



Conservation Efforts with BMP partners  
Photos from Art in the Park Exhibition

## BMP reveals work and challenges

On April 6 at the Courtyard by Marriott STINAPA's Bonaire Marine Park (BMP) held the first of four platform meetings. They introduced their 2022 annual report, and addressed the Caribbean coral disease crisis. The estimated 60+ stakeholders included dive shop owners, managers, instructors, nature organizations and cruisers.

Judith Raming, BMP manager since August 2020, seemed surprised and grateful for the large turnout saying, "We want to hear the voice of the people who use the [marine] park. In the last few years, every time we organize a meeting people say, 'Hey I want to give feedback.' So, I hope we get a lot of feedback."

**BMP Annual Report 2022.** The author of the annual report is Kalli de Meyer, founding manager of BMP, 1991 – 2000 and executive director of DCNA (Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance) for 10 years. She presented a brief overview of the marine park and led the crowd through parts of the report that described its geographic scope. The report listed STINAPA's conservation goals in the coral reefs, dry forests, mangrove forest, wetland and seagrass beds.

A few of the major accomplishments in 2022 were: the 25-year contract to manage Rooi Lamoenchi; formal management signing for Frater's Park; a thriving Junior Ranger program; nature education curriculum in Bonaire schools, and nine new BMP rangers.

De Meyer asked the crowd what the work of the marine park is and what they appreciated

most. Answers included: care of the mooring buoys, reporting the dumping of sand where it doesn't belong, cleaning up, keeping people informed, research, sargassum cleanup, monitoring illegal fishing, lionfish control, rescues and wastewater management.

She added to the list: field work, education, communication, outreach, regulations, law enforcement, science, patrolling, search and rescue, hosting scientists and wildlife rescue.

The crowd in turn commented on the lack of safety enforcement regarding speeding in the mooring field, jet skis, illegal spear fishing, kids illegally fishing and a better help line for weekend emergencies. They asked:

Where the BMP rules/regulations are posted? Why the mooring fees were raised without first supplying services like trash bins, a dinghy dock and mooring reservation system? Why is toilet paper still being found in the mooring field regardless of the new regulations for wastewater?

Raming remarked on the wastewater problem saying, the Water Circle group was created to draw attention to the wastewater problem through information and education. We want to create awareness with the 'No dumping only pumping,' but it takes time.

**An overview and timeline of Bonaire's coral disease** and possible actions was given by BMP biologist Roxanne-Liana Francisca "One of the main problems is that it is not just a problem on Bonaire but everywhere... We don't know what the cause is and we can't diagnose it... there is a lot of debate going on right now. We can't take a sample and send it to the lab," said Francisca.

When the disease was first noticed July 2022 at Karpata, everyone was alerted. The site was closed in fear it was the SCTLD (Stoney Coral Tissue Loss Disease) that had affected all of Florida's coral reefs and was spreading throughout the Caribbean.

In March and February this year multiple types of coral were discovered at Carib Inn turning white and with spots. Since March 23, 24 sites have been monitored. The disease has been found at Calabas, Carib Inn, Cha Cha Cha, TeAmo, Karels Pier, 18th Palm, Windsock Bachelor's Beach and Something Special. Sick or already diseased corals are 48% more liable to be affected. To date 215 have died. The disease seems to occur in groups. Most affected are Maze, Flower and Massive Star Coral but a total of 14 species are showing infections.

"We can't say exactly where it started, either Calabas or Carib Inn; it is spreading in both directions," said Francisca.

To prevent further spread the BMP is considering closing some sites including WSNP.



Diseased Maze coral on Calabas Reef



## Bonaire has a new coalition government



(L-R) Four of nine elected council members: Junnywout Wout (Blue/MPB); Clark Abraham, Dany Crestian, Rolanda Hellburg-Makaai (Red/Demokrat); (center, Lt. Governor, Edison Rijna) (L-R) The remaining five elected council members: Daisy Coffee (Pink/M21); Hennyson Thielman (Blue/MPB); James Kroon; Simiona "Jona" Chirino Felida; Benito Dirksz (Green/UPB)

The Partido Demokrat (DP, "Reds") got the most votes in the election but will be the minority party in the new government. The Union Patriótico Bonaire (UPB, "Greens") and the Movimentu di Pueblo Boneriano (MPB, "Blues") have joined forces to form a governing coalition.

On March 29, the central electoral committee of the public entity appointed nine Island Council members based on the election results. They are shown in the photo above.



Jolinda Craane

Tentatively, the three seats on the new Executive Council will be filled by Kroon (UPB, Social Affairs), Thielman (MPB, Spatial Planning and Development), and Jolinda Craane (Finance and Economy). Craane, described as a new talent in the UPB, has been serving as a Policy Advisor to the OLB. Her name was not on the ballot. The members of the coalition have announced they want to

appoint the new executive council before Dia di Rincon (April 30).

The coalition has published a list of seventeen "intentions." The two intentions topping their list are to slow down the arrival of migrants to the island and to set stricter rules for granting residence permits. The remaining items on the list are, predictably, things like supporting nature, alleviating poverty, repairing roads, protecting the island against climate change, and caring for animals. The coalition plans to refine their list in more detail over the next three to four months.

In related news, State Secretary Alexandra van Huffelen says the present island councils in the BES need to be enlarged. Too few councilors are tasked with too many responsibilities. She believes the council should be increased from nine to nineteen members in two steps, the first after the 2027 elections and the second after the 2031 elections. *DMR*

## Remember Chogogo?

A BES Administrative Jurisdiction Advisory Committee, tasked with sorting out the Chogogo legal tangle, presided over a hearing on March 30. It promised to report its recommendations to the Executive Council in two weeks—that is, by now. No recommendations have yet been announced, the executive council in power at that time no longer exists, and its replacement, which will be responsible for acting on the recommendations, has yet to be formed.

The central issue at this point seems to be whether the Public Body will act to collect the million dollar plus fine STINAPA levied against Sunny Side Exploitatie BV and Chogogo Bonaire OG BV. STINAPA charged the developers with building an illegal artificial beach with imported sand. STINAPA says the developer not only failed to get the required permit in advance, it also violated stipulations the permit would have contained.

At the hearing the Chogogo developers contended that a million dollars is a lot of money, considering the alleged violation. They also argued that the activities in question occurred above the high water line and therefore are none of STINAPA's business. That claim strikes the Bonairean ear as unreasonable and inaccurate, and arrogant as well.

The developers also insist they did have a permit. They point out that the Executive Council had granted them a last-minute

permit after the beach had already been developed. Otherwise the official opening of the resort would have to have been postponed.

The timing could not have been worse for the Executive Council, which was already under scrutiny for what the public saw as a series of go-along-get-along decisions that seemed always to stretch the rules to allow questionable developments. Those rulings also depended on the support of the lieutenant governor who, knowledgeable people said, had no authority to vote on development applications.

Moreover, waiting just around the corner was the disastrous approval of a building permit for Sunset Beach Resort. A 2-1 vote in the Executive Council to refuse the permit was announced as a 2-2 tie, broken by a hypothetical fifth vote, to approve the permit.

STINAPA argues that it has sole authority to rule on environmental impact issues, and it convincingly demonstrated that clout. It fined the Chogogo developers a million plus dollars, then later asked the court to order the OLB to enforce the fine. If the court decides the Chogogo developers have to pay, the new Executive Council will be responsible for collecting the money. *DMR*

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**The Reporter's Online Updates** bring you news that arrives between issues

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 Phone (+599) 796 4055  
 Email: [bonairereporter2019@gmail.com](mailto:bonairereporter2019@gmail.com)  
 Address: Box 603, Bonaire, Dutch Caribbean.

### The Bonaire Reporter Staff

Julie Morgan, Publisher  
 Production: Barbara Lockwood  
 Website: Michael Copini  
 Contributors: Angliet Baidjoe, Ria Evers-Dokter, Dee Scarr, Jane Madden-Disko, Don M. Ricks, Alan Zale, Caren Eckrich, Roxanne-Liana Francisca, Irene de Cunda Costa, Sanne Attevelt, Monique Degenaar, Kaj Schut, Wilma Nijland, Frank Bohm, Izain Mercera, Gijs Borsten, Gary Barrett, Mel McCombie  
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# I love my sewing machine

April on Bonaire is absolutely teeming with cultural events leading up to the big celebration of Dia di Rincon on April 30. And at every one of the festivities, you are sure to see Bonaire residents exchange their normal street clothes for the cultural dress of their ancestors.

