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BONAIRE The REPORTER

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Melvin Meyers in his role as a Bonaire slave.
Photo Julie Morgan

Commemorating the Abolition of Slavery July 1, 1863

FREEDOM

*I've suffered,
lived humiliated
twisted in the grip of
hunger and injustice.
Anger swells, bursts,
breaks the heavy chains
that for generations gagged my spirit.
This suffering I now smash into the past
and embrace FREEDOM.*

Delno L.A. Tromp (Denchi)

memorated on July 1. Curaçao observed Ketu Koti (emancipation commemoration and celebration) and released a commemoration stamp. Saba's emancipation presentation included a reading of the 734 Sabans emancipated in 1863 and Bonaire held two different commemorations including a Ketu Koti celebration.

RCN organized an event at Wilhelminaplein with speeches by government officials including Lieut. Governor Reynold 'Nolly' Oleana, Dutch minister of housing and spatial development Hugo de Jonge, deputy of social affairs and welfare James Kroon and department head of education, culture and science

Nina den Heyer. Bonaire's School of Performing Arts presented several interpretive dances including a dramatic dance to the freedom speech by civil rights leader Martin Luther King. And Gerald Alberto performed a moving rendition of Bob Marley's 'Redemption Song.'

Eight wreaths were placed by different organizations to commemorate the pain of slavery and the lives sacrificed. The ceremony ended with Melvin Meyers sounding the traditional conch.

In the afternoon, a by invitation only Slave Abolition Commemoration event revealed a new slave monument at Boka Slagbaai in Washington Slagbaai Nation-

al Park (WSNP).

Lieut. Gov. Oleana and Minister De Jonge both spoke of the need to remember the island's heritage and to learn from the past. Author and monument committee member Delno Tromp read his poem 'Libertat' and presented his new book 'Still Working Towards Liberation' to Oleana and De Jonge. The book is in three languages: Papiamentu, Dutch and English and will be distributed to Bonaire's secondary schools. Xenah Cicilia of STINAPA expressed thanks to everyone who made the monument possible.

The collective idea for the monument was born in January this year. A committee of five including members of STINAPA got to work to complete the memorial by July 1. The result is Bonaire's first ever emancipation memorial placed on a cliff overlooking Slagbaai and the sea. A history laden yellow obelisk became the frontal piece surrounded by the aloe plants slaves once farmed, a symbolic ring of chains, the flags of Bonaire and Holland and an eternal flame. Melvin Meyers, dressed as a slave, pushed a cart full of salt into the memorial area, reminding all of what Bonaire's slaves endured. The obelisk was selected as it is a part of slave history. Captains of salt



Slave Abolition Monument at Boka Slagbaai

Abolition of Slavery to page 5

Hato affordable housing project underway



Construction is in full swing on 254 homes, both social rental and affordable owner-occupied, Fundashon Cas Bonairiano (FCB) is building in Hato. Construction will proceed rapidly because pre-fabricated modules are being assembled on-site. A further 1,100 homes will be constructed during later phases, for a total of 2,124 new homes for lower and medium-income families on Bonaire by the end of 2030. The Ministry for Housing and Spatial Planning is contributing €10 million for the first phase of the housing project.

Many of the homes will feature solar panels and battery storage, so they will help the Public Entity of Bonaire (OLB) achieve its goal of eliminating energy-poverty on the island. The Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy have jointly allocated €900,000 to helping reduce energy costs on Bonaire.. *DMR*

The homes are presently being assembled from prefab panels imported from the Netherlands. A factory is planned for the Hato area where panels will be manufactured on the island.

Rotary gives kids great weekend at Slagbaai

The Rotary Club Bonaire, with the help of the Akse Foundation, gave 31 children ages 6 to 12 a busy and happy camp-out weekend at Slagbaai. Upon arrival, every child received a backpack with useful items for the weekend. They helped set up their sleeping areas, enjoyed a barbecue, and played games.

Saturday morning brought breakfast then time in the sea, life jackets on. For lunch they made their own pizzas supervised by Floris and Chef Isidoor from Rum Runners. The children rolled out their pizza dough bases, some in fanciful shapes, then covered them with ingredients of their choice. The baking was outsourced to adults. Another large barbecue in the evening, then to bed.

On Sunday morning the children competed fanatically at tug-of-war and the traditional soldachi race, cheered on by their fanatic supporters. Trophies were awarded to the winning teams. After another hot lunch, they cleaned up the place and went home tired. The Rotary team thanks Shaedra and her team for their supervision. *Photo/story Rotary Club Bonaire*



TCB honors six exceptional individuals

Tourism Corporation Bonaire (TCB) is proud to recognize Tirzo Thomas and Dirk Blaas of Rum Runners; Jonathan Paulina, who works at Belnem House; Pepe Mastropaolo, dive operation manager of Great Adventures Bonaire; Tanya Deen of InfoBonaire and Agnes Joosten who works at Multishop, a local art and gift shop. All are thanked for their exceptional hospitality and dedication to the tourism industry on Bonaire.

Visitors are encouraged to share their stories, photographs, or videos of exceptional encounters with the local community through the dedicated Bonaire Friends page at <https://bonaireisland.com/bonaire-friends/>.

Shown in photo with TCB employees: Agnes Joosten.



Piskabon raises donations following boat fire

A fishing boat, apparently deliberately set on fire, burned and sank at Sorobon the night of June 18. Reportedly the event followed a disagreement. The police are investigating the suspected arson.

Piskabon, the Cooperative Fisheries Association, is raising money on behalf of the owner, Jan Hendrik Emerenciana, and his family to help replace their boat. They lost another boat five years ago. An all-day mediathon has taken place at the Piskabon office, and further donations are welcome. Contact Piskabon at 717-8318 or send an email to piskabon@gmail.com. The goal is \$160,000. *DMR*

Botika Korona closing, will relocate

Botika Korona will close in mid-July and will reopen at new premises on Kaya Korona at a date yet to be announced. The pharmacies at Botika Playa (the Hospital) and Rincon are adding more counters and extending their hours to serve more customers. Extra parking facilities will also be made available at Botika Playa. Soon all doctors be able to send digital prescriptions directly to the pharmacies, so the prescriptions will be waiting when customers come in. *DMR (BESreporter)*

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Pakus is still OPEN in a downsized version at the old location on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m

Cooking with love



Chef Corjan Hoogerheide Photo Julie Morgan

tiful and amazing first course brunch of everything I could eat and truly enjoy. The regular lazy brunch is four courses allowing diners to eat, sit, swim, eat some more, read, talk, eat, play games, eat some more, relax and enjoy the day being lazy.

Corjan grew up in a coastal town in the Netherlands and has been working in the kitchen since he was 16. He explained that he has cooked fish all his life and can do more with fish because he always had fresh fish. Corjan maintains that practice today by only using the freshest fish caught on Bonaire.

He imports nothing but buys every-

thing locally in the supermarket including meat.

“Next year I will be cooking for 40 years. I learned to cook in practice – life experience. There are four things that count: temperature, taste, portions and presentation,” said Corjan.

He works alone, with no one else in the kitchen and still manages to create the perfect individual meal for 20 maximum guests at Lekker Thuis.

I was surprised to learn that Chef Corjan is also a YouTube sensation. His Netherlands YouTube show *Zeeuws*

Lekker Thuis
continued on page 4



Chef Corjan Hoogerheide’s passion is cooking, and it shows in every plate he sets before his guests at the restaurant Lekker Thuis at Red Palm Village.

Corjan said, “I cook with love. You can taste the love in the food.”

Lekker Thuis, literally means ‘nice at home’ and that is just how the open atmosphere lounge comes off. A nice, cozy feeling like you’re at home on your patio enjoying a beautifully prepared meal specifically designed for you.

Corjan has created an adaptable menu with fresh everything catering to specific dietary needs.

“It’s not easy for me to have just one menu but I modify it if you are vegan, vegetarian or have other dietary restrictions. I only use nice products and I have respect for the products. What you see is what you get,” said Corjan.

I’ve heard for some time how good Lekker Thuis food is, but until Corjan invited me for brunch one Sunday, I had no idea. I’m not usually a brunch type person and Corjan’s ‘lazy brunch’ from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. didn’t exactly fit into my schedule. Plus, I’m one of the ‘restricted’ menu types, so I was really surprised when Corjan presented me with a beau-

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Major archaeological site in Playa proposed as heritage center

Bonaire was home to Indigenous populations for thousands of years before people of European and African heritage arrived on the island. Between AD 1000 – 1400 a large community of the Caiquetio culture occupied the still undeveloped area north and west of SGB (high school), according to archaeologist Dr. Jay Haviser. The Bonaire Archaeological Institute (BONAI), with the help of the OLB and other organizations, hopes to develop the site into a major center for the study and preservation of Bonaire's pre-history.

The site was first identified when a grave was excavated in Amboina in 1976. A high status man who was buried with a staff of authority and decorations had been interred there. Haviser's 1987 archaeological survey of the whole island confirmed that the area was a major site with deep artifact layers and early dates.

Subsequent excavation of what Haviser estimates is probably less than a fourth of the site found seven circular house locations marked by post holes. The houses had hearths, refuse middens, ceramics, stone tools, food residue, beads, and ornaments.

Haviser says the artifacts indicate cultural traits— diet, behaviors, traditions—still present in the Bonairean identity. Dr. Kendra Sirak, a participant in Harvard University's Global Ancient DNA Research, has returned to the U.S. with bone samples from the site. She will use them to construct the genomes of the people who resided on Bonaire at that time. (See sidebar)

Fourteen skeletons were excavated, ten adults and four children. Four bodies were headless, and one head was buried without a body. Haviser reports that Caiquetio peoples in Venezuela hung heads of relatives in the rafters of their houses. The ceramics excavated match the Caiquetio style pottery characteristic of Curaçao and northern Venezuela as well. Notably, the people living on the Amboina site buried their dead in the floor of their houses, even two and three in some dwelling.

The recent excavation was triggered



School kids visit the site in 2019 during excavations by ARCHOL Photo via Jay Haviser

by a decision to expand SGB. Earlier the Monuments Council of Bonaire had declared the site a Monument. As of 10/10/10, Bonaire became subject to the MALTA Convention, which requires developers to pay for an archaeological investigation before breaking ground on a declared Monument.

