



Longtime Bonaire resident Malin Kaisjer observes a reef.  
 Photo Julie Morgan

## Protecting our precious coral reefs

June is World Ocean month and on June 1, World Reef Awareness Day will be observed on Bonaire and worldwide. World Reef Awareness Day was not proclaimed by a government or the United Nations but by a sunscreen company based on coral reef protection, Raw Elements. The day draws attention to the peril of the world's coral reefs. Its aim: to engage and educate individuals, businesses and organizations to protect our reefs before it's too late.

We learned in the September 2021 journal *One Earth* that one half of the world's coral reef coverage has been lost since the 1950's. The biggest threats are climate change, overfishing, pollution, global warming and ocean acidification caused by the overuse of fossil fuels. Around one-quarter of the carbon dioxide emitted from the burning of fossil fuels every year makes the ocean warmer, more acidic and less hospitable to corals. (Smithsonian)

Earlier this year, Dr. Callum Roberts professor of Marine Conservation at Exeter University said, "Coral reefs are in the cross hairs all over the world. It is an ecosystem that is suffering and is seeing the effects of climate change more than any other ecosystem. If we don't manage it, then it will go to hell."

From their latest research, Roberts and Dr. Eric Meesters, a scientist who also

frequently visits Bonaire, revealed that Bonaire has about 40% coral cover overall while other islands in the Caribbean have 18%.

Roberts said, "Bonaire is lucky because it has had a national park for a very long time that has been working to keep the reefs healthy and they are healthier than other parts of the Caribbean."

Roberts explained that we can boost the resilience of the reefs by reducing and managing all the stresses. We need to manage pressures locally so they can survive the impact of tourism, develop-

ment zoning and sewage.

Over the years Bonaire's coral reefs have had their share of problems including: a decrease in predator fish due to spear fishing, loss of sea urchins and parrotfish that control reef algae, white band and other coral diseases, incoming sargassum and the invasive lionfish. All were addressed successfully or still being handled.

"The thinking is we still have plenty of time but we don't. We need to deal with the data and the accelerating pressures. We need to accelerate the response," said

Roberts. "Simple answer - if you don't care about it, you will lose it. No longer credible are the arguments by people who say nature will take care of itself."

In 2014, Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD) turned up at the port of Miami and spread throughout the Caribbean, proving deadly in some areas. Although Bonaire is one of the last islands to be hit by the disease, it is here. Actions are being taken based on other islands' experiences, qualified scientific knowledge, research and monitoring. A SCTLD advisory committee has been formed. It consists of the OLB (local government), TCB (Tourism Corporation Bonaire), Bonhata (Bonaire Hotel And Tourism Association), STINAPA and other groups. They are working to decide what procedures should be implemented.

In the late Captain Don Stewart's *Reef Windows*, he explained that common sense, necessity and caring are the roots of our marine park.

"One needs to be able to control to a certain extent the use of the reef ecosystem and to ban activities that are known to be harmful to our marine environment. Legislation and enforcement can achieve this. However, this means certain restrictions will be necessary to best use the reef systems."

Julie Morgan



Reef Renewal is celebrating our reefs on World Reef Awareness with a ReefFiesta. They are inviting both divers and snorkelers to come and learn more of what they are doing save our reefs. See page 6. Photo RRFB



## Greenpeace files action

Bonaire residents, Dutch citizens and Greenpeace filed a legal action against The Hague for failure to protect Bonaire against climate change impacts. According to the seven individual plaintiffs, the government's negligence in protecting them from climate change violates their human rights. The action demands that the Netherlands meet its fair share in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to better protect Bonaire against climate change impacts. Several weeks ago, a pre-litigation 'letter before action' was delivered to Prime Minister Rutte.

Andy Palmen, executive director of Greenpeace Netherlands said, "...The government has a duty to protect all municipalities from floods and other life-threatening consequences of the climate crisis...that's why, together with people of Bonaire, we are holding the Dutch State accountable." JM



## Hospital has a critical staff shortage



**Giovanni Frans,**  
director of  
Mariadal

Giovanni Frans, director of Mariadal, says the staff at the hospital is worn down by the aftermath of the covid crisis and by the increased demand for healthcare as the island population both grows and ages. Doctors and nurses who miss work, burn out, or leave the island for greener pastures are hard to replace because Mariadal cannot compete in the international labor market. In the meantime, the hospital's costs of operation are climbing while its government subsidy stays the same.

Frans says the hospital is not turning patients away yet, but it may have to start soon.

According to Frans, the ever-increasing workload has more than doubled staff absenteeism compared to the pre-corona years. "Many nurses went to work elsewhere; they were left with mental fatigue. There are still employees who are sick at home."

It's difficult to recruit medical replacements for Bonaire. The island is not an attractive place for new doctors and nurses because housing is expensive and difficult to find, the cost of living is high, the workload is heavy, and salaries are low. Several employees of the hospital have a second job, and some are known to be depending on the food banks to help feed their families.

Not only have inflation and growth driven up Mariadal's operating costs, government policy decisions have as well. Bonaireans no longer have to go abroad for many medical procedures. The hospital rotates the specialist here. Providing specialist care is more expensive.

The main goal is to get more money. "The board and management of Mariadal has been in close contact with the Care & Youth Caribbean Netherlands Department (ZJCN) and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) for some time now," Frans said.

In the meantime, the hospital has activated its ZiROP (Hospital Disasters & Crisis Response Plan). It has a Crisis Policy Team, an Operational Crisis Team and five action centers to help it deal with the staff shortage. Office staff and voluntary MBO healthcare students, for instance, are taking up part of the workload. DMR (*The Weekly Update, Besreporter*)



On May 17, Acting Kingdom Representative Jan Helmond (L) appointed Ingrid Sealy (R) the Deputy Acting Lieutenant Governor of Bonaire. She will serve as Acting Lieutenant Governor when Acting Lieutenant Governor N. Oleana is absent. Her day job will continue to be head of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Sealy was born in the Netherlands, grew up on Bonaire, and studied criminology at the Free University of Amsterdam. She has held various management positions within the Public Entity Bonaire. DMR.

## Bonaire marches to end poverty

Bonaireans of all parties and cultures recently took to the streets on Friday, the 19th, to protest the level of poverty that still exists in the BES. Since 10-10-10 the islanders have been waiting for The Hague to set a social minimum for the islands that is comparable to the social minimum that protects people in the European Netherlands from poverty. The social minimum determines the minimum wage and also constitutes the government's guarantee that everyone will have enough to live on. The demonstration was timed to coincide around the time of a May 15-17 working visit of the Committee Social Minimum Caribbean Netherlands.

According to Marit Severin of *Caribisch Netwerk* (<https://caribischnetwerk.ntr.nl>), almost 40 percent of Bonaireans live on an income below the poverty line, while food prices, water and electricity are much more expensive here than in Europe. No unemployment benefits are paid here. The childcare subsidy is much lower. Unemployed mothers have no paid maternity leave. The Dutch respond that they pay targeted and temporary subsidies to meet many needs while a social minimum is being determined. DMR. Drone photo by Casper Duomo



**Flotsam & Jetsam, continued on page 13**

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**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21**  
**Free Sunset yoga**  
**Seru Langu 5:30 p.m.**





**Owner Ron Coffy**

Petals, Bonaire's little flower shop just got a lot bigger. After three years in a cute little spot in Antriol they've moved 'uptown' into a new and bigger space.

Back in 2019 owner Ron Coffy was perfectly happy in his job but started the flower shop because it was something he always wanted to do. He thought if he didn't do it right now then he never would. Still working at his job, he opened Petals part time. It became so popular he decided to quit his business job and go full time and that was just as Covid hit. The flower business was flourishing and last August he began thinking it was time to look for a bigger place.

"I was planning ahead, and I knew I wanted to move to a place more centrally located for walk-in traffic. I envisioned an old Bonaire house with a lot of windows - I wrote all this down. I thought the building will find me and in January I saw this building. No way could I afford it, so I split the building with Afro Love hair salon. She's in the back and I'm up front," said Ron.

Petal's moved into their new location a week before for Mother's Day and sold out completely.

"I wanted to create a therapeutic welcoming experience and atmosphere for clients. People can come in and order, sit and have a coffee while we create their flowers," said Ron.

Customers can also browse the new gift line of tableware, vases, books and home décor by Klevering Amsterdam (& Amsterdam).

## Petals is blooming

Petals beautiful flowers are imported fresh from the Netherlands. Specialty orders are available within a week's notice and that includes the delivery. With summer approaching there will be even more beautiful flowers available.

Restaurant, business and corporate orders are welcome on a weekly or monthly subscription basis.

Visit Petals at their new location at Kaya Gen. C.M. Piar #10. Petals is open Monday - Friday, 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Online orders and payments by credit card or local bank transfer can be made by phone, message or WhatsApp at +599-777-2055 and [www.PetalsBonaire.com](http://www.PetalsBonaire.com). Visit Petals on Facebook and Instagram.