But who is the creator behind these costumes? One such person is Micelle "Mimi" Lichtenberg, a 29-year resident of Rincon. Mimi has been hard at work on her sewing machine making cultural apparel since well before Carnaval in February and shows no sign of stopping until May 1.

Her training, skill and love for sewing came from her mother who made clothes for her children. At an early age, Mimi would help out doing the simple stuff like hemming. As her technique grew she began customizing clothes and later created apparel for herself and daughter.

Mimi said, "I've been making clothes for 41 years. I'm addicted to my sewing machines. I love fabrics and needles."

For Dia di Rincon she has orders for 97 dresses/outfits and has completed 48 plus an additional four for contestants at the recently held Dia di Rincon song contest Kanto Krioyo. Luckily Mimi has seven sewing machines, and they will be running pretty much non-stop from now until Rincon Day with the help of her daughter and granddaughter. Her son Jayztley inherited the family sewing gene and was always a big help. He is now studying in the Netherlands to be a fashion designer and has dreams to go to Paris.

Cultural apparel is not the only thing Mimi creates. About 10 years ago she began making dolls. She had taken a seminar to encourage people to start their own business and she thought, "I can make dolls."

"When I started making clothes for other people I gave them the leftover fabric and many said just keep it. I had boxes and boxes of fabric and after a while there



Micelle Lichtenberg says "Just call me Mimi."

was so much. It was just everywhere. I got the idea to make some dolls and soon there were dolls all over," said Mimi.

In addition to the cultural dolls, she creates small 'wish dolls' for peace and love, small coin bags, handbags, fabric covered bracelets, fabric portraits and embroidered wall art.

Mimi and her family lived in the Netherlands for

many years until her husband decided he wanted to move to Curaçao for a short time and then he wanted to move to Bonaire.

"I said, I'm not going, that was 29 years ago. I feel good on Bonaire now. I really feel at home," said Mimi.

She teaches sewing at JICN, Bonaire's prison, from Mon.- Fri., crafts with the elderly at Cocari, an elderly center in Rincon and teaches the occasional evening sewing class for adults. She hopes to expand to teaching children in the future.

On Rincon Day, Mimi's designs will be on display dancing through the streets. If you would like to purchase your own Mimi cultural doll or other craft work visit her Facebook page [Trinidad Lichtenberg](#), email - [micellelichtenberg@hotmail.com](mailto:micellelichtenberg@hotmail.com), or call +599-788-8615 or 599+717-2191. And on the last Saturday of most months, you can find her at Nos Zjilea at Mangazina di Rei.

Story/photos Julie Morgan



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# Ask Bob

## Bonaire real estate advice



**Are there any restrictions on foreign citizens buying Bonaire property? How long can I stay on Bonaire if I'm not a resident? Alan**

Hi Alan

Anyone may buy a property on Bonaire, you do not have to become a resident of the island. American and Dutch passport holders may stay on the island up to six months in a calendar year, passport holders from other countries are

limited to three months in a six month period, with the six months beginning at time of arrival on the island.

You don't need a visa to visit Bonaire if you are a passport holder from a country whose nationals are exempted from the visa requirement (this includes visitors from European Union countries and the United States.)

If you do need a visa, your time on the island is limited by the date on the visa.

Remember to always check the official regulations for your particular situation.

We look forward to seeing you on Bonaire!

*All the best,*  
*Bob Bartikoski,*  
*Re/Max Bonaire Broker/Owner*  
*Mobile: +599-786-7362*  
*US Toll Free: +1-866-753-2666*

**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**

If you want to immigrate to Bonaire you can start here:

<https://english.rijksdienstcn.com/immigration-naturalisation>

Application for permanent residency and instructions for US Citizens:

<https://english.rijksdienstcn.com/immigration-naturalisation/residence-application-for-us-citizens>

Application for permanent residency for all other countries except for US and The Netherlands:

<https://english.rijksdienstcn.com/immigration-naturalisation/application-for-residence-permit-other-nationalities>

## Creating optimal health

by Irene da Cunda Costa

### What is your personal Easter scent?

Easter falls during the spring, which for most of the northern hemisphere is the time of year when the cold, dark cloud of winter is exhaled and the fresh, aromatic wonders of springtime are reborn. Easter brings with it floral accents such as fresh gardenias and lilies – two of the most popular holiday flowers along with an abundance of other fresh flowers and fragrant plants. Here on Bonaire, Easter is a time for camping and barbecuing, so it comes with different smells. Depending on where we are and what the celebration is, distinctive smells will bring back memories and awaken emotions.

Religious rituals involving scents are rooted in many cultures around the world. In pre-Christian times, people burned incense to drive away demons. Celts and Germanic tribes celebrated incense burning at festivals. Medicine men and shamans sought a connection to the spiritual world in the rising smoke. In some churches incense is still burned

In India, the ancient science of Ayurveda, speaks about the deeper holistic science behind the exhilaration of senses when individuals come in contact with fragrances and experience its healing properties. The significance of fragrance in worship, as a vehicle of spiritual connection has been explained in classical Indian texts teaching to revere fragrances as divine gifts and agents of spiritual connection. Among the most important forms of fragrance in Hindu or Vedic spirituality is incense.

In Judaism, the sense of smell is considered holy. For them, when God created man, he blew into his nostrils the soul of life, and man became a living be-

ing. The site of our ability to appreciate scents became the very site where the soul entered the first human.

Early Christians avoided the use of incense as a way to differentiate their church from the worship styles of Judaism and other ancient religions. In the third century, Romans mandated incense offerings in worship of the Emperor, leading to the martyrdom of Christians who refused to participate. The 4th century was a turning point for the role of scent in the Christian church. That included the increasing use of incense, which became standard in Christian churches by the fifth century. Christian incense was sweet because of its connection with Jesus Christ's sacrifice. Through smell, human and divine could meet, not face-to-face as distinct realities, but intermingled in a communion of being. Sweet scents were a common metaphor for divine essence. Much later in Christian history, the Reformation would again cast incense aside and a focus on scents as inappropriate.

In the previous article I wrote about the importance of smell in relation to memory and emotions. The scents that surrounded you in your childhood during Easter time are intact in your memory. What is for your personal scent of Easter?



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

## Coffie wins Kanto Krioyo 2023

April 2 Rayshantaly Coffie won the first prize for the song contest, *Kanto Krioyo 2023*. At the competition ceremony, Coffie, formerly Miss Tourism Bonaire 2019, sang her song, *Den Koba' e huki tra'i seru*, to music composed by

Robertico Balentien.

The poem, written in Papiamentu, is on *The Reporter's* online update pages, but below, translated, are a few of the poignant lines that talk about the history of Rincon's name:



MC of the festival, Aime Ayubi of Live 99fm, joins Rayshantaly Coffie on stage. Photo Live 99fm. See Coffie's performance at:

<https://www.facebook.com/caribbean.vibe/videos/758498605877480>

**"I was raised always hearing that more than 500 years ago**

**Discoverers saw a dam, a hollow full of potential**

**They gave it the name Rincon for its location like a hollow, surrounded by hills, for the Bonairean behind the hill**

**"Then history taught us that the Spanish called it Rincon because it is a corner well located in the middle of hills like a hollow and behind the hills as a capital**

**"It is in that hollow I was born  
In its corners I was raised  
The hills always protected me"**

*Translation thanks to Jane Disco*

## Taste of Bonaire – Rincon style

For the first time ever Tourism Corporation Bonaire (TCB) held their Taste of Bonaire event on the streets of Rincon, the first village in the Dutch Caribbean.

As with every 'Taste', the street is banked with kiosks selling local and regional food and drink. The servings at the Rincon 'taste' were far more generous than 'tastes.' Visitors could dine on fish, BBQ, pasta, curries, hot dogs, ice cream and churros. Caribbean drinks, beer, sodas and mojitos were available.

The event featured local crafts for sale, a cultural scarf wrapping for ladies and a booth with geological samples and examples of ancient building construction.

Local bands Grupo Eso and Foyan boys entertained and moved the crowd to dance. Bonaire royalty, Miss Bonaire, Ruby Pouchet and Miss Tourism Bonaire Caroline Porras mingled with the crowd but weren't seen dancing.

This Taste of 'Rincon' Bonaire attracted a large crowd exceeding the expectations of TCB. It was the perfect opening



leading up to Dia di Rincon on April 30.

*Story/photo Julie Morgan*

*For more photos, see our FB page.*



# 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.

## The Demise of a Leader

When Bonaire is being discussed in the Dutch press, it's mostly about three topics. In a random order, it's about corruption, of nature preservation (or the lack thereof) and of poverty. Corruption always is the leading subject, (almost) all the others deriving from it.