Now BONAI and the OLB propose the remainder of the Amboina site be excavated and turned into a Bonaire Heritage Center. They want to assure local involvement in the project, including heritage scholarships for young people who might eventually work there. All five new board members of the reactivated BONAI were student members when the organization was founded twenty years ago.

The whole site would become the center piece of a green space park. The present excavation area would be architecturally incorporated into new school SGB will build there. Further construction would provide space for workshops, meeting areas, storage of artifacts, and eventually a museum for public exhibition of artifacts. An area on the site would be dedicated for respectful reburial of all human remains within one year of being excavated.

BONAI hopes the whole site will be fully excavated by professional archaeological teams. International support would be required, but the OLB is firmly

committed to assuring the work is conducted under local supervision. OLB has designated Haviser to exercise that authority.

Haviser was speaking at a June 23rd gathering at Terramar Museum. Dr. Kendra Sirak also reported on her role in Bonaire's inclusion in Harvard University's Global Ancient DNA Research. DMR



A carnelian amulet, an artifact that was a symbol of status for the individual who wore it Photo via Jay Haviser

Bonaire's indigenous DNA added to global study

Bone samples from skeletons excavated from the extensive archaeological site near the high school in Amboina have been transported to the Ancient DNA Laboratory at Harvard Medical School, where Dr. Kendra Sirak, biological archaeologist, will extract and interpret the DNA. Her data from Bonaire will be incorporated into the results of a large-scale study of the ancient Indigenous people of the Caribbean that was completed in 2020 by the Harvard lab, together with archaeologists, anthropologists, and museum curators from all over the world.

The study was based on 260 DNA samples from the remains of people who lived in the Caribbean before the first people of European or African descent arrived and vastly changed the genetic map of the region. The study revealed two main genetic strains.

One, an early group of hunter-gatherers who lived primarily in coastal areas, entered the Caribbean from "somewhere" in Central and South America. Excavations of their sites uncovered stone tools but no ceramics. A second population of agriculturalists who had pottery as well as stone tools arrived later. It spread throughout the Caribbean from a specifically identified island off the northeast coast of South America that's associated with the Arawak people. The DNA of the indigenous population of Curaçao and northern South America shares genes from both groups.

Sirak's contribution to the Harvard DNA will reveal more about the people who lived on Bonaire long ago, and where they came from, how they were related to other ancient people, and how people on the island today are related to them. DMR

Lekker Thuis

continued from page 3

Lekkers - Easy Cooking is what nailed his job 4.5 years ago with Red Palm Village owners Leo and Anna Dijkgraaf. It seems Leo is a big fan of all 135 episodes of the YouTube show that features Corjan traveling to meet and cook with other chefs. Corjan staged five episodes of his own show on *Bonaire, eet Smakelijk (enjoy your meal)* and 17 *Brunch and Bubbles* with Leo for Nos TV. In both series he travels around Bonaire visiting different people like Maurice Adriaens at LVV, fisherman Jan Tutti and Bob Jansen of Bonaire Daily Fresh, Elly at Wild Bird Rehab to name a few. He's kind of like the Dutch version of the late Anthony Bourdain.

Lekker Thuis is rated number two

on Trip Advisor from 133 restaurants in Kralendijk and Traveler's Choice in 2022. If you visit the site, you will see nothing but rave reviews.

"A gem of a small restaurant with a chef who uses the freshest and tastiest ingredients. Find your way to this beautiful hideaway, and you will find yourself in tastebud heaven."

"Fantastic, Delicious, Amazing! Wow! Best food in Bonaire hands down!"

Lekker Thuis is open five days from 6 - 9 p.m. and closed on Thursday and Friday.

Sunday is the four course Lazy Brunch for \$42.50. Monday is movie night with tapas on all the tables along with a three-course movie theme designed meal, when, for example, he makes pasta for an Italian movie. Cost is \$17.50 for the dinner, \$7.50 for the dessert and \$6. 50 for the movie.

On Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday Corjan serves a three to four-course surprise menu. Lekker Thuis is closed on Friday to outside guests but open to Red Palm Village guests so they can barbeque for themselves.

Red Palm Village is referred to as having a 'glamping' (glamorous camping) atmosphere with a total of 10 cabins. Guests have access to the Lekker Thuis bar to grab their own wine, beer or coffee on an honor system. The concept is to make everyone feel at home.

Lekker Thuis at Red Palm Village is 2 km from Kralendijk at Kaminda Sorobon 20. To make a reservation call +599-700-3978.

For more information visit www.lekkerthuisbonaire.com.

Story/photos Julie Morgan

Government wants to approve permits quicker

The local government hopes to start issuing employment and residence permits within two weeks. A small pilot project kicked off this month. Applications from 12 companies from the education, care and tourism sectors will be speed processed. The companies were selected because they were trusted to not abuse the application process.

Employers need an 'employment permit' (TWW) to recruit employees from abroad. They must demonstrate that no local candidates are available and that a foreign candidate meets all the qualifications. They must also comply with all legal obligations when it comes to foreign nationals, employment conditions and housing. Once all supporting documents have been fully completed and submitted, they are carefully checked by the RCN units IND and SZW. DMR

POLICE REPORT

Property Crime

Theft from construction sites. The Caribbean Netherlands Police Force (KPCN) warns owners of construction sites to be alert to theft of tools and materials. KPCN advises: Don't leave tools and materials unattended, provide storage containers with good locks and install security cameras.

June 26. A burglary was reported in a container at Kaya Sonmontuno. Strangers broke in and took two generators and various tools, among other things.

June 21. A roll of artificial grass carpet was stolen from a softball park that is under renovation.

June 18. A Kymco Agility scooter, registration number MF-1645, was stolen. The scooter is a brown 'metallic.' It was parked at an entertainment venue on Kaya Hermandad and stolen between 2 and 9 a.m. The case is under investigation.

June 17. The central control room received a report about a black electric scooter with registration number MF-4738 found in the Gotomeer area. The scooter had been at the location for about four days. The scooter was taken to the police station for safekeeping. Is this scooter yours? You can pick up the scooter at the police station on presentation of your ID, driver's license and insurance certificate.

June 16. In the afternoon a black Kymco Agility scooter, license plate MF-1013, was reported stolen. The scooter was parked in front of an apartment complex on Kaya Gilberto F. Croes locked with a chain lock and a padlock. The scooter was stolen between 8:30 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Call: stolen car. On May 13, a green Daihatsu Terios car was stolen when it was parked on Kaya Benue. The car has stripes on the side and a metal bar in the front. Have you seen this car? Contact the police via 715 8000, 911 or the anonymous tip line 9310.

Arrests

June 30. A man, 45, was arrested for aggravated assault after he was involved in a fight with serious assault near a catering facility on Hanchi Amboina on Saturday.

June 28. A woman, 45, was arrested for assault with a stabbing weapon and attempted murder on Thursday, June 1.

June 28. A man, 34, was arrested for assault, threats and vandalism. The man is suspected of assaulting a woman and smashing her car window at Kaminda Gurubu.

June 28. In the night, around 12:45 a.m. a man, 25, was arrested for public violence and threats. In a fight at an apartment complex

on Kaya Aguila he threatened several people with death. A little earlier, a man, 49, was arrested after he threatened a woman at Kaya Felipe G. Clarinda.

June 27. At about 6 p.m. a man, 50, was arrested for assault and threats. He assaulted a lady at Kaya Kariñoso in Rincon and then threatened several people with death. A dummy gun has been seized.

June 22. In the evening a man, 49, was apprehended at Bulevar J.A. Abraham for assault and public violence when he assaulted another man with an object.

June 22. A man, 25, was arrested. Police suspected he had a firearm. He did not cooperate with his search, pushed a police officer and ran away. During the pursuit on foot, the suspect was asked to stop several times, then two warning shots were fired. He was apprehended at Kaya Otomac. Several drug-related items and the suspect's car were seized for further investigation.

June 16. A man, 29, was arrested for violation of the Weapons Act BES and the Opium Act BES. The suspect behaved suspiciously near a shoulder bag during a mediation. This led to a house search. Ammunition and a powder resembling cocaine were found in a bag. These were confiscated for further investigation.

Driving under the influence

June 29. Around 3:45 a.m. a patrol spotted a car driving at high speed on Kaya Julio A. Abraham. The driver, 48, was detained for driving under the influence of alcohol.

June 16. In the late evening on Kaya Niki-boko Noord a car drove into a lamppost and then into the fence of a house. The driver, 61, was found to be under the influence of alcohol and was arrested.

Traffic

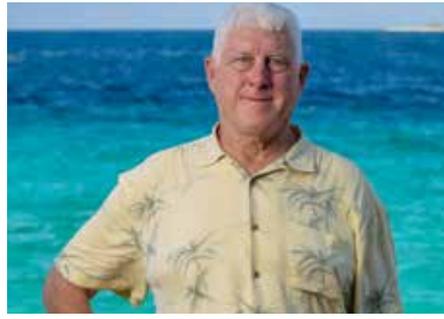
June 21. Around 11:45 a.m. the driver of an ATV (quad) drove into a hole after a sand hill in Bolivia, lost control and fell. He was taken to hospital by ambulance.

June 18. Around 11 p.m. a collision took place on Kaya Korona near the Coromoto church. The driver of the car stated that he was traveling north on Kaya Korona when an oncoming vehicle approached him. He tried to avoid the oncoming vehicle and as a result he hit the shoulder, his car flipped over and came to rest on its side. The driver was checked by paramedics on the spot and allowed to go home. All his documents were in order.

June 18. At approximately 8:45 p.m. a sin-

Ask Bob

Bonaire real estate advice



How do HOA dues work on Bonaire? Are they only for condos or do houses in a development have them too?

Thanks, Lily

Hi Lily,

Home Owners' Associations (HOA or VvE), apply to most condominiums in Bonaire, and some houses in developments. These associations charge various monthly or yearly fees according to what services they provide, such as maintenance of pool, taking care of landscaping, security gates, etc. Some owner associations also provide vacation rental services to the owners who choose to rent their condos.

gle-vehicle collision occurred on Kaminda Gurubu. A car drove into a lamppost and ended up in the bushes. The lamppost fell over and the wiring became loose causing power outages throughout the area. The WEB was notified. The driver of the car was taken to hospital by ambulance.

June 17. A pick-up and a passenger car collided on Kaya Industria in the morning hours. The pick-up wanted to turn left into the parking lot of a supermarket and did not see the approaching passenger car. The driver of the passenger car was taken to hospital by ambulance. It the driver received a report because he didn't have a valid driver's license and insurance documents.

