the debate, the Chamber of Commerce will share statements party leaders made during the debate.
Friday & Saturday March 10 - 11	Bon Doet , when the whole island volunteers. Register at https://www.bondoet.com
Saturday, March 11	Fishing Line Clean Up North Pier, as part of Bon Doet! Register with Bon Doet https://www.bondoet.com/en/node/741 Meet 9 a.m. at Dive Inn. Hosts Dive Friends Bonaire kindly sponsor our air tanks (INT). Bring your dive qualification cards, Marine Park tag, shears/line cutters and mesh bag. Permission has been granted by the Harbour Master but diving under this pier is entirely at your own risk.
Sunday, March 12	Clean Coast Bonaire. 8-10 a.m. Te Amo Beach. Donate your time. Work as a citizen scientist to collect marine litter & data. https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=clean%20coast%20bonaire
Mar. 24 - Apr. 2	First Annual Bonaire International Sport Week .
Mar. 25 - Apr. 30	Simadon harvest festival See "Nos Zjilea" page
Saturday, March 25	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. Shopping Night in Kralendijk 6-9 p.m
Friday, Mar. 31	Rincon Cruise Market 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the corner of Kaya Rincon and Kaya Commerce. Local art, music, and food Taste of Bonaire 2023 (Sports & Culture) 6 - 10 p.m. @ Wilhelmina Park. Food, culture, local handicrafts. Signature dishes of well-known restaurants offered at special prices.
Sunday, April 2	Cyclovia Kids Street Park Wilhelminaplein 4 - 7 p.m. Free monthly event. Children of all ages can bike, scooter, skate or skateboard. Kaya Grandi is partially closed. Expect a bouncy castle, music and a hot dog cart
April 7 - 10	King & Queen of the Caribbean windsurfing event Sorobon at Frans Paradise. Junior & Professional Slalom and Freestyle contest. April 7 Good Friday Public Holiday. Much is closed. April 9 Easter Sunday Public Holiday. Much is closed. April 10 Easter Monday Public Holiday. Much is closed.
Saturday, April 8	Kings of Krioyo. Kabuya Ranch. Listen to vibrant Krioyo music.

Coming Up

Second Annual Bonaire Rum Week, June 12 - 17. Tastings, parties, bartending, competitions, dinners & cigars. For more information visit <https://www.bonaierumweek.com>. For questions, contact.rum@caribjournal.com

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 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.: March 6th - Divi Resort, March 13th - VIP Diving email: Caribbean.Islands@mantatruster.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.

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* online update pages.

Election Day March 15.

April 11-15. DUO on Bonaire to talk with prospective students who want to study in the Netherlands and their parents.

Personal Income Tax May 15.

Tentative cruise ship schedule

DATE:	CRUISE SHIP	TIME	PIER	CAPACITY
Wed. Mar. 1	CARNIVAL MAGIC	0800-1600	South	3646
Thurs. Mar. 2	NORWEGIAN EPIC	0630-1300	South	5186
	SIRENA	1300-2000	North	824
Sat. Mar. 4	NORWEGIAN DAWN	0500-1200	North	3000
Sun. Mar. 5	SIRENA	0600-1300	North	824
	ENCHANTED PRINCESS	1200-2000	South	3660
Mon. Mar. 6	VISION OF THE SEAS	0800-1800	North	2435
Wed. Mar. 8	NORWEGIAN JEWEL	0600-1300	South	3000
Thurs. Mar. 9	NORWEGIAN EPIC	0600-1300	South	5186
Fri. Mar. 10	MARELLA EXPLORER 2	0600-1400	North	2253
Sun. Mar. 12	SIRENA	1300-2000	North	824
Mon. Mar. 13	ROTTERDAM	0700-2000	South	2668
Tues. Mar. 14	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	1300-2000	North	2417
Wed. Mar. 15	CELEBRITY EQUINOX	0700-1600	South	2852
Thurs. Mar. 16	CARNIVAL SPIRIT	0800-1600	North	2680
Fri. Mar. 17	SILVER DAWN	0800-2300	North	623
Sat. Mar. 18	NORWEGIAN JEWEL	0700-1700	North	3000
Sun. Mar. 19	COSTA FASCINOSA	0800-2000	North	3800
Tues. Mar. 21	AIDAPERLA	0800-1800	South	3268
Wed. Mar. 22	EXPLORER OF THE SEAS	0800-2300	South	3840

The Bonaire Reporter Mar. 1 - Mar. 15, 2023

Creating optimal health

by Irene da Cunda Costa

Digestion and stress

Digestive problems have different origins. It is important to consider not only the food we eat, but also other factors that may be intervening to alter our digestion.