Building new roads for your constituents ensuring your re-election, hiring temporary staff awarding your friends a decent income, helping a bunch of wealthy 'entrepreneurs' circumvent permit requirements: It's all in the toolbox of the agile lawmaker. There are a zillion examples to be found of the island nomenclatura stretching their powers for the sake of their friends and family.

One of the most remarkable examples of a person being rewarded for his actions is Edison Rijna, having, among others, used his powers to help remove a number of bureaucratic barriers for his friend Hans Schellevis, owner of the infamous Chogogo Resort.

I found and paraphrased an article by the Dutch collective for investigative journalism, Follow the Money, that was published in their website on March 30th, dealing with Rijna's promotion to 'special envoy' (whatever that is).

## Controversial lawmaker 'promoted out of town' to a diplomatic top position

Edison Rijna has been promoted, by Deputy Minister Alexandra van Huffelen, to special envoy of the Caribbean Netherlands. He will prematurely resign as Bonaire's Lieutenant Governor. In October, 2022, Rijna was suspended for two weeks after arranging an ex-post building license for a befriended hotel owner, in order to legalize an illegally laid out beach, deposited in front of the hotel.

The river sand, imported by the hotel owner from French Guyana, posed a serious threat to the coral.

As a result of an article by FTM on a conflict of inter-

est by Rijna, the Island Council, in October 2022, has adopted two resolutions: an investigation had to be performed into Rijna's integrity, and he had to lay down his duties for two weeks.

Although Rijna promised to temporarily step down, he never left his job, sources on Bonaire informed FTM. When asked, the Department of Inland and Kingdom Affairs reported that the investigation never was executed. 'There are no investigations into Rijna's actions', they said.

Last November the Bonaire Public Prosecutor started a criminal investigation, primary target of which was Hans Schellevis, the owner of the Chogogo Resort, who laid out the artificial beach. Secondary targets of the investigation, as was reported to FTM by a local informant, are local lawmakers like Rijna, and a number of civil servants.

Although the criminal investigation is not yet completed, Van Huffelen appointed Rijna as a special envoy of the Caribbean Netherlands.

In that capacity he will commit to the improvement of the socio-economic position of the Caribbean. To this end, he will be focusing on the accessibility of UN and EU funds, and on developing Latin-American relations.

Van Huffelen, in a press release, said she's very pleased to hear from the nomination. 'With his years long experience as 'Gezaghebber', and his extensive network in the region, I'm convinced that his work as a special envoy can be of major importance to the islands and to the Netherlands.'

In the same release she thanks Rijna 'for his great commitment towards the island Bonaire.'

According to the Caribbean newspaper Amigoe, Rijna's sudden departure has, 'in Kralendijk and far beyond the borders of the island', raised a number of eyebrows: Many people think he is promoted 'out of town'. A couple of months ago he was suspended in relation to the investigation. The newspaper quotes an insider, saying

his departure has a purpose. Rijna's second term as a Lieutenant Governor would only end in 2026. (...)

The situation at Schellevis' resort hotel Chogogo hasn't changed: the hotel guests still sunbathe on the white fake beach, the retaining wall that was meant to prevent the exotic sand from ending up in the sea still hasn't been raised – in spite of the fines imposed on Schellevis.

Furthermore, in November, as conservation groups had predicted, the fake beach partly washed away into the ocean, smothering the coral.

## 'Proper experience and expertise'

On March, 28, Dutch parliament adopted a resolution, inciting the government to start a dialogue with the Caribbean Netherlands on enforcing the legislation on environmental protection.

The 'Inspection for Environment and Transport' started an investigation into the process of licensing, inspection and enforcement on Bonaire.

Kingdom Affairs in the meantime informed that Rijna thanks his new job to his qualities: 'Mr. Rijna has showed, during recent years, that he's got adequate expertise and experience to deal with this job. That's the reason he was appointed.'

Apart from his role as a Lieutenant Governor, Rijna presented himself on the 'international stage', recently, during the Water Conference in New York, putting the consequences of climate change for small island states on the agenda.

The fact that Rijna is an experienced entrepreneur – he ran a recycling company on Bonaire – is, according to the Department, a plus: he is very capable in identifying chances for economic growth.

FTM

Translation and comment Gijs Borsten

## POLICE REPORT

### Property Crime

**Mar. 30/31.** A gray Suzuki Sedan SX4, registration number B-10761 was stolen. The car had been parked at Kaya L.D. Gerharts.

### Driving under the influence

**Apr. 5.** In the night hours a man, 55, was stopped for a routine check at Kaya Gilberto F. Croes. He could not show a valid driver's license or insurance certificate. When he proved to be driving under the influence of alcohol, he was arrested and his car was taken to the police station for safekeeping.

### Traffic

**Apr. 4.** Around 10 p.m. the car flipped over on the road to Rincon. The driver of a car had probably fallen asleep at the wheel. A patrol that drove by found the car and assisted the victim who was taken to hospital by ambulance.

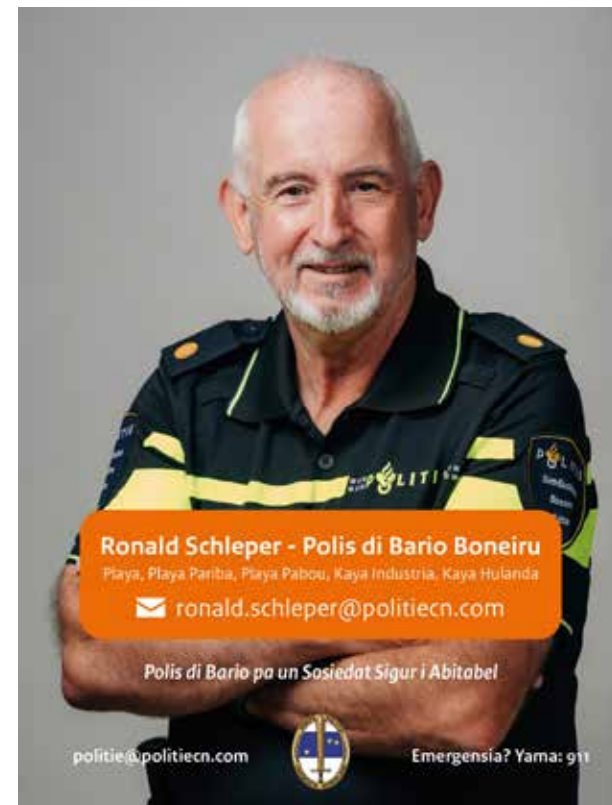
**Apr. 3.** Around 1:15 a.m. on Kaya Internashonal the driver of a scooter hit a donkey because he did not see it. Bystanders took the driver of the scooter to the hospital.

**Apr. 1.** A scheduled traffic check was held at Kaya Korona. A total of 23 vehicles, including 11 scooters and 12 cars, were stopped and checked. Charges were given for driving without: a valid driver's license (5); a valid insurance certificate (2); a license plate (1). Three scooters were taken to the police station because the drivers did not have a driver's license or one license plate. *The amount of a fine for the above violations varies between \$30 and \$225.*

## Community Police Officers introduced to the island

The Dutch Caribbean Police Force (KPCN) is now assigning Community Officers to the different districts on Bonaire. The officers are tasked with getting to know the residents and becoming familiar with the different challenges in each community. As they become more familiar with the districts, the police will be able to intervene more quickly and knowledgeably when problems arise.

The KPCN has launched a campaign to inform people about the duties of the community officers and how to contact them. Each week the KPCN issues a press release featuring one of the community officers. On the police Facebook page that week's officer introduces themselves and explains their role in the community. The Facebook page is: [Korps Politie Caribisch Nederland](#). DMR





# Int. Sports Week takes over Bonaire

**Pan American Slalom Windsurfing Open Championship by ProKids and Aquaspeed Bonaire Windsurfers** returned as part of Indebon's first International Sports Week March 31 - April 2.

This year, the competition introduced the new IFCA (International Funboard Class Association) global ranking point system making the windsurfing event even more significant.

In addition Bonaire Sunfish sailors from BSSA (Bonaire Sailing School Association) joined in the Aquaspeed contest as a part of Sports Week.

Twenty-seven windsurfers from five different nations and eight Sunfish sailors enjoyed perfect conditions with sunny skies and winds up to 22 knots at Sorobon.

Ruben Petrisie of IFCA said, "The competition was intense, and the athletes displayed their skills and determination on the water. The best racing action was undoubtedly in the junior boys and girls divisions."

The final day of competition was shorter concluding with an awards ceremony. Athletes excelling in the competition received

trophies and titles.