*Story/photos Julie Morgan*



## FOR SALE! Oceanfront Condo Den Laman Apartment Grouper



- Location: Hato, oceanfront
- Living area: 135 m2 / 1462 sq.ft.
- 2 bedrooms / 2 bathrooms / storage



- Private pier with direct ocean access
- Dive shop and restaurant onsite

**Virtual 3D tour**



**Asking price \$625,000 US Dollar**

Kaya Grandi 24-A Bonaire, Dutch Caribbean Tel. +599-717-7362  
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# 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.*

## Wrong signal

Mr. Abdul's call to Bonaire's residents, last Saturday, to show their discontent with the Dutch government by turning the national red, white and blue upside down, is IMHO, him being a former president of the local trade union, a bit thoughtless.

In the Netherlands, the upside-down flag is a symbol of protest. That's the part he understood correctly.

The protest it symbolizes, however, was initiated by a number of not-too-bright farmers, headed by the FDF (Farmers Defense Force), boasting a tenacious right-wing ideology. The fact that they still don't carry a racist agenda is probably caused by a lack of awareness of the

## Government plans to sell erfpachts at market value

A market price must be paid in the future for a plot of leasehold land. See page 30 of the *Land Issue Policy 2022-2025*. It can be found here: [https://www.arccarib.com/assets/uploads/court\\_cases/ASOTEKO\\_Grondbeleid\\_2022\\_-\\_2025.pdf](https://www.arccarib.com/assets/uploads/court_cases/ASOTEKO_Grondbeleid_2022_-_2025.pdf)

This was kept silent during the election campaign, but ASOTEKO (Association for Land Distribution Without Corruption) was right. Leasehold land will become unaffordable for the less well off. Those who have money can buy leasehold land. The poor have to see how they can get a site for self-construction. This is going to be almost impossible for them.

## Choose Superman for Lieutenant Governor, if she can speak Papiamentu

Nolly Oleana is filling in as Acting Lieutenant Governor until the Council of Ministers chooses Edison Rijna's replacement. A debate is raging on whether lieutenant governors should be appointed or elected. It's not an easy decision, especially on a small island where qualified candidates are in short supply and are likely to be either outsiders or people with deep family and political commitments in the community.

## The Barking of Dogs and Bite Incidents: Why Have We Normalized Them?

Dogs have always been faithful companions in our society, happily wagging their tails and barking carefreely. Their presence has brought us joy and brightened our days. But somewhere along the way, we have come to consider dog barking and bite incidents as normal. We have become accustomed to it, as if it is part of everyday life. It has become a troubling normalization, and it is high time we face this.

It starts with the barking. We walk or ride through streets and neighborhoods, surrounded by the constant sound of dogs marking their territory or simply announcing their presence. It's like a soundtrack that we no longer consciously notice. We have learned to ignore the noise, despite its impact on our mood and ability to relax.

Bite incidents are even more alarming. Every year, we hear stories of dogs unexpectedly attacking and causing serious injuries. People, athletes, and especially children become victims of these tragic events. But instead of being shocked, we become accustomed to these reports. They may briefly make the news but then fade into oblivion. We seem to no longer fully realize the severity of these incidents.

And then the government takes action. They establish a task force and delegate it to supervision and enforcement, an action meant to reassure us that something is being done. But a year later, it seems to have been more of a symbolic gesture, intended to appease public opinion.

sheer existence of colored people besides Zwarte Piet (whom they deeply love, because it gives them the opportunity to beat up the Dutch activist, Jeffrey Afriyie).

I think, considering Mr. Abdul's ties to the AFBW, a trade union with a – supposedly – more left wing, anti-racist agenda, his appeal is probably a mistake.

Besides, I think it's insulting towards the people of the German federal state of Schleswig-Holstein to constantly use their national flag as a token of insurrection. Although Germans are a very polite people, their patience with rebel rousers abusing their 'Fahne' might end at a certain point. And you don't wanna know what they're capable of when they get mad.

*Gijs Borsten*

Although the Memorandum of the new Land Policy is unclearly written and the Island Council can still go in any direction, it must be taken into account that land allocation as before will soon no longer exist. We understand that this new land policy has been approved by all parties. If we're wrong about that, let us know.

ASOTEKO warns again. All parties are going to dump the poorest part of the population. The old regulation that everyone can get a plot of land from the government against payment of legal fees, measurement and notary costs, will disappear.

Too bad the media doesn't pay enough attention to this. We appeal to the media to find out and to harass the politicians until the truth comes out.

*On behalf of ASOTEKO, Michael Bijkerk*

One of the largest parties, the Demokrat/PDB understandably favors electing the lieutenant governor. They owned the most voters in March 2023. The other parties don't want to be steamrolled. So they believe lieutenant governors should be chosen for their experience and competency, not always an easy sell in the voting booth.

According to former Lieutenant Governor Rijna, The Hague is looking for someone "who really comes from Bonaire and speaks Papiamentu." Everyone agrees with those criteria.

*Don M. Ricks*

ion. The actual impact of such measures remains limited. The task force holds meetings, guidelines are developed, and campaigns are launched. But what really changes in our streets? What changes in the way we experience dog barking and bite incidents?

Why do some people choose to have a large number of dogs, especially in residential neighborhoods where they often roam freely without supervision? It is often said that these dogs serve as guard dogs and help people feel safer in their homes. However, it cannot be the intention for the safety of owners to come at the expense of unsuspecting passersby, other wildlife, or even playing children. Many of these dogs live in deplorable conditions and are sometimes completely neglected by their owners. This is a situation we must prevent.

It is time to break this pattern. We need to become aware of the normalization of dog barking and the seriousness of bite incidents. We must create a safe environment in which both people and dogs can thrive. This requires close collaboration between the government, communities, and dog owners themselves.

First and foremost, we need to invest in education and awareness. Dog owners need to be informed of the responsibility that comes with owning a dog. They need to learn how to raise their dogs in a safe and respectful manner. Additionally, as a society, we need to learn how to responsibly interact with dogs to minimize bite incidents.

It is crucial for the government to take this issue seriously, establish legislation, and actively enforce it.

*Hendrik Keers*

# Ask Bob

*Bonaire real estate advice*



**Question:** I know that if I buy a house or a lot, I pay 5% transfer tax on the purchase price. If I buy a lot and build, do I pay 5% on the home I build? Troy

Great question, Troy. You won't pay transfer tax on the cost of new construction, but you will pay 8% ABB tax, (which is a general sales tax) that is applied to the labor cost, as well as some goods and services. The amount of ABB varies with the product or service.

When you pay an invoice for a service such as gardening or plumbing, it includes a 6% ABB tax, which the service provider pays to the tax office. When we import goods, the retailer usually pays an 8% ABB tax at the time that the product is imported into Bonaire. Builders deliver both goods and services, so the invoices you receive from your builder will have 8% added to the cost of both materials and labor.

There are many variables in ABB tax, so for more detailed information consult the tax office or talk to your builder about costs.

All the best, Bob

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

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**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**

## Loans available to promote agri-business on Bonaire

Present and prospective entrepreneurs can now apply for Agriloans. Agriloans are business loans provided by Qredits and the OLB to stimulate production of local fruit, vegetables and meat on Bonaire.

Those wanting to start or expand an agri-business can borrow up to \$100,000 at 2% interest. The term of the loan can be up to 60 months, and borrowers may qualify for a grace period of six or 12 months during which they pay only the interest.

Separate from the Agriloan project, an 'AGRI Business Academy' is being launched for Agriloan borrowers, or entrepreneurs who are already in business, or those who are thinking of starting an agri-business. The course covers technical aspects of farming and business skills. It is a 10 to 12 week program with two to three sessions per week. People can register for the AGRI Business Academy online until June 9, 2023.

The Agriloan project was officially launched at a gathering at LVV. Deputy Hennyson Thielman said, "This product creates extra financial room for growth and sustainability of existing agricultural companies and a good start for new companies in the sector." He promised the Executive Council will continue to be alert for opportunities to further develop the agricultural sector on Bonaire.

Eric Curiel received the first Agriloan. He has been breeding goats as a hobby. He intends to increase his production and market high quality goat meat locally and in the region. *DMR (Bonaire.nu)*

*The Bonaire Reporter May 24 - June 7, 2023*

# POLICE REPORT

## Property Crime

**May 14/15.** A dark gray Kymco Agility scooter, registration number Mf-3059, was stolen. It was parked in front of a house on Kaya Sabana.

**May 9/10.** A black Senzo Sports scooter, registration number MF-4385, was stolen between May 9 - 10. It was parked, locked with a chain lock in front of an apartment complex on Kaya Nikiboko North.

**May 10.** Three men aged 56, 53, and 23 were arrested after a short chase when caught red-handed stealing goats. They were also charged for not complying with a demand from the police, vandalism and violation of the firearms law BES. During the arrest, the car, the dead goats, telephones, knives, a machete, firearms and ammunition were seized.

**May 6/7.** The police station received a report of theft of goats at a kunuku in Lagun around 7 p.m. When the kunuku owner caught the thief slaughtering a goat, the suspect ran away and the owner gave chase. After the suspect threatened the owner with a knife, the owner stopped the chase and the goat thief fled on foot. Police seized the suspect's car and the next day, May 7, the owner of the car was ordered to report to the police station. Here the suspect, a man, 58, was arrested for theft, poaching and vandalism.

**May 4/5.** A gray Symorbiz scooter, registration number MF-1791, was stolen. It was parked locked in front of a house on Kaya Socrates.