Hit & Run. Recently, hit & run cases have become more frequent. Are you a victim of a hit & run? Try to identify the vehicle's license plate, type and color and the possible driver. The person who drives away from an accident has three hours to report to the police station. After three hours, the victim can report a violation of Article 31 of the Bonaire Road Traffic Ordinance. At that point, the police will start an investigation that could lead to criminal consequences.

Abolition of slavery, continued from page 1

transport ships would use the obelisks to navigate to land so they could load the salt the slaves had collected.

The committee selected the obelisk to reflect a new meaning, "We want to commemorate the fact that now the obelisk represents a new era, indicating that an enriched era is near... It is meant to encourage individuals to reflect on their history, heritage and experiences, understanding that the knowledge and wisdom gained from the past can guide and shape a better future."

Visitors to WSNP can add a visit to the obelisk on their next trip to Slagbaai. WSNP is open Tuesday – Sunday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Netherlands announced the opening of Slavery Memorial Year which runs from

Houses may also belong to an association that has fees or dues for any common areas such as a security gate or entrance landscaping, or no dues if there are no common areas to maintain. In developments with no common areas to maintain, there are frequently what we refer to as sleeping or inactive HOAs, which means there are no dues and no meetings. These associations if active, usually exist in order to be able to enforce any neighborhood restrictions.

If you own or are considering a condo that has an HOA be sure to ask what costs are included in your monthly dues as items such as TV, Internet or insurance may be included in your monthly fees. Every association is different so be sure to ask for a copy of the HOA/VvE documents if you are going to buy a property.

All the best, Bob

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

Public Order

June 28. KPCN received a report of counterfeit US dollar bills. The notes have been handed in to the police and an investigation has been launched.

June 26. The KPCN called on owners of abandoned cars in the Belnem district to remove them within 2x24 hours. After 48 hours, the cars would be removed and destroyed. Car 1 was a white car Toyota Land Cruise, registration number B-4586. Car 2 was a dark blue Mitsubishi Carisma, registration number B-11619.

June 22. The central control room received a report that a man reported missing, Pury Frans, has contacted family members. The search is therefore stopped.

Fire

June 18. A boat was reported on fire in the water at Sorobon. Given the situation, it was impossible to fight the fire. The Forensic Investigation (FO) department of the Caribbean Netherlands Police Force is investigating.



June 29. In the night police conducted an alcohol check on Kaya Hermandad and several other locations on Bonaire. During these checks, drivers of 25 cars and 17 scooters were checked for their alcohol consumption with a breath test. During this check: six people were arrested a car parked incorrectly was towed and three people were ticketed for driving without a license.

"Knowledge makes a man unfit to be a slave."

Frederick Douglass

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.

It can be done, somehow

The following (paraphrased) article, published in *The Guardian*, covers a number of developments small island states in the Caribbean are dealing with. Although there's no mention of Bonaire, the problems it highlights are almost all seamlessly applicable to our island.

Although its main focus is on the limiting of beach access for native residents because of foreign investors' activities, it also covers subjects like suboptimal employment opportunities for locals, the alienation of Lease Land, environmental consequences of limitless building, and the barring of cruise ships because of their minor profitability v.a.v. the cost of the environmental damage they cause. All familiar to Bonaire.

Maybe, for Bonaire, Anguilla may serve as an example. Nature preservation and the restriction of overdevelopment is high on the island's agenda, and all beaches (of which THEY have a lot) are freely accessible.

Gijs Borsten

What's the Caribbean without its beaches? But the people are losing access to them

By Kenneth Mohammed

Walk along a Caribbean beach, and your stroll is guaranteed to be cut short by an angry hotel security guard. In recent years, the Caribbean has seen a worrying trend of governments readily selling off assets to foreign corporations and political financiers.

Prime real estate, protected land and valuable resources are being relinquished without consideration for long-term consequences. It raises questions about whether remnants of the colonial mindset still prevail in political ideologies and decision-making.

Countries that sell off their citizens' birthright can find themselves regretting such decisions. Often corruption scandals tend to accompany these transactions, further eroding public trust in government, while developers' poor environmental practices surface to tarnish the reputation and irreversibly damage fragile ecosystems. Corruption, unfortunately, goes unnoticed by most local people.

See, for full text:

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/jun/06/caribbean-beaches-public-access-development-transparency-engagement>

Development in the Caribbean cannot mirror the patterns in Europe or the US. Politicians mistakenly view initiatives through the lens of their favourite travel destinations, vanity projects diverting money from true development priorities, such as education and health, and ignores the unique value and inherent beauty of the Caribbean.

Environmental challenges and the need for sustainability demand careful consideration. Pollution, beach and soil erosion, coral reefs and marine life, over-fishing, pesticides, waste management, and the aesthetics of the country must be factored into development plans.

However, numerous Caribbean governments engage in "invitational" development, offering incentives and benefits, to attract foreign developers. Typically, promises of employment opportunities to stimulate the economy and benefit the local population tend to fall short.

Instead, most of the jobs created are low-skilled positions that offer minimal wages, while the highest-paid management roles are filled by foreign workers. Consequently, the profits generated by these developments are repatriated to tax havens or foreign investors.

The privatisation of beaches and the controversial sale of prime heritage or beachfront sites to developers have become normalised throughout the Caribbean, leaving citizens' access to public spaces threatened as the region's natural beauty and cultural birthright is jeopardised.

In St Lucia, the government sold two volcanic peaks, at Anse L'Ivrogne, a Unesco world heritage site, to the billionaire Rossy family. The construction undertaken outraged St Lucians, because of its magnitude and location, which blocked public access to the well-loved landmark.

Similar controversies have happened elsewhere. In 2015, Antigua and Barbuda approved selling a 99-year lease on several public beaches to the Australian billionaire James Packer and the actor Robert De Niro, leading to community protests.

In 2018, the Bahamas' Government allowed for the sale of long leases of Crown Land, including beaches, to foreign investors. Environmentalists and locals voiced

their concerns, fearing that the sale could irreparably damage the country's authentic charm and historical legacy.

Jamaica, too, has experienced protests over plans to change rights of access to a public beach in favour of a foreign hotel developer. Residents argued that the sale would deprive them of access to the beach and harm the environment, but the Jamaican government proceeded, citing the need to attract investment and create jobs.

Barbados faced its share of criticism in 2021 when plans emerged of a proposed sale of land on the island's west coast to a luxury resort developer, which would have resulted in the privatisation of a popular beach. However, after a public outcry, the government decided to cancel the sale, demonstrating the power of citizen engagement in safeguarding public resources.

The pursuit of economic growth and foreign investment should not come at the expense of the Caribbean's environmental degradation.

In stark contrast to these examples, a recent decision by Anguilla's government stands out. Late last year, the British overseas territory decided to end cruise tourism as the negative environmental impact outweighed the revenue generated. This decision demonstrates that a more responsible and forward-thinking approach to sustainable development can happen in the region.

Caribbean governments must recognise that the pursuit of economic growth and foreign investment should not come at the expense of environmental degradation or their citizens' wellbeing. Prioritising short-term gains are unlikely to end well.

Instead, there is a need for astute and sustainable development initiatives that consider the region's unique environmental challenges. The long-term protection of the Caribbean's natural resources – beaches, marine life and other fragile ecosystems – should be paramount.

Caribbean governments must promote greater transparency and citizen engagement. Efforts to preserve public access to beaches and protect the region's heritage should be prioritised. Only then can Caribbean nations achieve sustainable and responsible development.

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From Past to Present: Slavery in All Its Forms

Introduction:

We extend our apologies to the descendants of the victims of past slavery. For me, it is unequivocal that slavery, in any form, is an abhorrent business model. However, as we reflect on history, we seem to overlook the connection to the modern-day versions of slavery that concern us all. We contribute to and benefit from a world where people are subjected to exploitation [1], animals endure oppression [2] and the Earth is relentlessly exploited.

The Paradox of the Present:

In 2015, all 196 countries within the United Nations (UN) established 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) to make the world a better place. These SDGs are intended to guide us until 2030. It is disconcerting that we are half way towards 2030 and, we have made only limited progress (12%) towards the goals set in 2015. In some cases, we have even witnessed a decline. [3]

Ironically, while we express regret and apologize for the historical era of slavery, we continue to lead lifestyles that perpetuate new forms of oppression and exploitation. Our insatiable desire for cheap clothing, electronics and other consumer goods has created a world where people are exploited and deprived of their freedom. For instance, we see child labor in the clothing industry, mining operations, coffee, and cocoa cultivation and the appalling conditions endured by workers

constructing stadiums for major sporting events, like the FIFA World Cup in Qatar.

The Exploitation of Animals:

In addition to the exploitation of our fellow humans, we also sustain a factory farming industry that reduces animals to mere production tools, confining them to unnatural environments and depriving them of their most basic rights and freedoms. This form of exploitation inflicts immense suffering upon animals and demonstrates a profound disregard for the well-being of other living beings.

The Exploitation of the Earth:

Last but not least, we must address the exploitation of our planet. Our consumption patterns and dependence on fossil fuels have led to devastating environmental effects. The changing climate, deforestation, and the

depletion of natural resources are all outcomes of our relentless exploitation of the Earth.

Conclusion:

Apologizing for the historical era of slavery is an important step, both for those who offer the apology and those who accept it. However, to genuinely demonstrate regret and foster reconciliation, we must actively combat contemporary forms of slavery and exploitation. We need to recognize the ethical and moral implications of our choices, such as those concerning clothing, food, and consumer goods, and strive for a world in where freedom, justice and respect for all living beings are central.

Only by embracing these changes and intensifying our efforts to achieve the SDGs can we truly express sincerity in our apology and atonement for the historical era of slavery.

Wilma Nijland

1. According to Global Estimates of modern slavery from walk free, International labour organization (ILO) and the international organization for migration: 49.6 million people live in modern slavery (2022), roughly 25% of all victims of modern slavery are children.

2. According to world animal protection worldwide more than 70 billion animals (2018)

3. UN environment programme, 16 June 2023, speech Inger Andersen, Pursuing healthy nature and a stable climate to leave no one behind.