Petrisie said, "Aquaspeed Bonaire should be commended for their hard work and dedication to making this event a memorable one for everyone involved." *J.M*

## 2023 IFCA PAN-AM Winners

**Jr. Girl U15:** 3 Lone de Jong NED-64; 2 Kit de Jong NED-92; 1 Bobbilyn de Jong NED-46

**Jr. Girls:** 3 Kit de Jong NED-92; 2 Bobbilyn de Jong NED-46; 1 Mimosa Meroni ITA-827

**Jr. Boys U15:** 3 Olivier van Sisseren ARU-28; 2 Caylen John Allee BON-80; 1 Tycho Smits NED-1111

**Jr. Boys:** 3 Terence Seraus NB-444; 2 Storm Nicolai NED-2008; 1 Tycho Smits NED-1111

**Open:** 3 Ethiene Soliono NB-56; 2 Terence Clappers NB-99; 1 Taty Frans NB-9

**Youth:** 3 Sebastian Spurit NB-55; 2 Tame Mondria ARU-20; 1 Terence Clappers NB-99



2023 IFCA Pan American Champion first place winner in the Junior Girls division was Mimosa Meroni from Italy Photo Julie Morgan  
See also Sunfish sailors on page 13 and our FB page for more photos.



Photo: Julie Morgan

## Indebon Sports Week included Extreme Bikers cycling for kids and adults on April 1 - 2.

Over 50 kids ages 2 – 18 experienced dirt obstacle courses at Rudy Boezem soccer field. The youngsters were divided into six age categories for the practice / races and all received medals of participation.

On April 2, the big kids, 13 adult mountain bike riders, took on a 3.7 k course at Seru Largu doing four or five laps dependent on categories of Elite, Dames, Masters (M&W) and Junior. Cash prizes from Indebon and FWDN (Fundeshon wega di number) were awarded to the winners: first -\$100, second - \$65 and third - \$35. (all winners and times published in Reporter online update pages)

Elite: Tom Homburg 1.00.28 (not eligible for prize); first – Virgillio Batista 1.06.12

Dames: first - Josje Peters 1.18.23

Masters (men): first – Fons de Bie 1.06.13; Masters (women): first - Tamara Branks 1.18.23; Junior - Louis Minne 1.17.36



Sports Week featured Beach Tennis and the first ABC-Cup on Bonaire held March 31 – April 2. Teams from Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao vied for top awards and medals.

<https://www.facebook.com/beachtennisbonaire/>

Coming up: The Stoked Men and Women Doubles League on Wednesday evenings, April 19 to June 14. Register you and your partner soon (latest April 14), as there are limited spots available. Registration and info about the rules, dates and availability) via: <https://beachtennisbonaire.com/league/>

If you need a partner or if you have any questions), please let them know by email [league@beachtennisbonaire.com](mailto:league@beachtennisbonaire.com)

They are looking forward to see you all soon!



# Piss and Vinegar

by Gijs Borsten

## Elvis hates Nina

According to an article on the news website Bonaire.nu, Elvis Tjin Asjoe blames the fact that his party, MPB, lost half of its votes during the last election, because Nina den Heyer had the nerve to actively start rubbing shoulders with the PDB. Or with others. Someone instead of him, anyway.

Notwithstanding his feelings however, election results suggest, that Tjin Asjoe, his candidacy generating 95 votes instead of the 889 he got in 2019, is to blame himself for the loss his party suffered during the 2023 Island Council election.

More specific, the monumental decline of the party was, according to various websites, caused by an astonishing amount of strategic blundering by him, not only by his stepping out of the political process (or didn't he, did he?), but also by leaving the party leadership to someone with hardly any experience, not being very charismatic, and getting only 300 votes, 6.5% of the MPB-total, during the 2019 election.

Compare those numbers to Elvis's female opponent's score in 2019, Nina den Heyer. She was the most convincing candidate in the party, getting the highest number of (preferential) votes of all candidates, boasting a bunch of knowledge in her area, and being prepared to learn more: 'I don't know enough of that subject to answer your question, but I'll dig into it, and I'll get back to you' (Rene Hakkenberg dixit). Compare that to Thielman's 'I dropped out of school to help Bonaire').

She was pretty ambitious. Maybe too ambitious.

So, they harassed her till she left. But her revenge was sweet as honey.

Den Heyer singlehandedly decimated the MPB's appeal to voters by leaving the party, taking her substantial content-related knowledge with her.

Just have a look at the numbers. During the 2019 elections the MPB's got 3,576 votes, of which Elvis scored 889. Nina, however, got 1,267, slightly over a third of the total number cast on the party. Third and fourth position were in the hands of Daisy Coffie and Hennyson Thielman, scoring 237 and 230 respectively.

Den Heyer and Coffie together got 1,502 votes, slightly less than half of the total amount of votes cast on all MPB candidates (and there were a lot. Thirty-nine, to be precise). That pretty accurately explains the number of votes MPB was about to lose (-/- 1,542) during the 2023 elections (data: bonairegov.com). Elvis could have known he would go down, and by how much, by just counting the numbers of those that were left.

Another factor he didn't take into account was the fact that Nina's approach towards shaping policies was very much based on learning what is going on, and acting accordingly, which is highly unusual in Bonaire's politics. Let's call it a more 'Western' approach, appealing to European and American voters, other than the traditional populist 'selling Bonaire to the highest bidder' attitude, hoping that, in the process, as much cash as possible will trickle down.

By handing out building permits to foreign contractors like they were M&Ms for instance, or promising disastrously unfavorable docking permits to the cruise industry. Cover Bonaire with concrete and lard, so to say.

A substantial number of voters, probably having a much opener eye for existing problems, like the various threats the environment is facing, or like the ever-existing poverty that has to be mitigated, won't vote for economic over-exploitation. They're sick and tired of every square foot of the island being built on, and of the consequences of overtourism and overpopulation for Bonaire's nature. In that respect, MPB also chased her voters away.

The success of the MPB during the 2019 elections wasn't caused by Elvis' charisma or the promise of Hennyson's Horn of Plenty. It was Nina's down to earth approach towards her playing field that brought in the votes.

Elvis's got what he caused. By treating Den Heyer and – to a lesser extent - Coffie like they were superfluous, or merely a pain, they simply left, taking a considerable number of voters along with them, away from the MPB.

Elvis, in case you didn't notice: Bonaire is traditionally a matriarchal society, women running the island, knowing instinctively how to survive, where men fail. You don't have to treat them like little children. And if you do, you'll see: their revenge can be immediate and nasty...



*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.*

## Orco Bank sponsors Bonaire swimmers in CARIFTA Games 2023



Orco Bank sponsored the Aquatics Federation Bonaire team for the CARIFTA Aquatics Championship 2023 held in Curaçao from April 4 - 11th, 2023.

The swim team, which recently qualified for the championship, visited Orco Bank's branch in Bonaire before embarking on their journey to Curaçao. Ms. Abigail Paula, Country Manager of Orco Bank in Bonaire, congratulated the team on their accomplishment – a testament

that the team's hard work and dedication paid off.

Orco Bank is committed to supporting the community by sponsoring this and other similar initiatives.

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You can also follow Aquatics Federation Bonaire on Facebook. At CARIFTA all team members swam the 50 meters freestyle. Eden, Melissa and Jonathan swam the 100 meter breaststroke and Koen swam the 200 meters backstroke while Jules closed the tournament with the 400 meter freestyle.



# King & Queen of the Caribbean named

Bonaire was blessed with two week-ends of unbelievable windsurfing competitions this month. First the ProKids Aquaspeed as a part of Bonaire International Sports Week, Mar 31 – Apr 2 and then Frans Paradise’ and Forsa’s King & Queen of the Caribbean / EFPT (European Freestyle Pro Tour) April 7-10.

The King & Queen attracted 24 local and international riders who already held some pretty impressive titles.

Most noticeable was local boy and world champion, Youp Schmit, who rode off with the FPT King title. Proudly assuming the role of Queen was multiple world champion Sarah-Quitta Offringa from Aruba.

In the closing ceremony on April 10 the winners in slalom, freestyle and junior received their well-earned prizes and awards.

Mick Schmit of Forsa Academy explained that not only is this a great windsurfing event but achieves a social purpose.

Schmit said, “By fully involving young people in the event, in the preparations/ deploying them in different places/or by participating themselves, it will also become their event. In this way we stimulate positive involvement between young people, companies and the island.