**May 3.** In the early evening, two masked men armed with, probably, a firearm entered the 'toko' on Kaya Rafaela in Antriol and took cash from the cash register. They fled before police arrived.

*Do you have information relevant to the investigation? Call 911/112 or the anonymous tip line 9310.*

## Arrests

**May 21.** In the night a man, 38, was arrested for assault with a weapon. The man had beaten and assaulted a woman with a machete.

**May 19.** Two men aged 53 and 63 were arrested for violating the BES Opium Act. When the suspects were stopped for control, a cocaine-like powder was found.

**May 17.** In the night a man, 32, was arrested on Kaya Mohicano for violating the BES Opium Act, not complying with police demands and for driving without a valid driver's license and valid insurance.

**May 12.** A house in the Antriol district was searched in connection with a recent theft. Goods were seized and a man, 48, was arrested for theft, handling stolen goods, violation of the BES Opium Act and the BES Weapons Act. The investigation in this case is ongoing and several arrests cannot be ruled out.

**May 6.** In the early morning a man, 50, was arrested at Kaya Karaña for aggravated assault with a weapon. He assaulted a man with a piece of wood. The victim was taken to hospital by ambulance.

## Driving under the influence

**May 21.** At around 10:30 p.m. a man, 41, was arrested at Kaya Nikiboko South for driving under the influence and for becoming aggressive towards the officers. His car was impounded for further investigation.

**May 18.** Around 8:40 p.m. a collision took place on Kaya Korona. No one was injured. One of the drivers, aged 66, was arrested for driving under the influence and fined for not having a valid driver's license and insurance papers with him.

**May 7.** A man, 58, was arrested for driving under the influence. A report came in about a car that was snaking on the road. The man's driver's license was confiscated.

**May 6.** A man, 51, was arrested for driving under the influence. A patrol saw the suspect driving swaying on the road and stopped the suspect. The man's driver's license was confiscated and his car taken to the police station for safekeeping.

**May 5.** A man, 32, was detained. He was involved in a two-vehicle collision on Kaya Korona. He received a ticket for driving without a license and was arrested for driving under the influence.

## Traffic Accidents

**May 19.** Around 2 a.m. a hit & run took place on Kaya Isla Riba. A witness stated that she saw a red pick-up with registration number V-2325 collide with the parked car.

*Are you a victim of a hit & run? Try to identify the vehicle's license plate, type and color, and if possible, the driver. Report this immediately to the police. The person who*

*drove away has three hours to turn himself in. After three hours, the victim can report a violation and the police will start an investigation that could lead to criminal consequences.*

**May 16.** Around 5 p.m. a car and a scooter collided head-on at the intersection of Kaya Amsterdam and Kaminda Djabou. The driver of the scooter was taken to hospital by ambulance for medical treatment.

**May 14.** Around 6:30 p.m. on the corner of Kaya Macario Sint Jago and Kaya Orgel an underage cyclist was hit by a car. The cyclist was taken to hospital by ambulance. The victim's condition is stable.

**May 4.** At approximately 10:40 a.m. cars collided on Kaya Nikiboko South. Car 1 was driving north on the Kaya Nikiboko South but suddenly had to brake when Car 2 drove onto the road. This caused another car to collide with the back of Car 1. The driver of Car 1 was taken to hospital by ambulance.

## Public Safety

**May 21.** A tourist from the U.S. became unwell and passed away as she entered the water to dive.

**May 18/19.** Around 3:30 p.m. May 18 a woman came to the intake desk to report that she was assaulted by two suspects while on the fishing pier on Kaya J.N.E. Craane. On May 19th two minors, boys aged 17 and 16, were arrested. The case is ongoing.

**May 10 & 4.** Two catering facilities were checked for safety measures by the Supervision and Enforcement Department, the fire brigade and the police. The team inspected items including fire extinguishers, emergency lighting, emergency exits and room size (to check the maximum number of people allowed). The safety checks will continue in the coming weeks.

**May 11.** An American diver ran into problems in the vicinity of the salt pier. When the patrol arrived, the diver had been brought to shore and salt company employees had begun CPR. Ambulance personnel took over CPR but the diver died upon arrival at the hospital.

## Fire

**May 11.** A pick up caught fire in a yard of a home on Kaminda Lac. The fire brigade extinguished the fire. The cause of the fire is not yet known. No one was injured.

# Police present 2022 statistics

On Thursday, May 11, the Corps Management Team (KMT) presented Bonaire's Crime and traffic figures for 2022.

**Property crime cases** in 2022 included various forms of theft (262), theft with violence (6) burglary and other (149). There was a remarkable decrease in burglary in businesses and homes from 2019 and a demonstrable increase in scams and deceit. In 2022 the Cyber Crime Unit was formed which resulted in more reports of cyber scams and deception.

**Violent offense cases** in 2022 included various forms of assault (168): murder/manslaughter (0), attempted murder/manslaughter (8), vandalism (96), threats (99), sex offenses (13), juvenile (10) and child abuse (4). Compared to previous years, there was a striking 90% drop in general assault and a drop in reports of domestic violence (34), partly due to the force's collaboration with agencies such as Akseso (Organization for Care and Social Assistance).

**Drugs:** Police seized 1744.8kg of marijuana and 4040.5 kg cocaine and arrested 19 suspects for violating the Opium Act.

**Cyber Crime:** The unit received 27 reports of cyber crime. The Cyber Crime Unit conducted five criminal investigations and sent two cases to the Dutch Police for further investigation

**Investigations:** the Problem-Oriented Team conducted 12 criminal investigations; the Incident Targeted Team conducted 149; the Financial Economic Team four; and the Digital Team 215.

## Basic Police Care Statistics.

**Traffic reports:** 725 collisions; 573 fines issued for traffic violations; cases of fevering (63) and street racing (7); 104 drivers arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.

**The Common Crime department** worked on 67 cases and 35 business cases.

# OM appeals verdict

The Public Prosecution Service (OM) is appealing against the verdict of Emiliano T. who was sentenced by the Court to a prison term of three years, of which two years were suspended.

The accused was sentenced for causing a fatal traffic accident on Christmas Day, in which he killed cyclist Paul Berenzinski while driving under the influence of alcohol. In addition to his prison sentence, the accused was suspended from driving for three years. Both the Public Prosecution Service and the surviving relatives thought the sentence imposed was too light. The Public Prosecution Service has now decided to appeal against the verdict.

The appeal will be heard by the Joint Court of Justice of Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba, where the case will again be heard by three judges. However, it could take some time before the appeal is heard, and Emiliano T. is expected to regain his liberty before the end of 2023.

The defendant's lawyer explained that her client's stay in prison is not postponed until the appeal is heard, but that his sentence begins now and he will regain his

freedom at the end of the one-year sentence originally imposed. "If changes are made to the sentence and the sentence becomes heavier, he may have to go back to prison, but there is also a chance that the sentence will remain the same," says lawyer Marga van Lieshout. (Bonaire.nu)

# People in detention learn work skills and citizenship

People detained in the Caribbean Netherlands Correctional Institution can participate in educational programs that help them develop marketable skills, give structure to their detention time, and create opportunities to perform acts of good citizenship. When they are released they are better prepared to rejoin society and live productive and fulfilling lives.

The project is called *Ban Pa Kambio* - 'We are going for change.' The courses are provided in collaboration with Fundashon FORMA. Detainees who can read and write well can enter MBO 1 training in Construction, Green and Hospitality. Many jobs are available on Bonaire in these three sectors.

Each year institutions or foundations are selected to receive students in the intermediate vocational education course. This year a pair of student detainees made two medication trays and two benches for Fundashon Kalor di Hogar, a care home for the elderly. Another pair filled 22 trays with fruit for the residents and staff of Kalor di Hogar. *DMR*



## The Charming Prikichi

by “Mel” McCombie, Ph.D.



Echo's tagline is Parrots and People, and they are chiefly focused on work allowing Bonaire's threatened yellow-shouldered Amazon parrot, or Lora, to thrive. But I'd like to talk about the other parrot on the island, the brown-throated conure (a species of smaller parrot). Most folks just call these birds parakeets, or prikichi in Papiamentu. Happily, this lovely parrot is not threatened like the Lora, and it's possible many of us take the prikichi for granted. I'm a big fan of the prikichi, a little charmer with personality plus, and all the behaviors that make parrots so engaging.

Loras are pretty big birds, around 35 centimeters or 12 inches in body length. Prikichi are smaller, with bodies around 25 centimeters or 10 inches. Prikichi have marigold-yellow heads, and a slight brush of brown on their necks. Bonaire's prikichi is distinct from the brown-throated conure of other Caribbean and southern American locales because its head is almost entirely covered in splendid vivid yellow feathers, making it a truly endemic, or Bonairean, species. And I am prejudiced when I say the prikichi is by far the prettiest of all the subspecies of

brown-throated conures.

Listening also tells us which is which. The Lora has a lower, almost gurgling call, whereas the prikichi's vocalizations tend to be higher pitched. My husband and I call them “pri-screechis”!

You are likely to see prikichis around town, houses, and resorts. Most Loras stay in the more northerly parts of Bonaire, but you will find prikichi almost everywhere on the island.