Bringing Up Baby by “Mel” McCombie

One of Echo’s most important jobs is protecting Loras when they breed, by monitoring nest sites and educating people about threats. But what makes Lora chicks so special? If you have watched birds like cardinals or starlings or trupials care for their young, you know that these chicks are fledged and on their own after about three



Two tiny newborns in a nest near Fonteín, 9 June 2023

weeks. For Loras, bringing up baby is more labor-intensive, and a bigger time commitment. A Lora chick is valued by its parents and its flock, and they put in the sweat equity in raising the chick.

Let’s start with the nest. Loras are likely to lay two, or perhaps three, eggs once a year. Compare this to the American cardinal. I’ve watched them in my yard in Connecticut produce three clutches a year, with two to five eggs per clutch. One couple might raise 10 to 15 chicks per year. Two chicks per year is a Lora baby boom by contrast.

A Lora nest is typically a cavity in a tree, or rock face (not built by the birds). Prior to the 1800s, Bonaire had many large trees; Europeans cut most of them down, which is why Loras today often nest in holes in the cliffs. After laying eggs, the female Lora tends to them carefully for 28 days, turning them, and keeping them warm. The hen is dependent on her mate for food while nesting.

When parrots hatch, it’s easy to see why scientists submit that modern birds are descendants of dinosaurs! These tiny creatures are blind and deaf, with naked scaly skin and oversized beaks. I find parrot chicks endearing and adorable, particularly as they grow and their feathers begin to poke through, but I understand if you find them otherworldly. But to their parents, these chicks are precious, and worth the months of labor and protection needed to grow into adults. Loras, like all parrots, take time to guard, teach and nurture their valuable young.

Lora chicks open their eyes a few days after hatching, and imprint on their parents.



Chicks in a nest box at Echo

That trusting bond is crucial for the chick’s social development, essential for making them members of a family and a flock. Parents stay in the nest, keeping it relatively clean and doing their best to protect their chicks from predators (here on Bonaire, cats, rats, and bees are problems). Feeding the chicks might sound a little gross, but it’s a system that works. Parents offer food to chicks by regurgitating from their crops (what we call a gizzard in a chicken). Food goes right into the chick’s little beaks—it’s broken down, partly predigested if you will. This baby food also includes “crop milk”, secreted from the parent’s crop lining, and offering extra nutrients for the chicks until they are old enough to forage and digest their own food. Parrot chicks beg for food, making a particularly annoying begging sound; if my baby made that sound, I would put food in its mouth just to make it stop! It’s

a big job, as Lora chicks need to eat often, around the clock in their first week of life.

As Lora chicks grow, their parents teach them survival skills, like locating water, telling the difference between healthy and dangerous foods, recognizing territory, communicating and recognizing predators. It is akin to going through nursery school, grade school and high school in about five months. When the young Lora is ready, it leaves its natal home and joins the flock, eventually finding its own mate and beginning their own parenting journey. You won’t find Loras living in their parents’ basements.



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

Gold Star Teens are Scuba Stars

The third week of June, Captain Don’s Habitat hosted a special group of 38 teenagers from the United States sponsored by Gold Star Teen Adventures (GSTA). Founded in 2013, GSTA brings together the children of U.S. special forces and first responders who have lost a parent. The organization helps to develop life skills for these teens partly by teaching scuba diving and the skills to thrive in the outdoor wilderness.

I ran into this extraordinary group by accident, as I was prepping for a dive in front of Captain Don’s Habitat and saw a lot of young folks also gearing up. I asked one young man where he was from and what the group was doing. This was the first I’d heard of Gold Star Teen Adventures. A little research showed that this group was the real thing: a serious, well-run charitable organization (a U.S. based 501c3) that has earned the highest ratings. They fund every single teen in the program, no matter their family finances. Wow!

Courage, passion and a willingness to push beyond comfort zones informed the comments of the members I met.

Team leader Alison, age 24, told me she began wilderness training with GSTA as a first-year high schooler. “GSTA is not a grief camp,” she said, “but it is about growing. Now, I try to be the person I needed when I was younger.”

She noted that each day, one of the younger teens is appointed platoon leader, responsible for keeping the agenda every day. It’s a way to build a sense of accountability.

Another team leader, Luke, age 21, spoke calmly about losing his father at the Pentagon on 9/11, and his mother to cancer when he was 2 years old. He grew up with his aunt and uncle in Colorado and with their encouragement, joined GSTA when he was 14. He told me it was so easy to be among others his age who had gone through similar losses—no explanations needed. Like Alison, Luke emphasized that the real pleasure of the program was in building character, learning and improving.



Libby, age 19, explained that her mother heard about GSTA when she was 12 and she and her brother joined their programs.

I asked why a Gold Star teen should join? “Community is a big part,” she said. “We learn skills, from scuba diving to wilderness rescue to effective communication and teamwork. And it is really fun!”

The group enjoys talent night, karaoke, theater and singing. I did wonder if the 6 a.m. physical training was also part of the fun.

I watched as co-founder Kent Solheim, briefed the group on their day’s training dives for Advanced Open Water. Solheim, who lost a leg from injuries sustained in Iraq in 2007, is both a NAUI instructor and a Colonel in the U.S. Army. Solheim not only laid out the day’s work but engaged the group with questions and humor. No one was phoning it in! Solheim was aided by Pat Duffy, another instructor and a longtime supporter, board member Mike Love, executive director Trina Solheim and

administrator Jessica McCloskey. Jessica told me her two teens were active in the program and how good it was for them after losing their father.

A smaller group of teens were engaged in the arduous NAUI Rescue Diver course. Of all the scuba courses, I’ve always thought that Rescue is the most life changing. It really builds confidence, and the skills make one a better, safer, smarter diver and a savvier person in stressful situations on land.

Before meeting the group here, I had not been aware of GSTA. As I watched these teens learn, play and grow, I was moved and impressed. I saw teamwork in action, and young people trying new things. But most importantly, as team leader Libby put it, “this experience is really important to the teens. It’s an extended family.” I hope this family returns to our lovely island.

Learn more about Gold Star Teen Adventures at: <https://gstadventures.org/>

Mel McCombie

Nos Zjilea celebrates San Juan

For the first time ever, the monthly cultural event Nos Zjilea at Mangazina di Rei in Rincon was held at night. And what a night it was.

Beginning in the afternoon Nos Zjilea commemorated the abolishment of slavery with a presentation by Bonaire author and historian Boi Antoin. The author has a new book, Bonaire, een koloniale zout geschiedenis (Bonaire, a colonial salt history). The book, in both Papiamentu and Dutch, speaks of the hundreds of enslaved Africans who were forced into labor on Bonaire's natural salt pans.

As usual the crowd shopped the craft vendors and enjoyed the local food, including fresh baked bread from the wood fired oven and fresh homemade drinks. Local band Grupo Kulturando entertained on the newly expanded stage. And of course, everyone's favorite couple, Monique and Donny Winklaar inspired the crowd with their dancing.

The evening event was the traditional celebration of San Juan (Saint John) with fire jumping by anyone brave enough to follow the example set by Bonaire's beautiful Miss Bonaire Ruby Pouchet.

And if that wasn't enough, in honor of the occasion the children's group of Talento Kultural performed a play based on different moments from the legends sur-

rounding San Juan. The children players acted and sang songs to a narration by musician and singer Wesley St. Jago.

The play told the story of a man coming home drunk after celebrating San Juan and the ire he faced from his wife; a man daring another man with an iguana to see if it could swim in the water (and, of course, it got away) and a man with a goat in a bag over his shoulder asking another to not give away his secret but he did. No real iguanas or goats were used in the play and the kids did a good job convincing the crowds otherwise.

Host of Nos Zjilea Izain Mercera said, "This was the first time we used a voice over for the actors in the play. I was really astonished how well it went. The two children actors are usually very shy but they did very well and were true stars."

This will be the first of many cultural plays to be performed at Nos Zjilea.

Nos Zjilea cultural event is held the last Saturday of every month at Mangazina di Rei. For more information visit <https://www.managzinadirei.org> or on Facebook.

Mangazina di Rei is open Tuesday – Friday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. See, Feel and Taste the Culture of Bonaire.

Photo/story Julie Morgan



Juliette Blanco exhibits her folk art



Since the pandemic the Bonaire Museum has been under renovation and now has an exhibit space for local artists. From June 17 till July 17 the work of folk artist and craftswoman Juliette Blanco is featured.

In addition to the Museum Bonaire's artifacts and memorabilia there is also a thrift store and that is what first brought Juliette to the museum. She was searching for items to use in her work: a discarded canvas to paint over, fabrics or unusual items that could be transformed into small works of art.

"I was looking for objects to paint and came to the Bonaire Museum. Little by little I would come in and help Arjen [cu-

rator Arjen van Dorsten]."

Juliette's paintings are perfect examples of imagination and fun. She works with a little acrylic paint, found objects and a great love for painting that she inherited from her mother, artist Ineke Lohmann. From a very young age Juliette was always around when her mother was painting and was thus greatly influenced.

Ineke Lohmann is a Netherlands artist well-known for Hindeloupen art, a traditional decorative folk art of colorful diminutive flower groupings painted on furniture, utensils and other objects

Juliette Blanco, continued on page 9

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Juliette Blanco, folk artist, continued from page 8

which she would find.

“I used to get embarrassed when my mother would go and pick up discarded objects and bring them home to paint. Our house was full of small paintings and painted objects and now I’m doing that,” said Juliette.

Though strongly inspired by her mother, Juliette chose not to be an artist but pursue a career in law. She continued to paint but just for fun. Juliette’s workplaces in the Netherlands police department and prosecutor’s office were filled with her work that remain there today.

In 2019, Juliette took on the role as government prosecutor in Bonaire. She and her French chef husband and two daughters made the move from a big city to Bonaire and love it.

When she works at the museum thrift store, part of her volunteer job is to sort through the clothes.

“If it has a small hole in it or I like the design, I place it on a canvas and see how it looks; what I see in the space... I just play around with it. I try to achieve the recognition from the painting of what it really is,” said Juliette.

Juliette never adopted her mother’s style of painting but found her own path of art and paints almost every day.

The Bonaire Museum is located at Kaya J.C. van der Ree 7 and is open Wednesday – Saturday 9 a.m to 4 p.m. Juliette can be found there once a week and on Saturday.

Story/photos Julie Morgan



Juliette Blanco looks for treasures in the museum’s thrift store

Rebuilding our reefs one coral at a time



RRFB working above as well as below. Credit: RRFB

Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire (RRFB) is intensifying its commitment to building reef resilience in response to the rapid spread of diseases, such as Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD), and increasingly adverse environmental conditions caused by climate change.