To get an after-the-fact, day by day progression of the event and the best coverage visit <https://EFPT.net>. Windsurfers Adam Sims and Maarten Molenaar are the press of the Freestyle Pro Tour. And for some amazing action photos and video visit: Kuma Movie on Facebook and freestyleprotour on Instagram. *J.M.*

*For the final standings, go to The Reporter’s online update pages.*



Above: Queen Sarah-Quitta Offringa, Aruba and King Youp Schmit, Bonaire. Photo Julie Morgan



Sarah (left) and Youp (above). Photos by Kuma Movie and Ayu



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Parrotfish are more than just a pretty face. The average parrotfish spends up to 90% of its day cleaning the coral reefs. If you are reading *The Reporter* online, click on this photo for DCNA's article: <https://dcnanature.org/parrotfish/>



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Currents move the disease in some areas while stagnant water could limit the spread of the disease as do the island's natural barriers. Everyone must follow regulations: don't dive in uninfected areas; after diving in infected areas, plan your dives either north or south, not both; use the disease site map updated weekly <https://arcg.is/1eCTD8> and don't touch the coral. Follow the gear rinsing protocol as the disease can live in damp gear. At this point there is no cure. Cleaning corals with antibiotics is a last option as the corals have to be treated daily and it isn't effective on all species. If you suspect a coral is infected take a photo and send it to AGRRA (Atlantic and Gulf Rapid Reef Assessment) with the site and date. (You will not receive a response.) **How to Decontaminate Your Gear:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=laVvK0FgF5A>

## Make Bonaire Accessible by Ria Evers-Dokter

### Nobody is perfect

It is very warm these days. A lot of people went camping by the sea, but I did not feel like it. I wrote a book and every now and then I open it and read a bit. It is about my youth and the things I learned when I was young. We did not go camping ... we lived by the sea, in the dunes in a pavilion. That is where I was born as well. And every Tuesday and Friday we had a dance. In those days dancing was so different..... We had an accordionist coming to our island and he played alone the whole night long. He came from the Mainland to our

The BMP is using posters, signs, social media and dive orientations to educate everyone, not just divers. A diveable coral disease ID card is available in limited quantities at some dive shops and the STINAPA office. What brought the disease and why it is jumping from island to island is an unanswered question. The original source has not been defined. Francisca eliminates cruise ships due to their strict regulations. But *The Guardian* in July 2021 said it could be linked to waste or ballast water from ships. Francisca said, "I think we have a chance. Bonaire's reefs are very good. If we all take the necessary precautions. We can see it's going to be painful and it's going to be hard and bad, but it will be worth it. We've seen recovery before, but we all have to work together." The BMP Annual Report will be available in hard copy this summer. It can be downloaded via a QR code on the website. BMP has scheduled more platforms for July 6, Oct. 19 and Jan. 18, 2024. *Julie Morgan*



Striking Selibon employees have ended their brief strike and both parties will resume negotiations, as ordered by the Court of Appeal. The employees' list of demands focused on working condition grievances, such as dangerously worn out equipment and what they consider a dictatorial management style. Photo Julie Morgan

island. After the dance was over, he stayed for the night and left the following morning. I was four years old and I loved the accordionist very much. His name was van der Wal and he had a wonderful warm voice. He arrived on his motorcycle, and we could hear him drive in from afar. When he got off his bike, he hugged all of us. My grandmother served him fresh coffee and a bit later hot soup and a sandwich. In the meantime my mom, granddad and grand aunt prepared the ballroom, got beer from the cellar and sprinkled sand on the dance floor. The dance could now begin. Everybody had a great time. I was not allowed in the ballroom as I was too young. When the dance was over the ballroom was cleared and everyone got ready to go to sleep. Grandmother asked van der Wal to put his shoes outside the bedroom, so she could

polish them early the next morning. Half an hour later we were all awakened by the piercing screams of my grandmother. Soon after that everything calmed down again and finally everybody went to sleep. The next morning van der Wal left again on his motorcycle. Our goodbyes were pleasant, because we all knew he would be back soon. When the ballroom was cleaned and we all sat down for our morning coffee, we had the chance to ask grandmother what all that screaming was about. At first, she did not want to tell us, because she was kind of ashamed. But later on, she told us. She had gone over to the floor where the shoes were supposed to be, so she could take them to polish. She found only one shoe. When she knocked on the door to ask for the other shoe, van der Wal pushed an orthopedic leg into her hands with the shoe still attached

to it. That was what made her scream. I learned a valuable lesson here, "Not everybody is the same, but yet, we are all the same." Nobody is perfect or better than someone else. Like grandma said, "Nobody is perfect." We loved van der Wal even more after that because he was perfect the way he was. I am very proud to have known him. *Ria Dokter is living happily on Bonaire, where she also used to work as a director at 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.*



## Reef Glimpses by Dee Scarr Stingrays

In 1979, when I was working at Riding Rock Inn, in San Salvador, the Bahamas, we were loaned to a dive operation in Grand Turk for a few weeks. My outstanding memories of that time were of watching a manta ray feed on a cloud of plankton, and the Southern stingrays. Grand Turk had large sandy areas where the rays would relax. They'd lie on the sand and flap their "wings," covering themselves with sand except for their eyes and their breathing intake ports. If you approached the rays from above, they'd bolt away. That makes sense, since threats would come from above if the ray was on the bottom. If a stingray doesn't have time to flee, it uses the venomous stinger from which it received its name. Each Southern stingray has a single stinger. This spine, encased in thick skin, is attached near where the ray's tail meets the body and lies along the top of the ray's tail. Australian Steve Irwin, the Crocodile Hunter, was killed by a stingray envenomation. I guessed that he came upon the ray from above and behind; the surprised ray gave its tail a swing and fled. Unfortunately for us all, the spine entered Irwin near his heart. If he'd been envenomated in an arm or leg he'd have felt a lot of pain but would probably have survived. We can learn from this. One lesson would be to avoid stingrays entirely, but that's pretty extreme and, thankfully, not necessary. The better lesson is stingrays don't



I found this Southern stingray here, on more than one dive. Its spine is visible on its tail, about 1/3 of the way from the body. Photo Dee Scarr

like surprises. We learned to approach from the front, so the ray could see us. If it shifted position at all -- which meant we were disturbing it -- we'd back away. If the ray remained still, though, we could often get close enough to touch a wing. I've never found anything that feels like a Southern stingray's wing. It's soft, like velvet, but its surface is smoother. Stingrays are closely related to sharks. If we had a clay shark, we could flatten it from top to bottom, and use that clay to enlarge its pectoral fins and create a roundish body with a long thin tail. We'd add water intake ports on the top, and leave the mouth, gill openings, and sensory organs on the bottom surface. When we add a venomous spine on the tail, we've turned our shark into a stingray. Fishermen, naturally, would rather clean their catches in calm water than rough wa-

ter; on Grand Cayman they'd wait until they had entered a specific, relatively shallow, sand-bottomed bay before they began throwing unwanted pieces of fish into the water. Over time the stingrays began to follow the boats, divers followed the rays, and Stingray City began. Have you been there? I was there in the late 20th century, so things have probably changed since then. People were taught to hold out their hand, flat, with a chunk of fish on it. Southern stingrays would dash in, competing to be the first to suck down the fish. They would also taste other possibilities, such as peoples' shoulders and heads. Many a diver returned from Stingray City with a stingray "hickey" (a bruise caused by suction), considered a badge of honor. In all that bedlam and competition, no one got stabbed by a stingray spine. There were no surprises for the stingrays, so no need for

the rays to use their spines. One day, off Grand Turk, a calm stingray seemed to enjoy the massage I was giving to its wing. As I moved my hand to the underside of the wing, I felt a snag hook in the ray's wing. A snag hook is three hooks back-to-back; one of those hooks was embedded in the ray's wing. I gently took hold of the exposed hooks and tried to pull the thing out of the ray. Naturally this disturbed the stingray, who rose off the bottom with strong wing flaps. I -- without thinking -- held onto the hook. The ray increased its speed, with me dragging along like a sea anchor, and then, suddenly, the hook came free from the stingray. I sank down to the bottom to calm down, still holding the hook. The stingray swam a very short distance and settled back down in the sand. When I was functioning as a sea anchor, the stingray could easily have spined me -- but it chose not to. Like the rays off Cayman, this one wasn't bothered enough to use its ultimate weapon. Just call me Androcles.



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).



# A Garden? Just Do It!

by Angliet, Nature Lover

## Design your garden by your senses

Creating a garden is an art for which you need all five of your senses. It's not throwing some seeds in the soil and waiting to see if they will grow. No, when you look for a beautiful garden to enjoy at its fullest, you need to be creative and plan it as you would a piece of art.