There's an excellent summary of the differences between Loras and prikichi here: <https://www.bonaire-birdtours.com/yellow-shouldered-parrot-or-brown-throated-parakeet/>

The lively, social prikichi is a beautiful bird. A few years ago, I was walking around Captain Don's Habitat, and a prikichi came up to me; it seemed unafraid of me, and I suspect it was a former pet that had gotten loose. I was able to really examine its feathers. They were an amazing rainbow of colors up close, iridescent blue, red, marigold yellow, and rich green. Such lapidary tones took my breath away.

One of my friends has a reflective coating on the windows of her house, and the prikichi are particularly attracted to the mirror-like surfaces. She sees them perched on her windowsill, seemingly admiring themselves—sort of like those one-way mirrors you see on TV shows in police interrogation rooms! The parading prikichi, cocking their heads, making feeding gestures to their reflections, are hilarious.

Local cacti are inimical to humans, but you will often see prikichi perched amidst their thorns. Perhaps it helps to protect the birds, but prikichi also love to eat cactus flowers after the rains. They also enjoy the pulp of the cactus, which

**Prikichi, continued on page 13**

## Let's Celebrate Our Reefs on World Reef Awareness Day

**“Protecting and restoring our dynamic reefs here on Bonaire takes all of us. The goal of ReeFiesta is to get more of our community involved in coral restoration and give everyone the opportunity to make a positive impact on our reefs!”**

– Ernst Noyons, Reef Restoration Technician | Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire

Marking the start of World Oceans Month, World Reef Awareness Day is held Thursday, June 1 at ReeFiesta 2023. On this day we recognize the importance of healthy coral reefs and the need for protection and restoration efforts around the world. This is an island-wide, all-day event hosted by Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire (RRFB) in collaboration with 13 partner dive shops.

ReeFiesta is a unique opportunity for divers of any skill level to have hands-on coral restoration experience and non-divers can see our nursery and restoration sites up close. After an educational presentation and training session, RRFB staff and dive instructors will lead a guided snorkel tour and synchronized shore dives at seven coral nursery sites around Bonaire. Participants will reconvene for

an evening celebration on the Buddy Dive beach, where snacks and drinks will be provided.

RRFB is committed to limiting the spread of Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD) throughout Bonaire's reefs and will require all participants to follow proper gear disinfection protocol by STINAPA.

In an effort to make coral restoration as accessible as possible and encourage new coral lovers to get involved in restoration efforts, the event is completely FREE for all attendees. Registration closes on Monday, May 29 or when event capacity is reached. Register early at: <https://www.reefnewalbonaire.org/reefiesta-2023/>

ReeFiesta 2023 is hosted by RRFB in partnership with AB-Dive, Beyond the Corals, Buddy Dive, DIVI Dive, Flamingo Diving, Harbour Village, Technical Diving Services, Toucan Diving, Tropical Divers, VIP Diving, Wannadive, Xprodiver and 4 Wheel Diving.

ReeFiesta sponsors are World Wildlife Fund, Ocean Oasis Beach Club and Orco Bank. *Written by RRFB*



Working at a Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire (RRFB) coral nursery. Credit: RRFB

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# Running to safety!

Every year, Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB) relocates several nests on the beaches of Bonaire and Klein Bonaire for the safety of the eggs. This is a precise job that has to be executed carefully. A nest is relocated when it is laid too close to the waterline or if baby turtles can get disorientated at hatching because of light pollution.

Approximately 60 days after the eggs have been laid, the sea turtles will be ready to hatch. They will open the egg-shell first and will start pushing down the sand and eggshells. Slowly they will come closer to the surface and as soon as they have reached it, they will follow the light: the reflection of the moon on the waves of the ocean, to get to the water.

At most of the beaches on Bonaire, it is no problem for the hatchlings to find their way to the open ocean. However, on some of the beaches this is a little bit more difficult. A good example of this is Te Amo and Donkey Beach. Because of the bright lights of the landing strip just on the other side of the road, sea turtles can get disoriented. The hatchlings will



start walking towards the airport instead of the ocean. Because of this, last year STCB decided to relocate all the nests from Te Amo and Donkey Beach to the beaches in the south or Klein Bonaire, where light pollution is not an issue.

Every morning, STCB's Beachkeepers patrol the nesting beaches of Bonaire. During these patrols, they will look for nest activity by searching for tracks in the sand. When a nest that needs to be relocated is found, we will do this imme-

diately. The relocation of a nest should be done as soon as possible after the nest has been laid, preferably within the first couple of hours. For the relocation of a nest, we have to proceed carefully. First, we will dig carefully to find the top egg of the nest. Then, the eggs and sand from the nest are placed in a bucket. It is important to take some of the sand from the original nest because the mother leaves a mucus layer around the eggs when she deposits them into the sand.

Once we have found a safer location for the nest, we will create a new nest chamber at the same depth as the original nest. After that, we will coat the nest with a layer of sand from the original nest, so we can deposit the eggs again, in the same order back as the old nest. This way, hatching success will be highest, meaning that as many hatchlings as possible can be saved.

The relocation of nests that are in danger is made possible by our donors. The following companies and families have already adopted a nest this year: Alan & Joan Zale, Alex Bakhuizen & Anna Vasylieva, ALLVAT, AutoCity, Best Cellars Bonaire, Blue Jay, Bruce & Donna Hood, BUTS Technical Consultancy, Cargill, Carib Inn, Dive Friends Bonaire, DNM Interim, Gaia Concepts, Hamlet Oasis, The Laughing Seahorse, Moon Tower, Praktima, Qvillas, RE/MAX, Steve & Meredith Schnoll, Sunbelt Realty, Toes Montage BV, VIP Diving and anonymous donors.

**Would you like to help making these relocations possible? Adopt a nest by emailing to [cepa@bonaireturtles.org](mailto:cepa@bonaireturtles.org) or find more information on our website [www.bonaireturtles.org](http://www.bonaireturtles.org).** Kaj Schut



## DIVE #1: Diving Medicine

Diving Medicine, also referred to as "Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine", is typically involved with the diagnosis, treatment and the prevention of medical conditions that can be caused by humans (divers) entering the undersea environment. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) is used in the treatment of decompression sickness and has also shown great effectiveness in the treatment of conditions such as gas gangrene, carbon monoxide poisoning, wound healing, radiation injuries, hearing and vision loss, anemia and tissue grafting. Diving Med-

icine includes the effects on the body of gases under pressure, the diagnosis as well as the treatment of conditions caused by marine hazards. Of major concern, is the relationship of the diver's fitness to dive and how this effects a diver's safety with underwater activity. Hyperbaric medicine is integral to Diving Medicine, since recompression in a hyperbaric chamber is used as a treatment protocol for two of the most significant diving-related illnesses, decompression sickness (DCS) and arterial gas embolism (AGE), either of which can have significant effects on a diver's quality of life.

Recompression Chamber Bonaire is here to help with your medical needs. Upon reopening in the near future, we will be equipped to provide a comprehensive approach to your Diving Medicine and Wound Care needs. This series of articles is intended to help with your understanding that the "diver" plays an important part in his/her diving health requirements.

Beginning with an assessment of "fitness to dive" all the way to suspicion of a diving related injury. The diver along with his/her buddy, your dive-master, family, and friends are all important when there is a diving related injury. Our chamber on Bonaire is not equipped to receive patients directly. All patients who suspect a diving related injury must be evaluated in the Emergency Room of the hospital in Kralendijk. Referral to one of the Chamber Doctors will be made by the Emergency Room Medical Staff if deemed appropriate for Hyperbaric Treatment and/or consultation.

Knowledge is the key to success. "Plan your dive and then Dive your plan". Respect your dive computer and dive tables, they have been developed for a very good reason. As we all know, sometimes "shi\_" happens, but don't worry, RCB is here for your needs. If you have a suspicion of a dive related injury, don't delay, don't ignore, go to the Emergency Room for an

evaluation.

I hope to provide you with a series of articles that will improve your understanding of diving fitness and how to avoid decompression injuries (decompression sickness and arterial gas embolism). So here we go, everyone in the water!



*Dr. George Matook first visited Bonaire in 1979, and now lives here full-time. A certified diver since 17, Dr. Matook has been a Dive Medicine Practitioner in Key*

*Largo. He's a Board Certified Orthopedic Surgeon who served as a medical doctor in the United States Air Force for eight years. Dr. Matook and two other Recompression Chamber qualified doctors have been hired to reactivate Bonaire's recompression chamber.*

# Make Bonaire Accessible

by Ria Evers-Dokter

## Memories....

It is a nice day, a holiday, and I am sitting on the porch enjoying the wind, the sun and the birdsongs. And I am pondering....

Yesterday it was seven years ago that we, my husband Anthony and I, came back to Bonaire after a 14 year long period in Holland. Though Anthony was born in Curaçao, he wanted to move back to Bonaire. All those years we have lived in Holland he remembered dushi Bonaire.

Because he had suffered a serious stroke, he was severely handicapped. We lived in a special housing project, built close to a care facility for the elderly. We had a little porch, so being outside was

not a problem. But the vista he had all day was the neighbor's garage door.