Since the confirmation of Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD) on Bonaire’s reefs in March 2023, STINAPA has implemented several measures to mitigate its spread, including limiting access to affected reef areas and the application of antibiotic treatments on affected corals.

As part of an integrated conservation and restoration strategy, Reef Renewal Bonaire is refocusing its efforts on bolstering the populations of nine coral species that

have been significantly impacted by the disease. This strategic shift will be executed in two fundamental ways:

1. Increasing Abundance of Resilient Coral Colonies: Reef Renewal Bonaire has spent the last two months identifying and selecting coral colonies in severely impacted areas that have displayed a certain level of “resistance.” These colonies will be brought to the nursery for propagation and subsequently outplanted to the reef.

2. Enhancing Genetic Diversity: The organization assists coral reproduction and genetic recombination using larval propagation to increase the diversity and strength of existing coral populations.

Francesca Viridis, the Chief Operating Officer of Reef Renewal Bonaire, summarized the organization’s recent endeavors, stating, “Over the past few months, we’ve surveyed highly affected “red zone” areas to monitor and map coral colonies of various species. After identifying colonies which have exhibited “resistance” to the disease thus far, we are scheduled to begin propagating them by the end of this month. Furthermore, during the May spawning event of grooved brain coral (*Diploria labyrinthiformis*), another highly susceptible species, we reared hundreds of thousands coral larvae in our floating ‘CRIB’ and successfully outplanted more than 25,000 young settlers onto the reef. Each of these settlers possesses a unique genetic makeup, equipping them with enhanced resilience to ongoing diseases and other stressors.”

Viridis emphasized the importance of establishing an on-land nursery facility to ensure long-term project continuity and reinforce existing larval propagation efforts. She acknowledged that while preservation and restoration work is going on underwater, the installation of a dedicated facility on land is crucial for project development.

“For the past four years, RRFB has cultivated hundreds of thousands of coral larvae by transforming a small office room into temporary, makeshift wetlab. However, limited space and lack of aquarium tanks have become significant constraints that hinder our progress,” stated Viridis. “This facility will not only serve as an educational and training resource, but it will also foster fruitful research collaborations. Most importantly, it will

enable us to implement a targeted and comprehensive coral restoration strategy that will bolster the resilience of coral populations, in the face of infectious diseases and other serious threats posed by climate change.”

Story/photos RRFB



Outplanted great star coral (*Montastraea cavernosa*) between two diseased colonies in a reef “red zone”. Credit: RRFB



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Junior Rangers graduate



STINAPA Junior Rangers graduation ceremony June 30 brought light to the amazing education about the environment and nature that Bonaire youth are receiving from this program. Held at Plaza Resort, the ceremony was led by former Junior Ranger Julia Martinus, now working toward a masters degree in oceanography from Florida Institute of Technology.

Approximately 50 youth were enrolled in the 2022-23 school year. Heading up the 2023 program were Desiree Croes and Monique Grol.

In the graduation program STINAPA board president Pierre Monte presented certificates to each ranger while a list of their environmental education and achievements for the year were displayed on a large screen.

Monte urged the young rangers to

become involved and attend meetings affecting the environment. He stressed that local residents need to be a part of the decision making.

Awards were given for outstanding performance: Rookie of the Year - Rowan Janfji and Caitlin de Kruijt

Most Active - Benjamin Djamin and Mickie du Mee

Most Active Non-diving – India Verhoeven

Gifts were presented to four of the many volunteers who help make the program successful.

Bonaire youth age 13 to 21 are eligible to join the out of school program. As they progress in their ranger education they move up in rank from Aspirant, Cadet, Trooper, Deputy, Captain to finally Commander. As skills and ranks progress the rangers can be trained and

certified to dive. Saturday activities include beach cleanups, birding, green house, climate change, mangroves, sustainability and business, lora counting, coral restoration, practice dives, reforestation, painting rocks as warning signs, fish surveys and many more.

To learn more about the STINAPA Junior Rangers program visit STINAPA.org.

Junior Ranger Pledge

I promise to learn everything that I can about my island and its nature. I will do everything in my power to conserve and protect nature, on land and underwater. I will teach my family and friends to love, respect and conserve our nature and to keep Bonaire clean.

Story/photos Julie Morgan

Dee Scarr

Bonaire's Defenses Against Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease

On July 23, the Bonaire National Marine Park hosted dive, snorkel and boat operators to learn the latest news about Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD, pronounced in conversation as "Skittle-D"), and about what Bonaire is doing against it. The information was presented by Roxanne-Liana Francisca, who is leading our fight against SCTLD.

To balance Bonaire's SCTLD defenses with our ocean tourism, an advisory committee has been formed. Represented are STINAPA, the Tourism Corporation Bonaire, the OLB and the Island Secretary's Office. The SCTLD prevention measures currently in place will remain until July 17.

SCTLD continues to spread around Bonaire. In May it was found on Jerry's Reef on Klein Bonaire; off Bonaire it extends from Jefferson Davis to the Hilma Hooker. There is a definite order of affected species: maze corals are first, followed by flower corals and the brain corals. One good sign is that the amount of SCTLD on 18th Palm does not seem to be increasing.

Around us, Aruba is working on treating corals with antibiotics, not in the sea but in the laboratory; Curacao is expected to try a similar system. SCTLD has recently been reported in Los Aves and Los Roques.

Here, the BNMP is trying antibiotic (amoxicillin) treatments for corals on the reef. Eight colonies were treated in an early test, and in four colonies the disease was stopped. The hope is that trained volunteers will be allowed to apply treatments. Concerns to be dealt with before that include antibiotic resistance occurring in the disease, the possibility of antibiotics accumulating in the food web, the basic issue of introducing antibiotics into the entire system, and EuroNetherlands policies regarding antibiotics.

For the future?

The genetic information from our corals will be banked by Reef Renewal.

With a goal of focusing treatments on areas iconic to Bonaire, the BNMP has tentatively begun with the Salt Pier and the Hilma Hooker. Once the procedure is approved, additional sites will be added.

BNMP will continue monitoring our reefs for SCTLD and will begin treatment workshops once the procedures are approved. One of the great things about Bonaire is that any of us can be part of this project, by volunteering to apply antibiotics. To sign up, look for the information on STINAPA's website.

In conclusion, Roxanne reminded us that:

There have been five mass extinctions in Earth's history.

Corals survived them all.

On the very long term, the reefs will rebound.

<https://conservation.reefcause.com/the-evolutionary-survival-of-coral-reefs/>

Make Bonaire Accessible by Ria Evers-Dokter

The connecting factor

Did you ever wonder why people feel so well in the water?

Whenever there is a group of people in a pool, they almost immediately connect. They talk together, make jokes, play with pool-toys, or just hang at the side and discuss several topics.

Human bodies are made up mostly of water and maybe that is the reason? Everybody looks the same in the water, nobody is larger or smaller. There is no difference if you are fat or thin, adult or kid.

In the water people automatically watch somebody else's kids. People standing at the rim or close by a pool, mostly are a coach, a teacher, somebody afraid of the water, and it seems like they never really "belong."

As a Special Olympics swimming coach I learned that you can really teach your athletes when you are together with them in the pool or sea. When being in the pool with them you "mirror" them and they "mirror" you.

The same goes for music, whether you are playing

music, singing or listening to music. Music is universal and makes people connect.

There are commercials that show this in a perfect way, especially around the holidays: in a busy street of a shopping center suddenly a young woman or elderly person starts to sing or play an instrument. Immediately people stop and look, point fingers at where it is happening.... But you can notice that people also stop and listen when somebody plays an instrument on the street.

For the last few months a group of elderly from Hofi Kultural has been playing on the stage at the cruise market.

They are all dressed in white, play an instrument like the quata, guitar, sinfonia and other small rhythmic instruments. And they all play nice Bonairean oldies. It is a very pleasant surprise for the many tourists, but it is also an authentic welcome. People stop and listen, some dance to the music and every now and then somebody tips the players.

Last Wednesday we attended a musical get-together, also at Hofi Kultural. Musicians, teachers, students (all 60 +). Listeners came to enjoy being together, to play good music, sing and have a lemonade and a few good snacks.... and dance.

Golden classics like: "Dugudugu sin saus", "Sarie Marijs", "Nos ta kore paranda ku un pia di ham"..... we all sang out loud. What a feast. Those who could not play, could join by shaking marachas or the tambourine. And of course at the end, the loved "Remailo." It did not matter that it was really hot and everybody perspired. We ALL had fun.

We all had such a wonderful time and were kind of sad when it was over and time to go.

And accessibility was never a problem. Everybody could enter Hofi, sit down, dance and for those without transportation, there was space to ride in others' cars.

If we could only get that vibe into the decision making of our island. We would all have so much more fun and enjoy all the possibilities for every citizen.



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 *Has Bonaire Quit Protecting Its Reefs?*

by Dee Scarr

A huge pile of broken glass and other debris was discovered on Bonaire's reef at the North Pier in October of 2022.

The debris covered a roughly circular area more than 10' / 3m in diameter and consisted mostly of mechanically crushed wine bottles and other glass.

In the nine months since the discovery of this debris, there has been no action on the part of authorities on Bonaire.

I applied for a Nature Permit to collect the debris. No response.

The Prosecutor's Office has been sent the information, including photographs of the 2022 debris pile and evidence I found as to the dumper; they never responded to me and I've heard of no other action.

The Bonaire National Marine Park has helped with collection of the glass but taken no other action.

The harbormaster, Gunther Flanegin, has answered only a few of my many emails requesting permission to dive for the debris, mostly to refuse permission. He has consistently asserted that this debris is "routine trash" despite photographs and information that show a single dump that's not local. On June 16 his own port diver affirmed that this debris was a single dump. Flanegin argues that ports must expect trash.

There's a difference between *expect* and *accept*.

Why did our port start accepting trash? Why should our port leave this debris lying on the reef of the Bonaire National Marine Park, when there are experienced divers who are willing to collect it (for free)?

Since the debris is near our North Pier, the harbormaster must give permission for diving there. In nine months, Flanegin has allowed us to collect glass only one time, and we've also collected this debris on a Dive Friends Quarterly CleanUp and two STCB line collecting events.

Four debris removal opportunities in nine months.