First thing, is look to yourself. What are your favorite colors or your preferred smell? What kind of atmosphere do you like: a jungle look, an oriental garden, English garden or sunny Caribbean wildflower garden? Maybe you have a clear garden plan but it can also be that by experimenting one comes up with ideas for a personal design.

### Some hints to make it easy:

**Colors** - which colors do you like, which combinations are nice? White and off white go with every color. Pink and purple are a nice combination. But orange and pink together are not my favorite, but of course, this is a personal thing. One might have another idea in mind when creating the garden, for example memories of Granny's Garden. Now I'm thinking of my Grandma's garden as well, of course not one that was created with an art idea. Grandma just threw seeds around. What grew and what didn't, nature decided. But for me, it was a great place to play hide and seek in the bamboo bushes, to pick magdalene flowers or to climb in the huge mango and knipp trees. So what is on a person's mind when busy creating.

Later, living on Statia, purple bougainville with pink oleander was a nice colorful combination along the fence, which gave privacy and kept the dust away from the porch. So I kept it that way when decorating my spot here



with plants. Tutarutu is also a whole year tropical flowering plant in different colors and it's easy to maintain so it's always one of my favorites. Don't forget Faja Lobi, always green, always blooming, a lifetime plant in four colors. These plants are shrubs. Other types of plants are one year flower plants: vines, cacti, ferns, herbs, spices, vegetable plants and decorative bonsai trees. Don't forget to take a serious look at how to organize and structure the garden that will go together with a certain atmosphere. A sunny corner, a spot with shade and a nice breeze for the garden set with a place for a hammock for an afternoon nap and watch the life of the garden's butterflies, birds or even the iguanas.

Colors and the design of plants can come in combination with other decorations such as nice eyecatchers. I'm thinking of rare garden tiles, funny tablecloths, decora-

tions, fancy garden furniture sets and decorative flowerpots. Creative recycled and handmade stuff has a place here too, such as macrame, bird sugar containers, driftwood art and more. Color, height, design, structure and decor, give a unique look to your creative garden.

### Smell is also an aspect of a magical garden.

Roses, jasmine and lavender for example, have strong smells which create a romantic atmosphere, and bring back memories of the good old days. They attract the hummingbirds, the bees and the bats of the night to the flowers of trees like the Calabas. The aromatic smell of garden herbs such as basil, Mexican mint, oregano, mint, lemon grass, maggy plant and citrus leaves have a rare impact on our psyche and spiritual life as well as on the behavior of animals and bugs. Spices such as nutmeg, cumin, cinnamon, bay leaf, cloves, cayenne pepper and citrus are used a lot by locals to make Bonairean cuisine exotic and tasteful accompanied by their aromatic smell.

Just do it.

*To experience typical cultural local food, hit the road to Rincon at Dia di Rincon and enjoy. And, Happy Kings 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.*

## Did You Know: that it probably takes 20 years for a tube sponge to grow just one meter?



Last April I watched as a careless SCUBA diver taking photos accidentally knocked over a 1m high purple tube sponge. I had been noticing some sponge damage on Bonaire reefs and it got me to wondering how fast the tube sponges regenerate or regrow. I dive pretty much every day so I started tracking the growth of five purple tube sponges on one reef along with water clarity, temperature, salinity and chlorophyll-a (a measure of the amount of chlorophyll in the water from algae growth). I wanted to see if there was any significant change

in growth rate due to changes in water conditions. Two months into the project and two of the five sponges I was monitoring had been knocked over so I had to settle for tracking three sponges. Their growth was pretty slow, so I ended up taking one measurement a month of their length. Their diameter changed so slowly that I only measured the top diameter once at the beginning of the study and once at the end of the study. So, for those of you who are still curious ... one year later

**Sponges, continued on page 15**

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# What's Happening

**Animal Shelter:** Mon-Fri 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; 2-3:30 p.m. Sat. 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. phone/ whatsapp: 701 4989 or 717 4989. Email: [animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com](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.onlinebibliothek.nl](http://www.onlinebibliothek.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. +599 701 4700 <https://www.facebook.com/terramarmuseumbonaire/>

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

**Washington Slagbaai Park:** Closed on Mondays Apr. 3 - Nov. 27. Otherwise open daily. 8-5 (entry up to 1 p.m.)

Mar. 25 - Apr. 30	Simadan harvest festival
Apr. 4 - Apr. 22	Terramar Museum Electric Tribe Exhibition
Wednesday, April 22	<b>Book signing of Davin Goodwin's mysteries at Pakus di Pruga</b> Kaya Simon Bolivar. 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. All proceeds to Animal shelter. See page 15 and below.
Friday, April 14	<b>TCB &amp; Friends: Simadan Outfit Reveal</b> 7 - 9 p.m.
Friday, April 21	<b>Rincon Cruise Market</b> 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the corner of Kaya Rincon and Kaya Commerce. Local art, music, and food  <b>Art Talk, Josie Martinez Mangle: Discussion of glass fusing</b> 7 - 9 p.m. MoltenWolf Glass. Kaya J.N.E. Craane Terramar 8 +599 701-1880 <a href="http://www.MoltenWolfGlass.com">www.MoltenWolfGlass.com</a>
Thursday, April 27	<b>King's Day</b> Public Holiday. Much is closed. The day commemorates the birthday of Willem Alexander, King of the Netherlands.  <b>Book signing of Davin Goodwin's mysteries at VIP diving</b> 77 Julio A. Abraham Boulevard. 4 - 6 p.m. All proceeds to STINAPA'S Junior Ranger program. See page 15 and below.
Friday, April 28	<b>Shopping Night in Kralendijk</b> 6-9 p.m 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Apr. 28 - June. 17	<b>Terramar Museum Exhibition Boneiru Bibu: Bou di Awa . Opening April 28, 5 - 8 p.m.</b> MoltenWolf Glass is a contributor.
Saturday, April 29	<b>Nos Zjilea Cultural Event</b> 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei, Rincon. Enjoy the music, dancing, crafts, amazing food and drink.  <b>Terramar Museum Movie screening: The Last Human</b>
Sunday, April 30	<b>Rincon Day</b> Dia di Rincon is Bonaire's biggest festival of the year. As a legal holiday, most businesses and government offices will be closed.
Saturday, May 6	<b>Pop up Art Galley Artist Vanessa Peralta selling her stained glass art and paintings.</b> 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. MoltenWolf Glass. Kaya J.N.E. Craane Terramar 8 +599 701-1880 <a href="http://www.MoltenWolfGlass.com">www.MoltenWolfGlass.com</a>
Saturday, May 17	<b>The Big Live Nature Quiz Family &amp; Friends Edition:</b> 6-7 p.m. for people in Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, St. Eustatius and St. Maarten. The online quiz is in English, with Dutch, Papiamentu and Papiamento subtitles. <a href="https://dcnnature.org/quiz/">https://dcnnature.org/quiz/</a>

## Two chances to give and receive

If you love Bonaire and detective novels, then it's time to explore Davin Goodwin's Roscoe Conklin books Diver's Paradise and Paradise Cove. Dave is giving you two opportunities to catch him at a book signing. The first will be at Animal Shelter Bonaire's Pakus di Pruga on April 22, 9:30-11:30 a.m. and the second at VIP diving on April 27, 4 p.m. - 6 p.m. The longtime diver - author and visitor to Bonaire is contributing ALL proceeds from the sales and signing to Pakus di Pruga and STINAPA'S Junior Ranger program respective to the location.



## Coming Up

<https://classicalmusicbonaire.com>

On Sunday afternoon May 28, 2023 there will be a second musical gathering.

**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](mailto:contact.rum@caribjournal.com)

**Pride Bonaire.** June 22 - 25. Sponsors and volunteers welcomed. <https://www.facebook.com/EQBonaire/>

# Events, Meetings, Sports

**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** Kaminda Djabou (behind Budget Marine). Open daily until 10 p.m. People can play for free or register for training and tournaments for a fee.

**Bridgeclub Bonaire** Wednesdays from 7:30 -10 p.m. All levels welcome. 796 2819, email [peejeesee@gmail.com](mailto:peejeesee@gmail.com). <https://www.facebook.com/BridgeclubBonaire/>

**Cyclovia Kids Street Park** Wilhelminaplein 4 - 7 p.m. Free monthly event. Children of all ages can bike, scooter, skate or skateboard. Expect a bouncy castle, music and a hot dog cart. First Sunday of the month: May 7, June 4, July 2, Aug. 6, Sept. 3, Oct. 1, Nov. 5

**Pickleball.** Wednesdays & Fridays 6 - 8 p.m. at Jong Bonaire. Come join the fun and see what it is all about. A sport for all ages.