I kept the Antillean traditions alive for him, spoke Papiamentu all day, cooked kuminda krioyo, invited Papiamentu speaking friends over but life simply was not the same. He needed to feel the warm sun on his skin, he needed to hear his friends driving by yelling jokingly in his own language, he needed to go back where he belonged. And the same counted for me.

With an enormous help from our friends, we managed and could fly back home.

When we flew close to Bonaire you could see a little piece of Slagbaai, we flew over Klein Bonaire and then we touched down.

And here we were confronted with the first problem of accessibility. Anthony needed to get lifted out by three tall men and carried down the stairs.

Our daily life began, and every day accessibility became visible more and more. I am a fighter and a writer, so I decided to start writing a blog about all the problems we confronted. We had picked Bonaire to go back to and there was the ZVK, so we had big hopes that a change was going to come soon.

In the meantime, I learned to improvise. I learned that if Mohammed could not come to the mountain, the mountain would have to come to Mohammed. Instead of going somewhere, I tried to get the plans arranged at our house. I learned where to get help and what kind of help exactly was available. I learned who I could rely on and who not. I learned when to open my mouth and when to keep it closed.

I just did not quite understand why the difference between Bonaire and Holland was so big. After all, in Holland we had experienced the start of the WMO and

had enjoyed the help very much. Bonaire was a special province of Holland, so why was there this huge difference?

Anthony passed away three years ago, and he has not been able to experience the start of the ZVW Group. I did, and that was a big change.

I got to join the MiVaBo and keep on fighting for the change. People with disabilities have rights, their needs cannot be ignored. I hope I can soon look back on big changes.



*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

## Damselfish

Years ago, when a spotted moray moved into a pipe, I hoped for it to get acclimated to me. One day, when I was just watching the moray -- something suddenly chomped down on my ear!

If you’ve not experienced this, here’s what happened: my brain was drifting along on spotted moray, was unexpectedly alerted to bite! and merged those things into moray bite! Yikes!

Just before I bolted, I realized it couldn’t have been a moray bite. The moray I was watching didn’t move. Okay, it could have been another moray, but on reflection it didn’t feel like a moray bite. I looked around, and there was a ... damselfish. Smirking at me.

I’d learned about damselfish in the Marine Environment Orientation section of Rick Frehsee’s scuba courses. After the section on sharks, morays and scorpionfish, Rick would continue, “There is one aggressive sea creature around here who would just as soon attack you as look at you.”

The students’ eyes would grow wide and there would be a collective intake of breath. After all, they’d seen Rick’s underwater photos of barracudas and even crocodiles. What in the world did Rick fear?

“Luckily, these fierce fish are damselfish, and they only reach about five inches in length.” There would then be a general exhalation, and students’ eyes would return to normal size. “And they only attack if you’re too close to their gardens.”

In the years since then, divers have better gear and buoyancy control and a greater understanding of the need to keep distance between themselves and the reef, so there are probably fewer damselfish attacks than there used to be.

But... gardens?

Yep. Damsels don’t bite for food, they bite to defend their food, which is generally algae growing on dead cor-



**Sergeant majors don't keep a garden, but this father is guarding his eggs from the photographer. The eggs adhere to the flat surface Dad prepares for them, and can be seen as grayish dots underneath him.** Photo Julie Morgan

al. If there’s not enough space to support its garden requirements, an enterprising damsel solves that problem by killing coral. They take nibbles out of the living stony coral around their gardens until individual coral polyps die, then use the newly-exposed skeleton for more algae.

I’d have predicted that gardening damsels would be delighted with Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease, since suddenly there are many new areas, free of living coral, available for their gardens. This is not happening, though, for at least a couple of reasons. First, gardening damsels settle as youngsters in the area they garden, and

stay there for life; they’re unlikely to move to the new spots. So, second, gardening damselfish who settle from the plankton during the SCTLD epidemic will have many more areas than usual to select. It’ll be interesting to see if we have a population increase in gardening damsels.

Their habits of killing coral and attacking people have kept damselfish well away from most people’s My Favorite Fish lists. Their pugnacious expression contributes to their lack of popularity, too. I wonder if any newly-settled damsels will change their belligerent frowns to smug grins.

All this writing about damsels has reminded me of that famous phrase from fairy tales: damsel in distress. In half a century of diving, I’ve only seen one damsel(fi)s(h) in distress, and that distress didn’t last long. I was visiting Captain Don (the name I gave to the spotted moray in the pipe), who had lived in the pipe for years when this event took place. The smirking damselfish was around for all those years, too, making sneak attacks on me and, occasionally, on Captain Don (the moray).

Over the years, though, the smirking damsel made so many unanswered attacks that it became complacent. Or something else caught its attention. Or maybe Captain Don (the moray) was secretly visiting the gym. At any rate, on this day, when the smirking damsel pecked at Captain Don (the moray), Captain Don turned his head in a flash and caught it. We all saw a damsel in distress, but only for the few seconds it took Captain Don (the moray) to shift the smirker into a head-first position and swallow it.



*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.*



Keller Williams (KW), international real estate company, gave a much needed facelift to Krusada Walk-in-Antriol as part of the KW Red Day challenge ‘give where we live’ on May 11.

Krusada provides support to Bonaireans dealing with drug abuse, alcoholism and recent prison release.

Back L to R: Larry Holling, Charlis Janga, Jason Bradley, Gita Pendjol (on scaffolding)

Front L to R: Monique Bruinewoud, Fenna Dietzel (behind Monique), Denise Holst, Brenda Holling, Lars Albers, Andrea Cabalzar, Tina Bradley





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# Piss and Vinegar

by Gijs Borsten

## A new kind of racism?

I. Some time ago, I was sitting, with about eight others, representing almost every ethnic group available on Bonaire, under the canopy outside Botika Sabana, waiting my turn to hand in my prescription. It was slightly after 2 p.m., and the lady behind the window had just taken in the first prescription notes after her lunch break.

A New Makamba entered. New Makambas can be recognized by the color of their skin. They always are slightly too tanned to be sophisticated. Not like a traditional Makamba, who stays out of the sun as much as he can, or like a tourist, with a skin tone somewhere between pale white and bright red.

He was a septuagenarian, skinny. He had a mission to accomplish, so much was clear. His eyes were focused on the little window.

He passed the group waiting under the canopy without saying a word, or without so much appearing to be aware of their presence, and started banging the little window. "Hello!" he said. "Hello! Anyone!" And he banged a little more. Nothing happened. The people waiting collectively switched off their phones. "Hello!" the man tried once more, and gave a few more bangs. They were considerably weaker than the first volley.

"Hey!" someone sitting on one of the plastic chairs under the canopy, intervened. "You!" The old man turned around and stared at her. He started waving a small piece of paper. "I only have to hand in my prescription!" he said. He turned back to the window and tried a few more fruitless bangs.

"What do you think WE are waiting for?" the lady said. For the school bus to arrive? The man looked a bit puzzled. Four or five people waved their prescriptions at him. "See?" she said. "You're last. Last."

He hesitated a moment, realizing he, too, was doomed to wait till it was his turn. He sighed, got himself a chair, and spent the next forty minutes waiting without saying another word. The taste of victory is sweet...

II. One Friday afternoon I was walking on Kaya Grandi, when I noticed a kid about 17 years old, standing on the sidewalk, with his behind only inches away from the face of a man who was sitting on the steps in front of one of the garment shops bordering the street. Kind of like he wanted to fart him in the face. The man used to sit there every evening, watching the people going by, and smoking the occasional cigarette. It's what he did, spending his evenings.

The kid was tall, about six feet, and was halfway the process of turning around toward his parents, about a hundred feet away, shouting something to them in an accent that indicated his origins were somewhere in the far eastern areas of the Motherland, probably close to Shith\*le (O.). His shouting was about something in the shop window, right behind the man sitting there.

"Hey," I said to the kid, "don't you think it's a bit rude standing so close to the guy behind you? Right in his face, I mean?" "What do you mean, rude?" he asked. "Well," I said, "you are practically standing on top of him, leaving him hardly any room to breathe. Don't you think he might consider your behavior disturbing? Slightly?"

The kid looked at me. "Disturbing? Why? Those people have to get used to us! Bonaire belongs to Motherland! We can do whatever we want here! We pay for them!"

Those words silenced me. I hoped I tapped into the remaining membership of an outing of Shi\*hole's looney asylum, but I fear his attitude will prove to be emblematic for the new generation of Makambas coming to Bonaire. We have to get used to them; I suppose.

III. I was attending a meeting, somewhere. A millennial of the more dynamic kind pitched a new concept in styling hotels and/or resorts. A bit like what Bistro meant for the restaurant business in the seventies. All very sophisticated. Central acquisition, uniformity in decoration, all very cost effective. It's been done for five decades, but it's new to Bonaire.

The only problem, he said, was to staff the various branches. "We don't want locals, we prefer trainees from Motherland," he said. "You can't trust people from here." He's been living on the island for a few years, and he already found out Bonaireans suck.

How about one of the more successful – and oldest – resorts on Bonaire fully under local management? How about the members of a strong, well-educated Bonairean middle class running almost every company that doesn't involve tourism? Got a blind spot for them?