Digestion is the process through which ingested food is transformed into assimilable nutrients suitable for the body's requirements. Food is broken down through mechanical and enzymatic action. This process begins even before we eat food, since when we think about food, see it or smell it, our body starts preparing for digestion. For digestion to work correctly it is very important that the energy supplied to the digestive system through the blood circulation is adequate.

When we have digestive disorders, many times we blame only what we eat. Although food itself is very important, digestion can be affected by both acute and chronic stress. How does this happen? During a stressful event, certain mechanisms are activated that prepare the organism to respond to the perceived

threat. The ancestral response to stress is always the same, no matter the nature of the stressful event, the body prepares to fight or flight. Respiratory rate, heart rate and blood pressure increase. There is a change in the blood flow, favoring the extremities, that is, arms to fight or legs to run, so the blood supply to the digestive and reproductive organs is decreased. All this happens under the command of our autonomous nervous system, that is, without the intervention of our will. The so-called sympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system has been launched. This branch of the nervous system is the one that keeps us alert and activated saving our lives in risky situations. When what is at stake is physical integrity, functions such as digestion and reproduction take second place in importance. Once the threatening event has been resolved, the body has its mechanisms to regulate itself and return to the previous state of balance. To restore balance the

antagonistic parasympathetic branch of the nervous system needs to be activated, the branch that favors digestion, social ties, and reproduction. But if we are living in chronic stress, the parasympathetic branch is not activated.

In the absence of adequate blood circulation to the digestive system, digestion can be altered in various ways. Examples of problems are stomach cramps, diarrhea, constipation, indigestion, inflammation, loss of appetite or increased appetite, irritable bowel syndrome, ulcers, and acid reflux, among others.

Anything that activates the parasympathetic branch of the nervous system before, during and after ingestion, will help with digestion. Practices such as mindful eating or functional breathing will help generate the best conditions for good digestion.

It is very important to manage our time well. Avoid over-packing your agenda. Learn to say no in order to dedicate the necessary amount of time to eating in a relaxed way. And if necessary, reserve a few extra minutes to do some functional breathing exercises before eating. These exercises can be used to stimulate re-

laxation and as an internal massage for our abdominal organs. During ingestion, mindful eating will help us connect deeply with the eating experience, from a sensory point of view and from a gratitude stance.

Another factor to consider when eating is the state of our internal dialogues. Mindfulness practices help to slow down the flow of our thoughts and to better capture their nature and patterns. Cognitive restructuring is a technique that helps us modify biases and irrational ideas that might cause stress. For, if we have concerns or unresolved issues that we have not been able to process yet, they could also interfere with digestion



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.

A Garden? Just Do It!

by Angliet, Nature Lover

Detox

Now that carnival has finished the fasting time has started.

Nowadays instead of 40 days of fasting, it's trendy to do a detox. If you call it a fasting or a detox, it's the same. It's a cleansing of the body. Some think that a cleansing is a must because of a whole year adding all kinds of stuff to the body. But science says that the body is well equipped to eliminate toxins. Your body does not actually require a diet to eliminate toxins but some strategies can support your body's natural detoxification system. You can help detox your body naturally with simple lifestyle adjustments. So detoxing with juices and all kinds of diets and expensive therapies is not really necessary. The liver takes care of cleansing the system. This doesn't mean that detoxing doesn't work, but if you have a healthy lifestyle with fresh food, enough sleep and enough water year round, the system is powerful enough to do its own self cleaning.

But if you still want to do something extra, look for certain plants we have here on Bonaire in our gardens or supermarkets: aloe, noni, lemon, broccoli, cauliflower, neem tea, ginger, cabbage, paksoi and rucola. Most important is to stay away from toxins like smoking, alcohol, drugs, sugar and fast food. When one has a healthy food diet, detoxing is unnecessary.