**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. April 17 - at Beyond the Corals . April 24 - at VIP Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation Program facebook 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.

## You can help keep Bonaire clean

Saturdays	<b>One Hour Clean up Power.</b> Weekly coastal clean up every Saturday, 9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Location given on FB page: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/OneHourCleanUpPower/">https://www.facebook.com/OneHourCleanUpPower/</a>
Saturday, April 22	<b>Quarterly Clean up, Dive Friends. Beach Clean up Edition</b> Everyone is welcome. See social media for changes More on page 13.
Sunday, May 14	<b>Clean Coast Bonaire.</b> 4-6 p.m. Piedra Pretu. Donate your time. Work 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>

## Tentative cruise ship schedule

DATE:	CRUISE SHIP	TIME	PIER	CAPACITY
Wed.. Apr.12	CELEBRITY EQUINOX	06:15-1500	South	2852
Thurs.. Apr.13	CARNIVAL SPIRIT	0800-1500	North	2680
	VOYAGER OF THE SEAS	1300-2100	South	3838
Mon.. Apr.17	VISION OF THE SEAS	0700-1800	North	2435
Tues.. Apr. 18	EXPLORER OF THE SEAS	0700-2300	South	3840
Wed.. Apr.19	EMERALD PRINCESS	07:30-1900	North	3577
Wed. Apr.21	CELEBRITY EQUINOX	0700-1600	South	2852
Wed. Apr.26	SEVEN SEAS NAVIGATOR	0600-1400	South	530
Sun. Apr.30	CELEBRITY SUMMIT	0800-1800	North	2450
Wed. May.3	CARNIVAL HORIZON	0800-2200	South	4683
Fri. May.5	VISION OF THE SEAS	0830-1800	South	2435
Tues. May.9	DISNEY MAGIC	0700-1800	South	2834
Wed. May.10	CELEBRITY EQUINOX	0730-1600	South	2852
Wed. May.24	CARNIVAL CELEBRATION (LAUNCHING 2022)	0800-2200	South	5282
Wed. May.31	CARNIVAL HORIZON	0700-1500	South	4683



# Underwater cleanup is now beach cleanup



Due to the coral disease that has found its way to Bonaire's reefs, Dive Friends has decided not to risk further spreading by modifying their April 22, Quarterly Cleanup Dive. The dive scheduled on Earth Day will be a Beach Cleanup of Baby Beach instead. The cleanup is at 9:30 a.m. For more detail, visit Dive Friends Facebook page for up-to-date information.

## Combating the spread of coral disease

All eight Dive Friends locations have disinfecting rinse tanks for your gear as recommended by the Bonaire Marine Park; please do your part and use them.

To lessen the chances of spreading the disease, Dive Friends has discontinued two tank boat dives to different areas (example: a north, then a south or on Klein). But instead, the two dives will be in the same area close together (example: two south or two north or two on Klein).

## Please:

Everyone must do their part and work together to save our precious coral reefs.

*On a good note, Dive Friends is selling their "Hero" shirts with proceeds going to Green Peace.*

*Story/photo Julie Morgan*



## Human remains found near Rincon identified

The Netherlands Forensic Institute (NFI) has determined that a skull and other remains recently found near Rincon account for the disappearance of Ludwig Cicilia. Cicilia had been missing from the community for some time.

The Caribbean Netherlands Police Force (KPCN) is continuing its investigation and expects to have more information to report about the case later.. *DMR*

## Corona test center closed

The Department of Public Health has closed the drive-by test center it operated during the corona crisis. The Department now considers covid under control here as in the Netherlands, just an ordinary infectious disease such as a cold or flu.

People with covid-like symptoms can still be tested by their GP or the hospital. If they have complaints such as coughing, sneezing, sore throat and a runny nose, they should work from home if possible. People should also to avoid physical contact with those who could become seriously ill if infected. If proximity cannot be avoided, they should wear a face mask.

The Public Health Department is still inoculating people against covid by request. Appointments can be made for any day from Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. -12 noon and 1:30 -5 p.m., by calling 0800 0800. *DMR*

## Navy scores more drugs

During three days in March the Dutch navy ship Zr.Ms. Holland intercepted four drug shipments, seized more than 2.2 metric tons of cocaine, and turned ten suspected smugglers over to the US Coast Guard for prosecution in the States. The vessel has blocked 13,000 kilos of drugs from reaching the market during its time in the Caribbean.

The Caribbean Coast Guard's maritime patrol aircraft spotted the "go-fasts." The US Coast Guard helicopter and two high-speed "go-fasters" intercepted them. The crews of two surrendered immediately. The crews of the other two surrendered after warning shots were fired.

Zr.Ms. Holland has been active in the region as a Caribbean station ship since October 2022. It alternates with the Caribbean Coast Guard and the US Coast Guard. *DMR (Bonaire.nu)*

## Plant a free sabal palm in your garden

The sabal palm, a species endemic to Bonaire, is threatened with extinction. Only 25 of them are growing in the wild on Bonaire. Tera Barra is contributing to saving the species by giving away more than five hundred free seedlings for people to plant in their gardens. The slow-growing sabal palm, long adapted to Bonaire's environment, does not need much water.

People can pick up a free seedling (one per person) at Tera Barra on Thursdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.. and on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. *DMR*

## Replacement Belastingdienst Director being trained in Netherlands



was a coach and change manager. *DMR*

Claudia Toet will replace Anneke van den Breemer as the Belastingdienst of the Caribbean Netherlands on September 1, 2023. Toet has been deputy Government Commissioner at the Public Entity of St. Eustatius since 2021. She supervised the implementation of the Restoration Act of the Provisions and

## Bonairean awarded Ph.D. by Delft University

Gyllion Loozen, from Bonaire, received a PhD in applied physics from Delft University of Technology last month. Loozen got a Havo diploma at the Scholengebied Bonaire and a bachelor's degree in applied physics The Hague University of Applied Sciences.

Loozen completed his master's degree and PhD research at Delft University of Technology. His dissertation is titled "Towards lab-on-a-chip optical trapping and Raman spectroscopy of extracellular vesicles using multi-waveguide traps." His proud parents are Leo and Sharine Loozen. *DMR (Bonaire.nu)*

## Hospital adds mental health wing

Fundashon Mariadal has opened a new wing that houses the outpatient clinic of Mental Health Caribbean (MHC). It includes a room where the psychiatry department team offers adult treatment. *DMR (Bonaire.nu)*

## Bonaire has too many hotel rooms

The Tourism Corporation Bonaire (TCB) is developing new marketing strategies and lobbying the airlines to add more direct flights to Bonaire. Not enough visitors are landing to fill the island's hotel rooms. The average hotel occupancy rate on Bonaire was only 75% during the first quarter. It is predicted to drop to 59% in the second quarter. Bonaire now has 2,800 hotel rooms, a 65% increase over the 1,700 rooms it had four years ago.

*DMR*

## The Netherlands to loosen the reins of BES

The Hague is going to reduce supervision of Bonaire, Saba and Sint Eustatius. Currently the personnel decisions of three public bodies must be approved by the Kingdom Representative, and their budgets must be approved by the FinBES. Soon, however, the public bodies in the Caribbean Netherlands will have the same authority to hire and budget as the Dutch municipalities in Europe.

In announcing the pending changes, State Secretary Alexandra van Huffelen expressed a caveat. Like the Dutch municipalities, the BES public bodies will be expected to perform both functions responsibly. Supervision can be re-imposed at any time at whatever level is needed. *DMR*

## Int. Sports Week: Sunfish sailors at Sorobon



Robbert Verboon, second place overall winner, leads this Sunfish race, followed by first place overall winner Sipke Stappert.

## The overall results were:

### SUNFISH A -

- 3 Ton Nuijten
- 2 Robbert Verboon
- 1 Sipke Stappert

### SUNFISH B -

- 3 Dedrie Pedersen
- 2 Marleen Van Nes
- 1 Jeroen DeVries





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# Shelter News

## Book Sale/Signing by Davin Goodwin at Pakus Di Pruga



On Saturday, April 22, author Davin Goodwin, will be at the Pakus di Pruga from 9:30-11:30 a.m., to sell and sign copies of his two mystery novels set on Bonaire. "Diver's Paradise" and "Paradise Cove" follow the adventures of a fictional retired detective who solves murder mysteries on our island. Island characters and locations are readily identifiable to those who know Bonaire.

An avid scuba diver, Davin is very familiar with the island. He has visited here over 35 times in the past 20 years, many trips for extended periods.

All proceeds from the sales will benefit Animal Shelter Bonaire. Please stop by and have your purchase signed by the author.