IV. Lord, have mercy on us...

*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.*



## Rotary flea market raises \$22,000

The Rotary Club Bonaire held its traditional Feria again on April 27. Feria is a flea market that offers used and new stuff at bargain prices. More than \$22,000 was raised for community causes. The first recipient was the Akseeso, the family care foundation. The money will pay for a weekend at Slagbaai for 35 young people from low income families. The Rotary will also fund other social projects over the next 12 months.

From the opening at 9 a.m., hundreds of people descended on the flea market at Wilhelmina Square. Rotary members had been collecting donated items for a year and sorting them into storage units. This year many of the items for sale were brand new. They had been donated by stores. After the sale, remaining items were re-donated to the Animal Shelter.

**Reminder: The free lease has expired on the building where Animal Shelter volunteers have been running a popular flea market every Saturday for years. They are desperately looking for a new building, or even for an open lot where a few containers can be parked. DMR**



Bonaire's barrel organ is a wooden box and a cylinder with up to eight songs. To make music you turn a handle to turn the cylinder. The barrel organ is accompanied by a musician playing a "Wiri," a percussion instrument. As part of Bonaire's rich cultural heritage, the barrel organ needs to be preserved, safeguarded and maintained.

On Saturday, May 27, Nos Zjilea will be held at Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei with the theme: "Let's Play Creole Music." Frank Carolina will share his knowledge of the barrel organ and songs you can play on it. He will play the barrel organ and give you the opportunity to try it out yourself.

Ace Foundation is holding various music workshops for Bonaire's kids so they can try different instruments. Ace works to acquaint children with musical rhythms from around the globe, and most importantly, with local and Caribbean music and dance.

Nos Zjilea features a cultural market with local art and fresh products such as locally produced natural juices, herbal teas, and delicacies. The kitchen opens at 10 a.m. with a wide variety of soups and various local Creole dishes, including a delicious grill.

All this in a cozy atmosphere with "LIVE" performances by the local bands "Ace Kids Club," "Kulturando" and "Nikky Mix."

Experience Nos Zjilea, the monthly cultural event of Bonaire, on Saturday, May 27 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei. It doesn't get more local than this. For more information, please visit Mangazina di Rei's Facebook fan page, [www.facebook.com/mangazinadirei](http://www.facebook.com/mangazinadirei).

Izain Mercera



# Ann Caradonna, pioneer in dive tourism



Ann underwater with dive guide Chano Thielman in the early days prior to the ‘no gloves’ policy enforced by Bonaire Marine Park to protect our coral. Archive Photo

Caradonna Caribbean Tour’s founder and early promoter of dive tourism on Bonaire, Ann Caradonna, celebrated her 80th birthday with a party at her island home on May 19. A small group of longtime friends of more than 30 years gathered to celebrate and honor her. Ann first came to Bonaire in the early 80’s while traveling the Caribbean with her partner, Frank Recca. She initially promoted

Saba at the request of a hotel owner when he discovered she was a travel agent. Cammie Akins, a Caradonna employee since 1991 said, “There were very humble beginnings in Ann’s laundry where she set up a small office. She took advertisements out in newspapers for Saba and put together vacation packages for travelers.” As sales increased, Ann eventually extended her rep-

resentation to the Netherlands Antilles by including Curaçao and Bonaire. Ann began Caradonna Caribbean Tours in 1985 with her partner Frank Recca. As Ann was a certified PADI instructor she was able to experience each dive destination and provide the best in personalized service. She worked closely with Bonaire tourism promoter and entrepreneur, Hugo Gerharts in the mid-80’s. Caradonna promoted a low-cost package for dive travelers known as ‘Bonaire Bonanza’ at Sunset Beach Hotel (formerly known as Bonaire Beach Hotel). This first-ever type of package included air, hotel accommodations, boat and shore diving, car rental and other bonus items. The bonanza allowed thousands of early dive travelers who didn’t know anything

about Bonaire to experience the island. Cammi said, “I think Ann Caradonna was one of the pioneers for dive travel. She created a really successful brand and I’m so happy I was a part of it.” When Ann sold the business in 2004, the name was changed a few years later to Caradonna Dive Adventures. The Caradonna legacy continues to work with dozens of suppliers on island to represent Bonaire globally as one of the top dive destinations. Ann spends several months of the year at her home in Bonaire to the delight of her longtime friends. She and her partner Frank have been together since the 80s. Ann is the mother of two children, Lisa and Nick, and has four grandchildren. Julie Morgan



Longtime friends Eky and Francey Allee celebrate with Ann. Photo Julie Morgan

## A Garden? Just Do It! by Angliet, Nature Lover Competing with the birds

Where to start? There are so many interesting things to talk about. Okay, here I go talking about fruit because it is everywhere. While biking around I noticed that knepps are back. One day I passed this huge knepp tree in Nikiboko North and saw some knepps on the ground. So I looked up at the tree and wow, it was full of knepps. Really, every stem had a bunch of knepps. I jumped off the bike, picked some from the tree and they tasted great but in a few days they would be really juicy. So I passed by again and you know what? The tree was almost empty and the ground was covered with damaged knepps. Who did that? It was the birds. What a waste for all these very healthy, delicious rare fruits. Take a look at the picture, beautiful knepps and in one morning they are all gone. I am seeing the same thing in my garden. The first row of my bacoba was getting yellow but still not ready to harvest. I looked again the next day and the first row was gone, all eaten. So, I could not let the other ones ripen on the tree. There are also cherries. I get up very early in the morning with the first light to pick the cherries otherwise - the birds will get there first! One day I was 15 minutes late and there



they were already busy finishing the fruit. Do you see the green mangoes in the picture? It’s the same story. They cannot get ripe on the tree. But there are some nice things to make with green mango, such as chutneys, pickles and jam, so it’s not such a great loss. The fruit the birds don’t touch is star fruit which is strange. They just aren’t interested. My soursop tree is full of young fruit but a strong wind blew some of them off and I wonder how many will grow and ripen. Soursop often needs a rain shower to grow big and

juicy. There have been dry years where they don’t ripen but stay small and turn black. But let’s cross our fingers, hopefully during the hurricane season we will be blessed with regular rains so all the young fruit will grow nice and juicy. Tamarind fruit also comes off in strong winds so I collect the ones that are blown off. I gather a lot of the fruit because there is so much to do with it: juices, jam, marmalade, chutney, syrup, sweet tamarind, tamarind tea, and tamarind in stew. Make use of it, as it contains high vitamin C, is a blood cleanser, cools the body and is very good for constipation. It’s a one hundred percent pure product ripened by the sun. Tamarind often grows by itself in uncultivated soil. It is not transported by boat or plane and so it is sustainable, urban agriculture and climate friendly. This is really top quality healthy stuff - FOR FREE. These benefits are also true of coconuts under unused coconut trees, the appledam fruit, seagrapes, hoba fruits, guyaba, fruit of cacti, mispel fruit, papaya and maka pruum. Some names are local because I don’t know the English names but if you ask the locals they will show you the fruit I am talking about. All these fruits are all very high in health value. When using island grown fruits, I can guarantee that you have treated your body with the best quality fruit there is.

**How to ‘try’ to protect some fruit against the birds:** For papaya, wrap brown paper bags around the tree; bird wire or a net might help too. Ask at Warehouse for the big burlap sacks for potatoes or onions and hang them in the trees to deter birds and iguanas because they can get hooked on or in them. A friend hangs mothball bags in low trees or among fruits and it works well. Give these ideas a try to protect your fruit and vegetables. And don’t forget that spraying homemade neem tree tea is very helpful against bugs and fungi. It’s all natural stuff, and so does not harm your body either. So try it all out, see what works – 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.

Route AG architecten Funrace

AG Architecten is sponsoring the next mountain bike funrace on Sunday, May 28 at 8 a.m. The two classes, Elite and Fun, will bike the same 9.2 km route three times. The cyclists will travel over Bakuna / Lac from the start on the way to Lac near the Mangrove Info and Kayak Center. Helmets are required and there is a \$10 entry fee. Water and sports drinks are provided. For more information visit De Freewieler or the Duo Xtreme MTB Facebook page.