Some hints to detox if you still feel the need for it.

- Start the day on an empty stomach with warm water with lemon juice. Or add some ginger. It flushes out toxins from the body.

- Swap caffeinated drinks for green teas: mint; Tulsi; chamomile; Jasmin; Matcha; Himalayan or honey lemon.

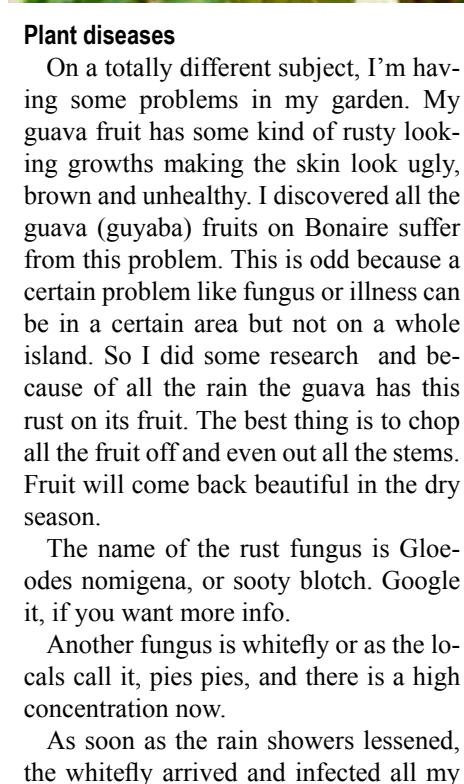
- And drink a lot of water.



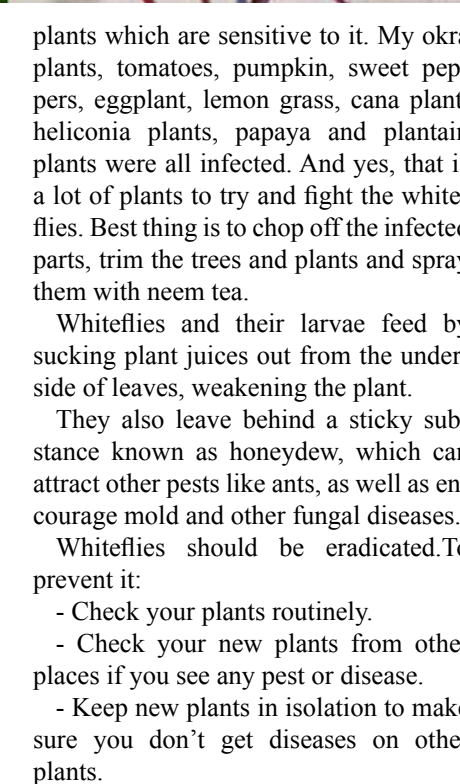
Heliconia



Wild Mandarin



Guyaba



Red Cotton

Plant diseases

On a totally different subject, I'm having some problems in my garden. My guava fruit has some kind of rusty looking growths making the skin look ugly, brown and unhealthy. I discovered all the guava (guyaba) fruits on Bonaire suffer from this problem. This is odd because a certain problem like fungus or illness can be in a certain area but not on a whole island. So I did some research and because of all the rain the guava has this rust on its fruit. The best thing is to chop all the fruit off and even out all the stems. Fruit will come back beautiful in the dry season.

The name of the rust fungus is Gloeodes nomigena, or sooty blotch. Google it, if you want more info.

Another fungus is whitefly or as the locals call it, pies pies, and there is a high concentration now.

As soon as the rain showers lessened, the whitefly arrived and infected all my

plants which are sensitive to it. My okra plants, tomatoes, pumpkin, sweet peppers, eggplant, lemon grass, cana plant, heliconia plants, papaya and plantain plants were all infected. And yes, that is a lot of plants to try and fight the whiteflies. Best thing is to chop off the infected parts, trim the trees and plants and spray them with neem tea.

Whiteflies and their larvae feed by sucking plant juices out from the underside of leaves, weakening the plant.

They also leave behind a sticky substance known as honeydew, which can attract other pests like ants, as well as encourage mold and other fungal diseases.