Jane Disko

## Please Help Pakus di Pruga Find a New Home

Time is winding down. Soon Pakus di Pruga will have to vacate their current location.

Sales from the Pakus are a major source of income for the Shelter and we are desperately seeking a new place to continue the operation that benefits both the Shelter animals and the local community.

Pakus needs approximately 250-300 square meters of indoor space for which we can afford to pay a maximum of \$1,000.00 per month. Another alternative we are considering is empty land, minimum of 750 square meters, on which we could continue the weekly Pakus market using containers to create the

indoor space needed.

If you have any ideas or can help in any way please contact Paul Wichers at [paulenamina@gmail.com](mailto:paulenamina@gmail.com).

Jane Disko



## GET PAID TO HELP US SAVE LIVES!

### Animal Shelter Bonaire has an opening for two Animal Care Givers

#### Position 1:

20 hours per week/4 days per week

Three weekdays and one weekend day (8 a.m.-1 p.m.)

#### Position 2:

10 hours per week/2 days per week

Saturday and Sunday (8 a.m.-1 p.m.)

#### Requirements:

- Love of animals
- Physically able
- Good people skills
- **Resident of Bonaire** with valid sedula
- Able to read basic English
- Willing to learn about animal care

#### Responsibilities include:

- Cleaning kennels and cages, watering and feeding animals
- Checking and reporting health and condition of animals
- Walking, bathing and grooming when needed
- Helping keep property and kennels neat and clean

Salary based on qualifications, minimum \$7.13 per hour

If you are interested please email [animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com](mailto:animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com) with your C.V. for an interview appointment. **DO NOT RESPOND VIA FACEBOOK OR MESSENGER.**

# Pet of the Week - Quad

Meet our sweet and handsome boy called Quad.

Quad is a neutered male cat of 10 months old. When he was about seven weeks old he was found, all alone, in the bushes near a school. Luckily, he was found by the children and their teacher brought little Quad to the shelter.

Because he was still so small and very thin he went directly to foster care and received the TLC that he needed so badly. After a few weeks he returned to the Shelter to join our other kittens.

And look at him now. He's a lovely independent young cat and very beautiful! Look at his special pattern, he's gorgeous.

Quad has tested negative on FIV and leukemia, received all his vaccinations and will be chipped the moment someone adopts him.

What do you think? Can you give this handsome young boy the home he's looking for?

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.**

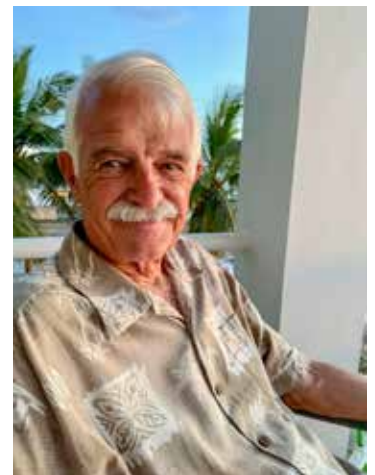
**You can also call 701-4989 or 717-4989 to make an appointment, via whatsapp, facebook messenger, or email [animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com](mailto:animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com)**

## Did You Know: slow growing tube sponges, from page 11

the purple tube sponges only grew between 5 and 6 cm in length and their diameter increased approximately 0.5 cm. Growth rate seemed uncorrelated with any variables except temperature. They grew very slightly faster when the water temperature was over 28C when all of us were worried about coral bleaching. So ... in 18 to 20 years if all goes well, a purple tube sponge can regenerate and grow to 1m in height to replace the one I saw knocked over.

We as divers absolutely cannot afford to cause any damage to the reef. The sponges and corals we damage while taking photos, or while struggling with buoyancy issues, or simply by not watching where we are going will not regrow to an equivalent size in our diving lifetimes. Given the number of divers in the water in Bonaire, we must strictly follow the "do not touch the reef" guidance of STINAPA. One finger or one pointer rod is one too many when multiplied by the total number of divers in the water. Because of the slow regrowth rates, the reef cannot recover quickly enough from a little more damage every day. If we continue being today's average divers, we

will see the reefs decline in our lifetime. Please ... Don't Touch the Reef.



*Written by Gary Barrett, Citizen Scientist. Connecting People With Nature.*

*Note from Caren Eckrich, STINAPA Biologist: If all of us had the insight into, dedication towards and passion for nature that Gary has, the connection that people have with nature would be so much more balanced. Thank you Gary!*

**WORLD  
EARTH  
DAY  
22 APRIL**





# Enrichment is for the birds

by Mel McCombie

Think about a wild parrot’s typical day: hours of foraging for food, socializing, building nests, courting and keeping guard. Parrots lead busy, active lives. But what about Echo’s ambassador parrots, Lola, Kiki, Weebo, and Dushi? They need to live in an aviary because they can’t be released into the wild. How does Echo help them live full lives?

Highly intelligent and social, all parrots need to be busy. A bored or lonely parrot often starts plucking at its feathers. Echo makes sure these feathered ambassadors get a lot of stimulation, work, and play. Megan Hill, who works for the World Parrot Trust and Echo, described Echo’s program of parrot enrichment as essential for their mental and physical health.

She noted that parrot enrichment includes social contact, like music, other parrots, or human interaction. Occupational enrichment involves exercising the body and mind by giving Echo’s parrots challenges, like folding small nutritious treats into old copies of the Bonaire Reporter, a reward for the exploring busy beak. The Reporter does not just line the bottom of the bird cage at Echo! Megan folds and shreds old Reporters, buries nutritious treats in the folds, fills cardboard boxes with the shreds and Echo’s parrots spend hours seeking treats, and having fun.

You have probably seen Loras working on cracked calabash shells, digging out the fruit. Megan cracks their hard exteriors enough so the Loras can open the hard shell and enjoy the reward. Sometimes she and Echo volunteers hang fruits from natural twine in the aviary to encourage climbing with the reward of a treat at the end. Simple brown paper sacks from stores are excellent hid-

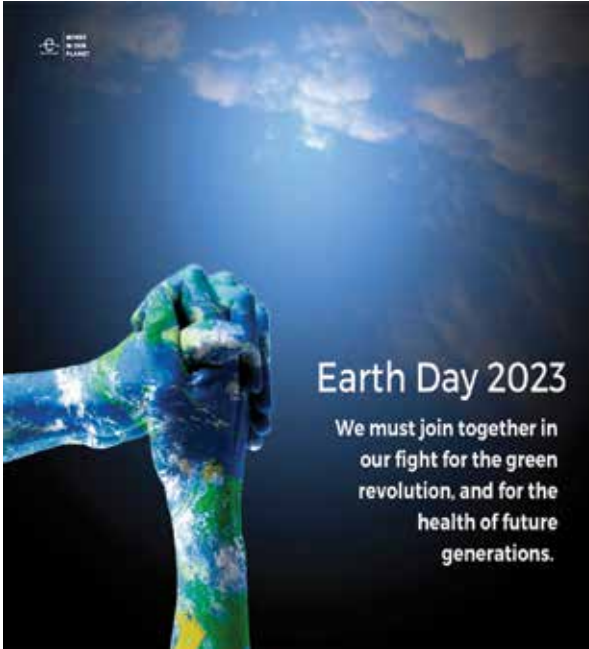


ing sites for shredded Reporter paper and small treats. This offers lots of beak appeal, and hours of cheerful activity. A busy beak is a happy beak. Parrots love to chew. Their beaks and tongues are built for plucking and manipulating, and they are curious creatures. David Woolcock of the World Parrot Trust writes in an article on parrot enrichment that “the cure for boredom is curiosity; there is no cure for curiosity.”

Parrots love a challenge, so Echo volunteers place big branches of neem wood in the aviaries (with the oily

fruit removed) for the Loras to strip the bark. Branches on the tops of the aviary encourage climbing, exercise the aviary birds need. The volunteers create toys and beak challenges from the paper tubes in toilet and kitchen paper, plain cardboard, brown paper sacks, wood scraps, and natural twine—and of course, old issues of the Reporter.

Echo works hard to provide a good life for their ambassador parrots, and though they can never be released, Lola, Kiki, Weebo, and Dushi educate visitors and Bonaireans about the beauty and importance of our protected species. If you find an injured parrot, please call Echo straightaway at +599-701-1188 so they can provide it with the care needed to release it back into the wild, where it belongs. And if you would like to learn more about Echo, check out their website at [www.echo-bonaire.org](http://www.echo-bonaire.org). Remember that parrots are happiest when they are busy. Just ask Lola, Kiki, Weebo, and Dushi!





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