Why has Bonaire's harbormaster been so obstructive about everything related to this 2022 debris dump?

Despite an astonishing lack of cooperation, there have been successes.

More than 425 pounds (193 kilos) of debris, mostly glass, has been removed from our reef. Thanks to clues in the debris, **this 2022 dump has been traced to Silversea**



Cruises.

In 2005, a smaller such debris pile was found, also near the North Pier. That debris was removed by divers in ten days, with the cooperation and appreciation of the Harbourmaster (who was not Flanegin). The dumper was prosecuted by the BNMP and fined by Bonaire. **The cruise line fined for that 2005 debris dump was also Silversea Cruises.**

Why is Bonaire ignoring a 2022 debris dump by the same lawbreaker who was fined for the same crime in 2005?

Has Bonaire quit protecting its reefs?

Information on this debris dump, and requests to collect it, have been sent to parties involved, including the harbormaster's office and the nature permit group, with copies to the BNMP. Information was sent to the Lieutenant Governor's office.

What I know about the law doesn't seem to have anything to do with reality, although I'm a better detective than I thought I'd be. What I am is committed to the

health and safety of our marine animals, so

What I want to do is:

- * affirm that our reefs – all of them – are still protected, and

- * get that 2022 glass away from our vulnerable marine animals and our protected reef, and

- * use that 2022 debris to shame cruise lines into recycling rather than dumping.

Can you help?



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.

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Bonaire brings home the gold



Bonaire's Special Olympics team returned home victoriously from the World Special Olympics to a welcoming balloon and flag waving crowd complete with a brass band on June 26.

The athletes brought home gold and silver medals for Bocce and Swimming. An amazing 7000 athletes from 190 countries competed in 26 sports in the games held June 17 – 25 in Berlin, Germany.

Bonaire athlete Su-endry Weef won gold medals for Bocce double and a silver medal for Bocce single. Revelino Engelhart won a gold medal for Bocce single and Genrick Mercera won a gold medal for Swimming 25m Freestyle.

The team was accompanied by coaches Rolvin van Hellburg for Bocce and Chislain Makaai for Swimming.

An estimated 3,000 coaches and 20,000 volunteers supported this year's Special Olympics athletes at the World Special Olympics.

The Special Olympics began as a small backyard movement in the 1950s by Eunice Kennedy Shriver in the United States. Shriver realized the unjust treatment of people with intellectual disabilities and took action to create a movement that has spread worldwide.

This was the first time the games were held in Berlin.

The Special Olympics winter and summer games are held separately every two years. Bonaire competes every four years in the summer games and trains in the off years. Fundraising for the athletes is held yearly through Bonaire's Special Olympics Walk-a-thon. For more information visit the Bonaire Special Olympics Facebook page. Congratulations to all the athletes of Special Olympics.

L- R - Revelino Engelhart and Su-endry Weef display proudly display their hard earned medals.



Restoring Lac's Conch

What do conch and palm trees have in common? The support of a California-based organization called Seacology! Recently, representatives of Seacology came to Bonaire to meet the partners and players of the two projects they support on the island.

For centuries, islanders have easily captured Queen Conch in Lac Bay. As the waters are so shallow in this area, neither specialized skills nor expensive equipment is required to bring home this tasty source of healthy protein. Monique van de Water, a biologist leading the Dutch Caribbean program of the World Wide Fund for Nature the Netherlands (WWF-NL) explains, "Our goal is to include Piskabon (Bonaire's fishing cooperative with more than 70 members) in the project from the start. They have valuable passed-on knowledge of the Queen Conch, or karko, that you can't learn elsewhere".

Who better to train and control the area than those who know the area and stand to benefit the most from the project? Compensating fisherfolk for this task can be considered as trading habitat protection and sustainable resource management for agreeing to personally protect the area by not allowing others to poach the area. Doing so will give karko a chance to grow to maturity and to reproduce.

"We are hopeful the project's success could allow for karkos to be sustainably harvested after a period of 10 years," van de Water projected.

The cultured karko juveniles are supplied by the Queen Conch Hatchery of the Curaçao Sea Aquarium. Project coordinator and scientist Michiel van Nierop outlined the project to representatives from multiple organizations at the Lac Bay meeting point. Starting with the larvae-to-snail process van Nierop exhibited the tools and technology the project will utilize.



Nierop said, "Our first results are promising with low mortality and good growth!"

One-year old juveniles are about 3 inches (~7.6 cm) long, big enough to support the Passive Integrated Transponder (or PIT tag) to be cemented to the shell to enable monitoring. However, juvenile conch burrow into

the sand to feed and avoid predation, making them difficult to monitor. To locate the deceptive young conch, custom-made reading frames pick up the unique signal emitted from the PIT tag, allowing for data management and map making.

New approaches are being taken by Judith Raming, STINAPA Marine Park manager.

"We are proud to work with our fishing community," said Raming.

Long-time fisherman and Piskabon representative Edmundo "Eddy" Christiaan said, "I speak the truth. Karko is part of our culture. Bonaire needs conch."

He later invited Seacology representatives to visit his fishing cottage, the last remaining one of its kind on Bonaire's shores.

WWF-NL is the primary funding supporting the pilot project to study the effects of outplanting cultured 1-year-old juveniles. Monitoring of growth, migration and survival rates will be the indicators to provide guidelines to future large repopulation projects. Seacology's support will allow the fishing community to self-police the area and educate the community regarding the long-term viability of the project.

Seacology director Duane Silverstein said, "Working directly with communities to preserve their cultures and improve their lives is a premise of Seacology projects"

Protecting the Queen Conch is not just about fritters! This pretty pink mollusk keeps seagrass and coral reefs healthy by grazing on macro algae and organic matter. Look forward to a next article on how Seacology is helping to save one of the world's most endangered plants—on Bonaire!

Story/photo Lynn Costenaro

Nos t'ei! Bo t'ei!

Article 1 of the Constitution (adapted in February 2023) "All who are in the Netherlands are treated equally in equal cases. Discrimination on the basis of religion, belief, political opinion, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or on any other basis is not permitted."

June is known in over 100 countries as Pride Month and for the first time ever Bonaire raised the rainbow flag for a week of Pride June 21 – 25.

All the events featured the slogan Nos t'ei! Bo t'ei! (We're here and you're here. We do co-exist.)

Judith Brekelmans, president of the equality organization EQ founded in 2015, said: "This is our first tie to Pride Month. We have never really promoted our organization before except with small activities. We are trying to see with the eyes of love and we will get closer, but everyone has to respect. We know that on Bonaire every event we have has to be very respectful."

On June 21 invitees attended a health care conference at Plaza Resort. Eight speakers from health management



L-R - Laurindo Andrea, Terrence Jansen, Philip Bodifee, Francis Figaro, Judith Brekelmans and Luca Wang.

in medical, general practice and mental health discussed how to address and interact with LGBTQIA+ individuals.

Brekelmans said, "Every speaker had a way of explaining how to communicate and it was very informative and successful."

A thank you get-together for Pride Week sponsors and volunteers was held at It Rains Fishes back patio on that same day.

Countless people attended the actual

opening, June 22, of Pride Week at Bonaire's newest art gallery Sobremesa. Lieut. Governor Nolly Oleana cut the ribbon to the opening saying, "I stand behind you as human beings." A new art show was hung by local artists of all gender orientations. Poetic readings echoing the feeling of pride and emotion for equality were spoken by different people staged in different locations throughout the gallery space.

On June 23 a fun pub quiz about pride

was held at Hillside. The highlight of the week was the Selebra' at Happy's. Amazing music, food, drinks and a surprise appearance by Curaçao's Caribbean Dolls drag performers that wowed everyone.

The closing event was a relaxing pool and beach side event at the Bonairian.

Despite the fact that Bonaire approved same sex marriage in 2012, there is still a degree of intolerance.

Brekelmans said, "In the young people, elderly and parents of youth, we see there is not so much tolerance and not even close to acceptance... We are losing people we know that can't live the way they want and are leaving. It's a pity, it shouldn't be that way. Bonaire should be welcome to everyone. This is an island that knows slavery, but we are still fighting for equal rights. We are talking about equality for everyone even though people are slightly different."

Pride Week is not a one-time event for Bonaire. EQ is making plans for Pride Week 2024.

EQ will continue to hold their monthly LGBTQIA+ themed movies every three months; next date is October 25. And they will continue a special happy hour at Happy's called Kiki on July 28.

For more information visit EQ on Facebook. *Photo/story Julie Morgan*

Piss and Vinegar by Gijs Borsten Coral disease

Since 2014, coral reefs in Florida have been experiencing an outbreak of the Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD). The outbreak has spread along Florida's coastline and to reefs in the Caribbean, including, since a couple of months, Bonaire and Curaçao, the only reef systems infected in the southern Caribbean.

Despite a wide response effort, and extensive scientific research, the authorities in the US have not been able to mitigate the spread, or find a cause, or a cure for the disease. All they know is that it's probably bacterial in origin, and can be transmitted through direct contact and water circulation. Meaning, for a layman: it won't go away by itself, but we can limit the spread by establishing strict measures.

STINAPA, being the patron of the underwater park, closely monitors the spread of the disease that has recently made the passage West to Klein, and has enacted a moratorium on diving on North-Western dive sites.

Furthermore, Bonaire's government officials, TCB and Bonhata, to mention a few responsible bodies, so far observed an absolute silence concerning the infection. Besides, as far as I can judge, there's nothing they have done to limit the outbreak. TCB, Bonhata, the deputy responsible: they all appear to be in a state of radical denial. Kind of, if we don't mention it, it probably doesn't exist. Roll over and play dead.

But while scuba diving is a principal source of income for Bonaire (the average diver spending more on air than the low budget tourist on his entire vacation), the preservation of the reefs is of imminent importance for the survivability of the dive industry. It's dozens of dive operators, and probably hundreds of jobs that are involved.

There appear to be two major problems. Firstly, while in the US prominent oceanographers have published a number of very accessible research papers, nobody on Bonaire besides STINAPA (that can't do anything else than keeping track of the infection) seems to have done anything to even try to understand what makes the infection constitute a danger for our reefs and thus for our tourism resources. Nobody (TCB, Bonhata, island government) seems to be able to paint a clear picture, or have the faintest clue, of the consequences of the disease for Bonaire's dive tourism. Would consulting local and Floridian dive operators shed some light on possible consequences?