Whiteflies should be eradicated. To prevent it:

- Check your plants routinely.
- Check your new plants from other places if you see any pest or disease.
- Keep new plants in isolation to make sure you don't get diseases on other plants.

- Spray neem tea at least once a week. Whiteflies don't like this tea and it is also good against other fungi and bugs.

- A mixture of vinegar and water is also good. Spray in the morning and evening when the whiteflies are very active and repeat as needed.

- Prune and treat. Keeping the leaves pruned can be a good way to control a white fly population.

- Use a natural repellent. Grow strong smelling plants like the easy growing mexican mint, parsley, cilantro, onion, or any other aromatic plant. This can make whiteflies stay away.

- Due to their color, yellow sticky traps attract the whiteflies and they get stuck and die. There are usually eggs left on the undersides of the leaves so make sure to get rid of them as well.

- Use a mix of dish soap and water. Eight drops a liter is good but first try out a little bit on plants to make sure they don't die from it. If you notice leaf burns, dilute the mixture with more water or less soap. After a while, rinse the plant and the dead eggs will come off.

Extra maintenance is necessary to encourage them to thrive and can help reduce risk of all sorts of pests and diseases.

There is some work to do in your garden, start now, 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.

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Red Cats

Red cats, don't you love the beautiful red tabbies?

And did you know that there are four shades of red tabby - Sandy/Lemon, Ginger, Marmalade/Orange and Red?

Most red tabbies will be male with only 1/5 of red tabbies being female.

This is because the X-chromosome is responsible for that red tabby coloration. Female cats each have two X- chromosomes so they need to inherit the red gene from both their parents in order to have a red tabby coat color.

Male cats have XY chromosomes, so they only need to have the ginger gene passed on via the X-chromosome of the mother cat. That means that there's a higher chance of male cats being ginger.

At this moment we have 10 male red tabbies and three females at the shelter looking for a furr-ever home.

All of these beautiful red fur babies have had their vaccinations, are neutered



and ready to go.

There must be a perfect red cat for you amongst them!

Photo/story: Monique Degenaar

Pets of the Week

Hello dog lovers,

My name is Izzy. I'm a young lady of 1.5 years old and a very happy girl.

I like to cuddle, sleep on your lap and go for nice walks. I'm also good on my own sunbathing, sleeping in a nice breeze or just watching what others are doing.

I'm very good with other dogs young and old and I blend in very well. At the moment I have four friends and we eat together, play together and sleep together. But that is the shelter life. I really wish to have my own family, home and my own yard. All I have known in my short life is the life I'm living right now since I was 8 weeks old and I want more than this.

Are you the one who will help me further in life? I promise I will be your best girl for the rest of my life.

Photo/story: Sanne Attevelt

If you would like to meet our cats and dogs, please come to Animal Shelter Bonaire, Kaminda Lagun 26A. Open Mon-



day - 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

Police must stop killing dogs trainer says

Dog instructor Norbert Tadema accuses the police on Bonaire of wrongfully euthanizing, even shooting on site, dogs following biting incidents. In the past three months, 19 dogs have been euthanizing and 6 have been shot. "The police are not trained in dealing with dogs," Tadema says. "They immediately interpret territorial behavior as aggression."

Tadema emphasizes that he would especially like to help train the police in advance, then be available to advise them how to handle actual incidents. He says that on Bonaire most dog incidents by far involve a bite, not an attack. "Unfortunately, people are often afraid of dogs," he said. "Sometimes they try to keep the dog at a distance by throwing stones. This causes the dog to feel threatened and to defend itself. They do this by biting; it is a natural instinct."

Having a pet killed by the police is traumatizing, yet the owners have no choice and no recourse. Incidents are recorded at the police station, but the police will not tell the dog's owner what happened—except when a dog has caused serious injuries and the owner might be subject to prosecution.

Tadema says "The real cause is not being investigated. For example, whether a dog was kicked or, as recently stated in a police press release: someone started throwing stones, which is the same as throwing fuel on the fire." Tadema says he is submitting the complaint on behalf of a group of dog owners.