# What's Happening

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

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

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

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

**Pakus di Pruga (Animal Shelter flea market. Central Kralendijk):** CLOSED.

**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/terrarmuseumbonaire/>

**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.)

<b>April 28 - June 17</b>	<b>Terramar Museum Exhibition In Honor of the Ocean</b>
<b>May 21 - May 28</b>	<b>Children's Music Week.</b> Wed. <b>24</b> Parke Lanlan Clarinda, Nikiboko. 5-6 p.m. Workshop Reggae. 6-7 p.m. Reggae Show & ACE Kids Club Thurs. <b>25</b> Plasa Chiku Goeloe, Antriol. 5-6 p.m. Workshop Latin Music. 6-7 p.m. ACE Kids Club Show Fri. <b>26</b> Casa de Musica (Patras di Misa di Playa). 5-6 p.m. Workshop Samba/Muzik Brazil. 6-7 p.m. Show Casa de Musika & ACE Kids Club Sat. <b>27</b> Casa de Musica (Patras di Misa di Playa). 11-12 noon Workshop Muzik Krioyo. 12-1 p.m. Show ACE Kids Club Sun. <b>28</b> SKAL 4-7 p.m. Closing Music Week
<b>May 25 - June 8</b>	<b>Bonaire Culinaire.</b> Use this 15-day event to discover the wide variety of restaurants Bonaire has to offer. Bonaire's culinary hotspots have created a 3-course menu for only \$39.50 per person. <a href="https://bonaire-culinaire.com">https://bonaire-culinaire.com</a>
<b>Thursday May 25</b>	<b>International Plastic Free Day</b> In June 2022 Bonaire banned single-use plastics: disposable carrier bags, plastic straws, stirrers and cutlery. In August 2022 disposable Styrofoam meal packaging was banned. To mark May 25, 2023 several supermarkets are giving away a reusable shopping bag for purchases over \$50.
<b>Saturday May 27</b>	<b>Great Lionfish Derby 2023.</b> Hunting area Punt Vierkant-Red Slave. Fill in registration and waiver here: <a href="https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdfxqpK_HQaANOF4mpn7GfKghLazRg-xj3-a0Rfd7CpnYZqg/viewform">https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdfxqpK_HQaANOF4mpn7GfKghLazRg-xj3-a0Rfd7CpnYZqg/viewform</a> Spots are limited so grab your buddy and register NOW!
<b>Saturday, May 27</b>	<b>Nos Zijle Cultural Event</b> 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei, Rincon. Enjoy the music, dancing, crafts, amazing food and drink. See page 10. <b>Barrio Festival Tera Kòrà</b> - 6 - 10 p.m. Tourists can get acquainted with Bonaireans, the island's culture and its products.
<b>Sunday, May 28</b>	<b>AG Funrace</b> 8 a.m. See page 11. <b>Classical concert.</b> 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Hofi Cultural, Kaya Skandelchi, <a href="https://classicalmusicbonaire.com">https://classicalmusicbonaire.com</a>
<b>Wednesday, May 31</b>	<b>World Parrot Day Tours</b> 4 p.m. & 6 p.m. Special price \$10 adults, kids free. At Echo, Dos Pos, Rincon. Reserve <a href="https://www.facebook.com/echobonaire.org/?locale=nl_NL">https://www.facebook.com/echobonaire.org/?locale=nl_NL</a>
<b>Thursday, June 1</b>	<b>World Reef Awareness Day</b> Free for snorkelers & divers. Get Working in coral nurseries. See page 6. Register at: <a href="https://www.reefrenewalbonaire.org/reefiesta-2023/">https://www.reefrenewalbonaire.org/reefiesta-2023/</a>
<b>Sunday, June 4</b>	<b>Guardian Group Walk &amp; Run Bonaire.</b> Starts at 6:30 a.m. at Bachelor's Beach. Ends at Frans Paradise, Sorobon (8km). \$10 per person. Proceeds to charity. Online registration required. <a href="https://walkrun.wufoo.com/forms/my-guardian-group-walk-run-bonaire-2023/">https://walkrun.wufoo.com/forms/my-guardian-group-walk-run-bonaire-2023/</a>
<b>June 12 - June 17</b>	<b>Second Annual Bonaire Rum Week,</b> Tastings, parties, bartending, competitions, dinners & cigars. For info: <a href="https://www.bonaireumweek.com">https://www.bonaireumweek.com</a> For questions, <a href="mailto:contact_rum@caribjournal.com">contact_rum@caribjournal.com</a>
<b>June 19 - June 25</b>	<b>First Annual Yoga &amp; Wellness Week</b>
<b>Wednesday, June 21</b>	<b>Free Sunset yoga on Summer Solstice</b> Seru Largu 5:30 p.m. RSVP preferred: Kelly: 599 7010110 @Fitfor Lifeathletics   Miranda: +1 425 7859808 @samudrayogaflow
<b>June 22 - June 25</b>	<b>Pride Bonaire.</b> Sponsors and volunteers welcomed. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/EQBonaire/">https://www.facebook.com/EQBonaire/</a>

# 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. Wednesday evenings Apr. 19 - June 14 The Stoked Men and Women Doubles League.

**Bridgeclub Bonaire** organizes a bridge evening Wednesdays 7:30 - 10:30 p.m. All playing levels are welcome. Info: 795-0128 (only whatsapp text messages), [bridgeclubbonaire@gmail.com](mailto:bridgeclubbonaire@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: 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 May 29 at VIP (7:30 p.m.) 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@reefnewalbonaire.org](mailto:info@reefnewalbonaire.org)



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

## You can help keep Bonaire clean

<b>Saturdays</b>	<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>
<b>Sunday, June 11</b>	<b>Clean Coast Bonaire.</b> 8-10 a.m. Te Amo Beach. 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>

## Bonaire takes second and third place in the Big Live Nature Quiz

On May 13th, the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) hosted its annual Big Live Nature Quiz for adult residents on Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, St. Eustatius, and St. Maarten. A total of 164 individuals in teams of 1-4 persons participated in the online, live and interactive quiz.

**Winners.** After 24 exciting nature rounds, a team called "Not Even Once" from Saba won a sailing trip around their beautiful island. Second place went to "Cuddlefishes"

on Bonaire and third place to "humuhumu-nukunukuapua" on Bonaire. They will receive other local prizes. A big congratulations to all.

"We had a lot of fun and learned much about nature. So cool to have all six Dutch Caribbean islands together in one quiz," commented a Big Live Nature Quiz participant from Bonaire.

The kids' edition of the BLNQ runs in November.

DCNA

## ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BONAIRE'S GEOLOGY?

Everyone who loves Bonaire has questions about the island's geology. All will be answered in a three-part fun class by André Nahr. The class will be held on Tues. 6, Thurs. 8 and Sat. 10 June at Foundation Mariadal, Kaya L.D.Gerharts #17, across Hotel Central on the road to the big church in town. Session one and two 7-9 p.m. and session three brings everything together in a fun field trip on Sat. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Wear comfortable shoes for the field trip, but there is no heavy hiking. Taught in English. Cost \$120.00 p.p. in cash at the first session. Sign up [geology.andrenahr@gmail.com](mailto:geology.andrenahr@gmail.com).

## Tentative cruise ship schedule

DATE:	CRUISE SHIP	TIME	PIER	CAPACITY
Wed. May. 24	CARNIVAL CELEBRATION (LAUNCHING 2022)	0800-2200	South	5282
Wed. May. 31	CARNIVAL HORIZON	0700-1500	South	4683
Thurs. June 1	CELEBRITY EQUINOX	0730-1600	South	2852



# Creating optimal health

by Irene da Cunda Costa

## Psychedelics make a comeback to the mental health arena

When the Controlled Substances Act was passed in 1970 LSD and many other psychedelics were placed into the most restrictive “Schedule I” category by the United States Drug Enforcement Administration. At that moment all studies on medicinal applications of psychedelics basically stopped in the entire world.

Fifty years later, we are facing a worldwide mental health crisis. Skyrocketing numbers of individuals suffer from treatment-resistant depression, addictions and suicides and we have yet to respond. The long-proscribed psychedelics have returned to the scene of the mental health sciences with renewed strengths offering hope where there was very little or none.

Since the U.S. Food and Drug Administration granted “breakthrough therapy” status, to psychedelic therapies using psilocybin and MDMA, there have been numerous controlled studies at places like John Hopkins University, Imperial College of London, Stanford University, and many others around the world.

Many things are different from the 60’s. Advances in neuroscience and brain imaging provide much more detailed information on the processes that psychedelics trigger. Higher scientific standards with the inclusion of

control groups and double blind studies make the results much more reliable.

One lesson learned from the ban of the 60’s was the importance of keeping the use of these substances in a clinical setting aimed at promoting health and well-being and staying away from the promotion of recreational use.

### What is the setting?

The setting of what it is called Psychedelic Assisted Psychotherapy includes first of all the fully informed consent from the patient for the use of psychedelics for a therapeutic purpose.

The personal preparation includes exploring the intention to use the psychotropic drugs. This is usually done through the psychotherapeutic process, as well as working out any concerns in relation to the experience. The person should start the experience in a calm state. Personal characteristics and medical records should be taken into account to overrule any possible contraindication. Some contraindications are psychosis or its presence in a first degree relative and taking medication for depression (like SSRI) as both interact in the serotonin circuit.

The physical environment must be comfortable, pleasant, safe, calm and predictable. Clinical sessions take place in health care facilities, in rooms with warm and comfortable decor.

During the session one or two therapists are present, but the interaction between patient and therapists is kept to a minimum. The therapists are there to help the

patient handle any possible moment of anxiety and to make the experience as smooth as possible. The patient is encouraged to spend much of the time engaging in self-reflection while listening to carefully selected music through headphones.

Follow-up sessions that are non-drug assisted provide opportunities to integrate the insights gleaned from the experimental sessions.

The FDA originally approved research for the use of psilocybin for treatment-resistant depression and major depressive disorder and MDMA for post-traumatic stress disorder. There are also ongoing studies on the effect of these and other substances (like LSD and Ayahuasca or DMT) in anxiety or depression associated with terminal illnesses, addictions (alcohol, cocaine and tobacco) and even with micro dosing in autism. The hopes are high as well as the urge for alternatives to find ease to all these conditions, so let’s keep the lessons in mind while providing support for further research, decriminalization, regulation and protocolization for the use of these substances.