More important, nobody has, in an attempt to clarify how we could prevent the spread, ever tried to find out how the disease got here. I therefore suppose – the silence of the involved island institutions thundering a severe warning in our ears, telling us more than any extensive memorandum on the subject could have done – that a decree to muffle any news on the disease has been issued by the absolute ruler of Bonaire, TCB's chief Miles Mercera (King Miles I, so to say) (I can't help it, but suddenly an analogy with 'The Emperor's New Clothes' pops up in my mind...) who obviously doesn't give a daisy about long term perspectives, i.e. the future of the dive industry and everything connected.

The reason for their – or rather his – silence is clear. He suspects – I think he knows for sure - it's the cruise ships that took the infection to Bonaire. Considering the beginning of the spread of the disease on the West coast of the island, between, roughly, Divi Flamingo and the Marina, the source is almost certainly shipping. Both Playa piers are right in the middle of the infected area, and it doesn't take much of one's imagination to consider the cause of the contamination being the mooring ships.

It could have been one of the yachts, but judging the time those need to get here from the nearest infected area (about two weeks) and the number of them arriv-

ing (a few), the source of the infections probably is to be found among the cruise ships. They sail down from the infected areas in a matter of days, have a reputation of not being too neat in getting rid of their bilge water and related waste (millions of dollars in fines are issued yearly in the US), and, on Bonaire, there's no monitoring whatsoever to prevent the ships from dumping their excrements in our ocean (peeking in the water to see if it's still clear isn't real monitoring to me; if there isn't an authorized procedure describing how the cruise ship's waste water is to be analyzed, enforcement is impossible. The harbormaster's opinion. No more. A license to dump).

I know there aren't many oceanographers, microbiologists, or affiliated scientists to be found on Bonaire, most certainly not in circles of TCB or island government. Would, in an attempt to prevent contamination, taking samples from any incoming ship's waste water and bilge tanks help finding out whether it is contaminated or not?

We have to find out how we can prevent future infections, how we can fight the present one, and what we're going to do once the dive industry is at risk of collapsing. It's a bit like Covid: ignore it, deny it, tell everybody it's the lizards taking over, but it's gonna get you anyway.



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.

gasina The Storehouse.

What's Happening

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

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

Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei in Rincon: Tues. - Thurs. 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sat. 8 a.m. - noon
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

Marshe di Playa Local market Sat. 9-1. Kaya Industria, next to Warehouse Supermarket.

Pakus di Pruga (Animal Shelter flea market. Central Kralendijk): While we are still looking for a new permanent location, the Pakus is still OPEN but in a very downsized version at the old location on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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.) \$40 (Free with proof of Nature tag)

Sunday, July 2	<p>Full Moon Lagadishi Hike in the Washington Slagbaai National Park. 6 p.m. \$10. Registration required +599-717-8444. Limited spots are available.</p> <p>Nikiboko Bario Festival 6 p.m. til midnight. Free. At Parke Lalan Clarenda. With music groups Grupo NikiMix and Foyan Boys. Performances by S.P.A.B. Dance, DJ Fe. Sponsored by TCB and New Angel Softball team.</p>
Monday, July 3	<p>Evening with the Full Moon. An evening of poetry for Papiamentu speakers. 7-9 p.m. Kunuku of Popo Morales in Mexico, Antriel Pariba. Bus leaves from east side of church in Rincon then picks up people from Playa at SKAL. Reserve bus at SKAL or call +599 715 5323</p>
Tuesday, July 11	<p>Molten Glass Workshop Crafting Glass Ornaments with Josie Class limit 8 people. Be guided through the entire process of creating your very own glass art - from choosing your glass, to design, to the fusing in the kiln. \$150 includes tools, materials, snacks, beverages, and your finished pieces. No experience is required. Sign up by sending an email moltenwolfglassinc@gmail.com</p>
Saturday, July 15	Women's Dive Day
Saturday, July 26	Conservation of Mangroves Day
Saturday, July 29	Nos Zjilea Cultural Event 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei, Rincon. Enjoy the music, dancing, crafts, amazing food and drink.

Glass Workshops

On June 13 MoltenWolf Glass (MWG) held their first glass fish workshop with a class limit of eight people, but the response was so overwhelming that a second fish class was added on June 20th. In each class MoltenWolf Glass artist Joel Munoz demonstrated how to make a "corner fish" after a discussion of how to work the glass. After the participants made their first fish, Joel demonstrated how to make a "mosaic fish." The participants then created their second, and, in some cases, their third fish. After the class, the fish were fired in the kilns at MoltenWolf Glass to be picked up two days later. All of the participants' fish turned out beautifully, and everyone had a wonderful time. MWG's Ornament class on July 11th is full, but there are still places in an Olive Oil Bottle class on August 8th.



You can help keep Bonaire clean

Saturdays	<p>One Hour Clean up Power. Weekly coastal clean up every Saturday, 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Location given on FB page: https://www.facebook.com/OneHourCleanUpPower/</p>
Sunday, July 19	<p>Clean Coast Bonaire. 4-6 p.m. Boka Onima. Donate your time. Work as a citizen scientist to collect marine litter & data. https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=clean%20coast%20bonaire</p>

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

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 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. <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: July 2, Aug. 6, Sept. 3, Oct. 1, Nov. 5

Pickleball. Wednesdays & Fridays 6 – 8 p.m. at Jong Bonaire. Come join the fun. 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



Manta Monday - Nicole Pelletier of the Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation Program. July 3rd at Divi resort (7:30 p.m.) July 10th - No manta Monday this week. Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation Program facebook email: Caribbean.Islands@mantatrust.org



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



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

Government dates

Personal Income Tax extension from May 15.due July 15.

Do you want to apply for Dutch nationality? The IND will not process any new applications from June 30 to August 18. It will not be possible to: • Submit questions or requests regarding Dutch citizenship; • Submit applications for Dutch citizenship; • Submit formal documents on Thursdays; • Make payments and have requests signed. Feel free to contact us via Nederlandschap@rijkdienstcn.com

Nominate someone as an Honorary Citizen. The annual Honorary Citizenship is awarded on Bonaire day. It can be granted to residents, former residents or non-residents of Bonaire. It is awarded for exceptional achievements that influencing well-being, prosperity or reputation of Bonaire. Achievements, for example, in administrative, social, sporting, cultural, charitable, economic or scientific fields. Fill in the proposal form via the website no later than August 1, www.bonairegov.com/voorstel-ereburger.

If you are unable to complete the form digitally, you can address your nomination to the SKAL department, for the attention of Rina Saragoza, Kaya Kachi Craane # 34., and deliver it to the counter of the SKAL department. Your nomination will be treated confidentially by the department.

Tentative cruise ship schedule

DATE:	CRUISE SHIP	TIME	PIER	CAPACITY
Mon. July 17	DISNEY FANTASY	06:30-1500	South	4000
Wed. July 19	CARNIVAL CELEBRATION (LAUNCHING 2022)	0800-2200	South	5282
Mon. July 26	CARNIVAL HORIZON	0700-1500	South	4683
Wed. August 9	MARDI GRAS	0700-1600	South	6631
Wed. August 16	CARNIVAL CELEBRATION (LAUNCHING 2022)	0800-2200	South	5282
Wed. August 23	CARNIVAL HORIZON	0700-1500	South	4683
Thurs. August 24	CARNIVAL EQUINOX	0800-1700	South	2852

Tourism stakeholders meet

Tourism Corporation Bonaire (TCB) together with its partners the Public Entity of Bonaire (OLB), Bonaire Hotel and Tourism Association (BONHATA), Bonaire International Airport (BIA) and the Harbor Master held its second stakeholders meeting for 2023.

Miles Mercera CEO TCB: For 2023, the Tourism Master Plan set the target number of visitors at 170,000. Up to May Bonaire has received around 76,552 visitors, 48% from the Netherlands, 23.5% from the USA, 15% from the former Netherlands Antilles. TCB has co-op campaigns planned with KLM, TUI, Corendon for the European market, and others planned for the North American market such as those with Expedia and Flash Flamboyance.

Veroesjka de Windt CEO BONHATA: So far this year hotels had an average occupancy of 71% (2022 had 76%; 2019 had 77%). The Average Daily Rate (ADR) for 2023 is \$246. (2022's ADR was \$225). The Revenue per Available Room for 2023 is \$176, compared to 2022's \$163.

Maarten van der Scheer CEO BIA: The first half of 2023 saw an increase of 8% in number of passengers over last year. Mayor improvements to the current facility are planned and under construction including the baggage reclaim belt and arrival hall. July's start of Winair to Sint Maarten is improving connectivity to the Windward Islands. The airport is aiming for new routes and frequencies in the winter, especially to North America.

Harbor Master Gunther Flanegin presented data for October 2022 to May 2023: 171 cruise ships visited, bringing 423,000 visitors. There were five new first calls in 2023: Ritz-Carlton Evrima, Carnival Celebration, Norwegian Prima, Royal Rhapsody of the Seas, and Ponant Le Ballot.

Bonaire kids train like the pros



For the first time, top ranking Dutch football club PSV, (Philips Sport Vereniging) brought their talents and expertise to train professionally and possibly enlist Bonaire's young athletes. Some 200 kids, ages 6-15 enjoyed the opportunity to learn from four of PSV's 40 trainers in a camp June 19 – 30.

The idea was developed from a meeting last year in Holland between Brainport's PSV and OLB's Hennyson Thielman. Bonaire's OLB, Steven Cicalia of FFB and Terrence DeJong of Indebon collaborated to make it happen for Bonaire's kids.

The training was held at four of Bonaire's fields: Stadium Rincon, Rudy Boezem, ATC Pitch and Elion Flores.

Professional coach and coordinator for PSV Vincent Blantke said, "Our main goal is to give them a nice ex-

perience and train. This is free to the kids. Some of them just wanted to have a good time and others worked really hard. We tried to challenge them."

The kids were divided into three different age groups to practice various drills, skills and scrimmages.

OLB's Debbie Rauwers said, "This is an awesome move for our kids. We are a small island and the more help and tools we can get the better. We need this to diversify. We start with football and then more sports in the future."

All kids received a t-shirt and certificate on completing the training.

PSV has provided this training experience for young athletes in Greece, New Jersey, South Korea, Indianapolis, IN, Vancouver Canada, Tokyo and Iceland.