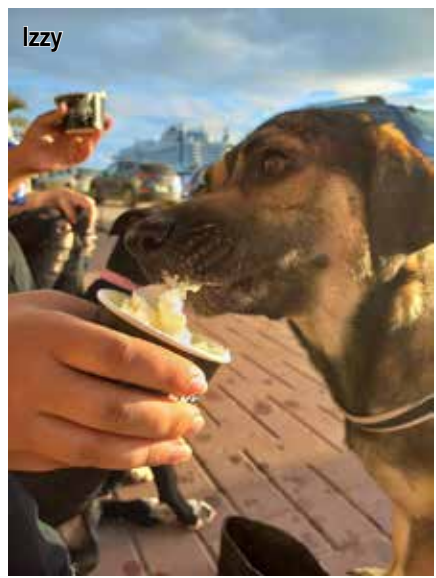
The police emphasize that they act according to the rules. "The main task of the police is to ensure safety," says a spokesman. "In case of an aggressive dog on the street, the police do their job by putting the dog to sleep. When it comes to an acute situation, the dog is immediately killed."

DMR (Caribbean Network)

Shelter News

Keep your dog healthy, happy and social!

Exercise for your dog is a very important part of making sure they stay healthy and happy. Incorporating socialization skills into an exercise routine is a win-win program. Walking your dog in social environments is not only good for your pet but it is also a great way to get your own exercise and meet and mingle with island residents. Whenever possible, Animal Shelter Bonaire staff and volunteers take a few of our Shelter residents off premises for a walk or for a swim where dogs are permitted to enter the sea. Recently, lucky ladies Otje, Fenny and Izzy enjoyed a lazy sunset stroll along the seaside boulevard where they mingled with passersby, other pets out for a walk, and enjoyed the sunset. As a reward for their good behavior, all three were treated to some delicious ice cream. All three of these lovely ladies are available for adoption. Stop by the Shelter and meet these sweet and social dogs.



Sunday March 5th, 5 a.m.

Start: White Slave Huts

Finish: Pasadia Kariño, Rincon

\$15 Fundraiser for Special Olympics, Bonaire

T-shirt pick up:

El Mundo, 7 Kaya Grandi, Kralendijk

Friday, March 3 5 to 7 p.m.

Saturday, March 4 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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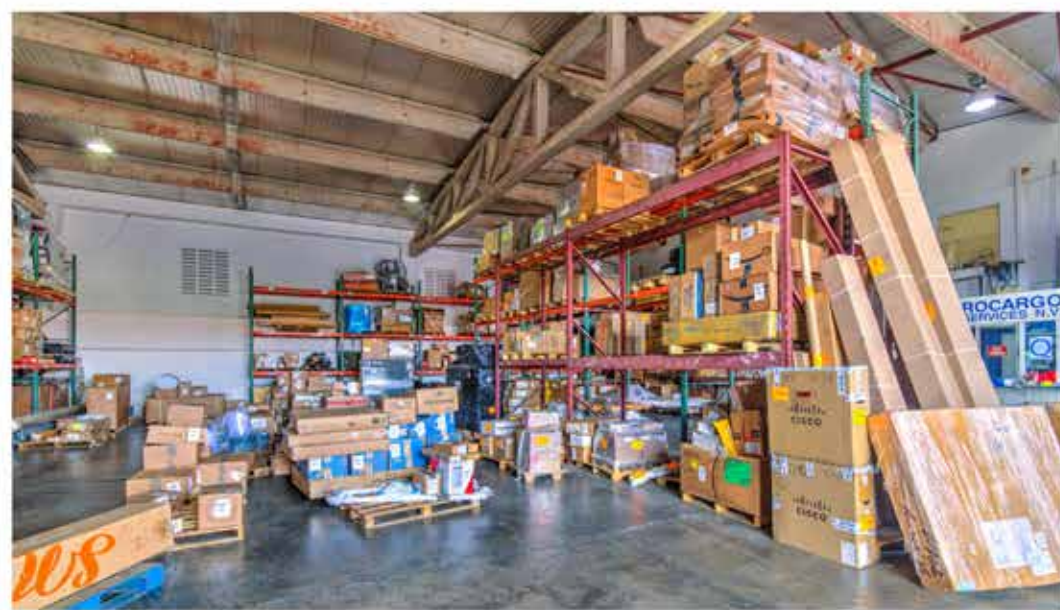
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