*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.*



## WEB to increase desalination capacity by 25%

WEB will build two additional reverse osmosis units to supplement the five it has now. The new units will increase Bonaire’s desalination capacity from 7200m3 of drinking water per day to 9600m3 per day. Work will begin shortly and the two new units are expected to go into service in mid-2024. IDE, a company based in Israel, will design and construct the units. WEB bought its present units from IDE too. *DMR*

## Another tanker load of BOPEC crude sold

The oil tanker *M/T Hafnia Asia* has gone to sea carrying 370,000 barrels of crude from the storage tanks of the bankrupt BOPEC. The sale was public, and the loading operation was pre-approved by Rijkswaterstaat (the Dutch Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management).

The Court of Bonaire gave Stan van Liere, the bankruptcy curator of BOPEC, permission to sell the oil. The Court said it could not determine whether the creditors of BOPEC have first claim to the proceeds. So the sale could proceed and afterward the rightful claimant could be determined, though that would be complicated and take a long time.

The curator can continue to sell BOPEC oil, but from now on he will collect the proceeds on behalf of the creditors. Nothing can be done with the BOPEC terminal until the oil is gone and the bankruptcy is settled.

*DMR (BESreporter)*

## Kaya Aruaco to be paved

The dirt road Kaya Aruaco will be paved from the Curoil LPG plant west to Kaya Leeuwarden. Asphalt-ing the road will make it safer for the transport of hazardous substances and for residents in the nearby neighborhoods of Nort’i Saliña and Hato. Curoil Bonaire and the public body will share the cost. Later the paving will be extended east from the LPG plant to Kaya Pueblo. *DMR*

## The army’s back

From May 26th to June 2nd, the 42nd company of the army, stationed on Curaçao, will be bivouacked at the old airstrip near Rincon. To maintain its operational readiness, the unit comes to Bonaire regularly to familiarize its personnel with the island and get acquainted with the local authorities and emergency services. To prepare for preventing or dealing with potential disasters, the unit will train at key locations on Bonaire that were identified during the reconnaissance exercise conducted last August. *DMR*.

## The Charming Prikichi, continued from page 6

provides moisture and needed calories during the driest seasons. Like the Lora, prikichi enjoy fruits, vegetables, grains, and seeds. Unlike Loras, they can nest more than once a year, favoring a variety of nest sites (including termite mounds!). They can produce up to 3-6 eggs per nesting event, so their offspring are more abundant than Loras. And like their bigger cousins, prikichi also pair-bond for life.

About ten years ago, I was driving on Kaya Amsterdam when I noticed a groups of prikichi on the side of the road. Parking the car, I exited to take a look. A dead prikichi was in the middle of the group, perhaps hit by a car; its flock mates seemed to be gathered to mourn their

friend. I realize I am guilty of anthropomorphism, but what I saw speaks to the bonds between parrots.

A third of all parrots in the world are threatened with extinction, but thankfully, prikichi are not threatened like our Lora. But their seeming ubiquity should not blind us to the threats that all parrots face from habitat destruction and poaching. I know I am grateful to Echo for its work protecting Bonaire’s parrot habitats every time I watch a flock of chattering prikichi flashing by. I hope you will check out Echo’s website to learn more about their work, at [www.echobonaire.org](http://www.echobonaire.org).



*Mel McCombie is a retired professor, and conservation activist, and has lived part-time in Bonaire for 30 years.*



On April 29, 2023, Bonaire’s Douglas Abraham graduated from Alabama’s Samford University School of Nursing. Douglas has earned his Master’s Degree in Nursing Science as a Nurse Practitioner specializing in Family and Emergency Medicine.

### Congratulations, Douglas!

We personally know of Douglas’ interest in helping others, as he served wonderfully as Surface Support for Touch the Sea back when he was in high school. He is currently planning to continue his studies in Samford’s doctoral nursing program.

We’re looking forward to Dr. Douglas Abraham’s return to Bonaire!

Dee Scarr and David Batalsky



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# Shelter News

## Animal Shelter Bonaire's Free Sterilization Program Is Needed Now More Than Ever

Bonaire is in the midst of a pet overpopulation problem, both companion and feral dogs and cats. We cannot adopt our way out of this problem, we have to "fix" it by spaying or neutering the island's cats and dogs. To date, Animal Shelter Bonaire has funded approximately 8,300 sterilizations since we began the program in 2004. In 2022, 722 animals were sterilized. This is still not enough! Social and commercial media are full of documentation of the increase in the number of animals roaming the streets or being "dumped." We will continue to aggressively campaign to increase the number of spays and neuters to address the problem by offering free sterilization.

Unfortunately, recently there seems to be some confusion about Animal Shelter Bonaire's "Free Sterilization Program". Comments have been thrown about that sterilization is not "free" and that the term "free sterilization" is not appropriate. As a result, people are somewhat confused as to how to take advantage of this much needed program.

**To be clear: sterilization of cats and dogs is available at no cost to all residents of Bonaire. The veterinarians receive payment for the surgeries from the Animal Shelter Bonaire's sterilization fund at a reduced price from their normal fees.**



Of course, if you can afford to pay for the sterilization of your animals directly to the veterinarian or wish to contribute to the Shelter's sterilization fund then those

actions are encouraged and serve to free up additional funds for those who cannot afford it.

Besides funding the surgeries for individuals, the Shelter also pays for the sterilizations of FKK animals. In addition to the Shelter's program, Dierenhulp Bonaire also works within the neighborhoods providing free sterilization and other assistance for those in need.

### So what exactly is the process to take advantage of the program?

The process differs depending on where you choose to have your animal sterilized. If you choose to go to Klinika Veterinario Bonaire on Kaminda Lagun, call 717 4255 and make an appointment for your pet. There will be no charge to you for the surgery. If you choose to go to Flamingo Island Veterinary Center on Blvd. Julio A. Abraham, you must first come to Animal Shelter Bonaire to obtain a voucher for the surgery. Then you can call 717 3338 to make an appointment. Again, there will be no charge to you for the sterilization.

Please have your own animals spayed or neutered and please encourage others to do so. Donations to the Shelter sterilization fund are also much appreciated. Our local bank account information is: Stichting Dierenasiel Bonaire, MCB Account #10237800. The island's animal overpopulation problem needs all hands on deck to solve it. *Jane Disko*

## Pets of the Week



**Hello everyone.**

**We are (L) Pixie and (R) Boris.**

We were both left on the street and became shelter residents. We came in separately and did not share the beginning of our lives.

Before we became best friends, we were both very sad and lonely. But then we were introduced to each other and now we share a life together. We play, run, snuggle and support each other.

He and me became a we, and now we need a YOU. A you that will adopt us both and give us a place to call home. A you that will love us, play with us and cuddle with us, so he, me and you can be a family. That is what we talk about and that's what we both wished for on a falling star. Let there be a you for us.

*Story : Sanne Attevelt  
Photo : Femke Meester*

**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. ou 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)**



### Meet Pino and Pluck

These little boys are Pino and Pluck, two brothers. They are 15 weeks old and not yet neutered. They are healthy, tested negative for FIV and leukemia, had their vaccinations and will be chipped when adopted. They are so happy together that we prefer to adopt them out together.

At this moment it's kitten time at the shelter. We have kittens ready for adop-

tion in every possible color. We have tabby's, black and white, white with grey, black, red, beige/ cream and white/ cream. You name it, we've got them.

Come over and see, cuddle and most important, adopt one or two little kittens and fill your house and heart with joy!

*Story Monique Degenaar  
Photo Femke Meester*

**Can you help Animal Shelter Bonaire's Pakus di Pruega find a new home? Email - [paulenamina@gmail.com](mailto:paulenamina@gmail.com)**



# WSNP opened its doors for International Museum Day

Bonaire extended International Museum Day on May 18 to encompass the entire month of May. Many of Bonaire’s museums offered free admission and tours to emphasize their community collections and the educational value of those collections.

On May 14 Washington Slagbaai National Park (WSNP) opened its gates to visitors and local residents giving them an opportunity to enjoy and learn from chief ranger George “Kultura” Thode as he conducted a free tour of the museum. As Kultura led guests through the museum, he presented

the history of Bonaire and the park including information about the island’s nature, geology, agriculture and animals.

The almost month-long celebration was announced at Nos Zjilea at Mangazina di Rei on April 29. The celebration continues through May with events at WSNP, Chichi Tan Museum of Natural History, Tanki Maraka, Kadimo, Fuhikubo, Collection Bonaire, Obersi Collection and Terramar ending in a final celebration at SKAL (Museo Boneiru).

*Julie Morgan, story/photo.*



George “Kultura” Thode at WSMP Museum

# Raising the Progress Flag



Acting Kingdom Representative Jan Helmond raised the Progress flag at the RCN building together with Acting Island Governor Nolly Oleana, EQ Bonaire ambassadors, representatives of the OLB, RCN department heads and the Diversity & Inclusion team on the occasion of IDAHOT May 17, 2023. On this day, the *International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia* (IDAHOT) we support the LGBTQ+ community, raise awareness of diversity and embrace the added value of our differences and that which unites us.



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