Story/photos Julie Morgan



Creating optimal health

by Irene da Cunda Costa

Yoga Nidra or NSDR

Yoga Nidra, also called yogic sleep, is a guided meditation that generates a state of consciousness between wakefulness and sleep. It is also called non sleep deep rest (NSDR). Scientists believe Nidra generates benefits such as improved sleep patterns, improved physical and mental health, improved coping mechanisms for trauma and addiction and increased overall resilience and emotional balance.

It is done through verbal guidance and the goal is to stay awake during the entire practice but on the edge of sleep.

The Yoga Nidra technique was created by Satyananda Saraswati in 1976. Although this technique is not found in ancient or medieval texts, yoga scholars point to analogies with various ancient practices. Richard Miller, who pioneered in yoga as therapy in the west, used Yoga Nidra to rehabilitate soldiers in pain, using the Integrative Restoration (iRest) methodology. He took the practice to military bases, veteran's clinics, homeless shelters, Montessori schools, hospitals, hospices, chemical dependency centers, and prisons.

The form of practice taught by Satyananda includes eight stages:

1. Internalization: a quiet, safe and comfortable place is chosen, the person lies down, closes their eyes and the focus of consciousness is guided from the outside to the inside of the body.
2. Awareness of breathing: the focus is brought to the breath.
3. Enunciation of a resolution or SANKALPA. The SANKALPA is what the practitioner wants to help bring out his full potential. It must be enunciated in a positive way and in the present tense, the SANKALPA IS.
4. Rotation of consciousness: attention is drawn to each part of the body that is mentioned.
5. Manifestation of opposites: involves imagining variations in weight and body temperature.
6. Creative visualization: this part can have multiple expressions, depending on the objective of the practice.
7. The SANKALPA is repeated.
8. Externalization: is the gentle exit of the practice by returning the focus of consciousness to the surrounding environment.

The regular practice of Yoga Nidra, in addition to these benefits, improves dysfunctional thought patterns, since an expansion of consciousness is generated due to the state of relaxation, thus innovative thought patterns are accessed. By training the mind to be still, mindfulness improves and it is easier to get out of autopilot when needed. Cultivating mental calm and physical relaxation helps reduce the continuous alert states

suffered by people with anxiety and also helps detect automatic negative thoughts, improving the symptoms of people with depression.

The sustained practice of Yoga Nidra trains the relaxation response by activating the sympathetic branch of the nervous system which in turn improves blood pressure, regulates cholesterol levels, enhances the immune response, balances the nervous system, regulates the endocrine system and reduces pain perception.

The only thing necessary to practice Yoga Nidra is a quiet place, comfortable clothes, a mat and audio that can be chosen from thousands on the web. The idea for the practice of Yoga Nidra is to dedicate between 20 and 40 minutes to it, but there are 10-minute audios and other longer ones.

Referring to the practice of yoga, Sivananda said, "Ten minutes of practice is better than three hours of theory."

So, if you have time for a power nap, you can try Yoga Nidra instead and see if it works for you.



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.

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Shelter News



SHELTER TEAM MEMBER TAKES SILVER AND GOLD!

Animal Shelter Bonaire is so proud of our Special Olympian Su-endry Weef who brought home two medals from the 2023 Special Olympics in Berlin! Su-endry won a silver medal in individual bolas and a gold in doubles bolas (with Revelino Engelhart). Besides being an Olympic team member, Su-endry has been a Shelter team member for over four years taking care of our cats in the Cat Palace. He was part of Bonaire's Special Olympic team who competed last month with 7,000 athletes from 126 different countries. Congratulations, Su-endry! We are so proud of you!

Story Jane Disko / Photo Julie Morgan

Pets of the Week



This week we aren't focusing on just one of our beautiful cats but instead the spotlight is on all our amszing (young) adult cats that are ready for adoption.

Did you know that at this moment the Shelter has 45 individual sweet cats, all with their own special personality and waiting for their forever home?

All 45 have tested negative for FIV/L test, all are neutered, had their vaccinations and will be chipped when adopted.

Do you know the advantage of adopting a young adult cat? If you know exactly what kind of cat you adopt, please let us know because we know their personalities. Do you want a lap cat, a more independent one, a snuggler or a hunter? We can make the perfect match for both you and one of our young adult cats. The Shelter has all colors and sizes.

Please come over and meet them all. *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. ou can also call 701-4989 or 717-4989 to make an appointment, via whatsapp, facebook messenger, or email animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com

A Garden? Just Do It!

by Angliet, Nature Lover

Making tea: Part 1

There are so many natural goodies in our surroundings, yes, right there in our yards. Since I have some knowledge about plants, I don't get any tea from the supermarket. My tea supermarket is my garden. From leaves of different fruit trees one can make very delicious healthy teas with high nutrition value. Bonaire is full of these trees. And as some are also huge, they give an endless supply of leaves, giving so many choices that I have to write two columns to name them.

Green tea

When talking about green tea we have in mind green tea (bags) we buy in the tea shops. But my personal approach is that any fresh picked leaves or any part of a plant is green tea. So for me I have a lot of choices of green tea on Bonaire.

But the green tea we get from tea shops is okay and has good things such as a boost of antioxidants which is good to neutralize free radicals. Antioxidants prevent free radicals from causing damage and cancer development.

And also when drinking green tea at night, the tea gives a good sleep. In the daytime the best use is 1-2 hours after breakfast or lunch.

And yet now I will talk about "green" tea in my yard.

Papaya leaves

Pick a fresh papaya leaf. Boil it for about 20 minutes. This is to reduce the bitter taste in the fresh leaf. Pour water into a tea glass. Add some honey or fresh ginger or some lemon juice to make a nice combination with a high healthy boost. One can use the leaf also without boiling. I do that. To reduce the bitter taste I let the picked leaf dry for two days and then just pour hot water over the leaf the same as you make normal tea. In combination with other leaves and herbs such as basil, ginger, turmeric, you want to taste any bitter taste. Papaya leaves are also used to cook meat, to make meat tender because it's a good tenderizer. In certain countries papaya is used as a vegetable and its very healthy. It improves the immunity and has a lot of other nutrient values such as Vitamin E, A, C B-17 and high antioxidant bioactives.

Mango leaves

Three to four pieces of a leaf are good for a pot of tea. Pour hot water over the



guava



papaya



pineapple



mango

fresh leaves or boil them for a few minutes. Very good for the nervous system. For shaky nervous hands mango tea might help with time.

Guava leaves

One can find this tree everywhere on Bonaire; in yards, in the mondi and even on the street. This is very strong tree that can survive the heaviest of droughts on Bonaire. It is full of power and strength and contains a lot of good stuff such as antioxidants, all Vitamin Bs except B12, Vitamin C, fiber and more. It brings down cholesterol, acne, is good for skin texture, fights cancer, supports weight loss, heals cold, cough and throat pain.

Pineapple peels

Pineapple peels are painkiller, so don't throw the peels away. Tea from them takes care of inflammatory pains. (It's also said that pineapple hot water - tea - and hot pineapple kills cancer cells. The warm fruit contains the effect to kill cysts and tumors.) Hot pineapple water will become "alkaline" water which is good for everyone. It also kills germs and toxins which cause allergies. Peels are very good for a face mask. Rinse pineapple fruit before peeling so one can use all parts for tea, for face masks and also to make syrup.



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.

Pakus di Pruga is still looking for a new permanent location. But for now Pakus is still OPEN but in a very downsized version at the old location on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. And yes, the Shelter is still taking donations.

Summer vibes and \$10,000 in cash prizes

Digicel Summer Cash Splash Campaign is On!

On June 26, 2023, Digicel Bonaire launched its summer campaign Summer Cash Splash, rewarding customers with a chance to win a share of \$10,000 in cash prizes. Even those who are not yet a client of Digicel will still have the opportunity to participate and enjoy the summer vibes with Digicel's Summer Cash Splash.

"A little something extra in the wallet to soak up the easy breezy summer vibes is always a good thing," shares André McKenzie from Digicel Bonaire.

Popular ABC music artist Roderick "Rocco" Flava has collaborated with Digicel with a super catchy jingle to help Digicel share the Summer Cash Splash campaign and get everyone across Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao in the carefree summer spirit.

How can you be a part of Digicel's Summer Cash Splash Campaign?

It's simple: Recharge with \$5 and win! Prepaid customers can recharge with \$5 or more in the MyDigicel App or at any Digicel reseller, and their number will be automatically added to the raffle - \$1 equals one digital coupon. The more a customer recharges during this campaign, the higher the chances of winning.

Customers can also win by activating a 3-day or more plan. When doing so, the customer will also receive a digital coupon for every \$1 spent.

Postpaid customers can also participate. Every active number is automatically included in the Summer Cash Splash Campaign raffle! If you are not a Digicel customer yet and wish to participate, it's easy; switch now and enter a world of benefits, connectivity, and Data Pa No Kaba. Once you have subscribed to Digicel and have activated a postpaid plan or purchased a Digicel SIM or e-SIM, you participate in the Summer Cash Splash Campaign.

A chance to win \$500 every day!

The campaign was launched on June 26 and will run through July 22, 2023. Beginning July 3, Digicel will draw one lucky winner to receive \$500 every day for 20 days! The more a customer recharges, the more chances to win. For postpaid customers, keep your number active and your bills up to date for the opportunity to win.

Tune in to your favorite radio station for more details and 'swing' to the Summer Cash Splash jingle.

For more information, visit Digicel Bonaire's Facebook at

www.facebook.com/DigicelBonaire

Pictured Digicel staff: L-R Audric Jansen - Technical & IT Coordinator, Shekina Smiet - Corporate Account Executive, Ivan Abdul - Head of Business Sales and Ashanty Toppenberg - Retail Store Team Leader



On Thursday, June 29, the Digicel Business team in Bonaire spent some quality time, entertaining and informing clients at Sebastian's Restaurant under a beautiful view of the Bonaire sunset. The 'Mix and Mingle' event was the ideal occasion for an open exchange of ideas and business solutions tailored to each customer's needs outside of the normal work day. Ivan Abdul, Head of Business Sales at Digicel Business commented "It was indeed a pleasure hosting some of our valued corporate customers. This informal networking not only allowed us to engage with each customer on a one-on-one basis but also fostered an environment for them to establish professional relationships with other invited businesses. I wish to express my gratitude to all for the overwhelming turnout and look forward to our next corporate event." The conception of the Digicel Business 'Mix and Mingle' event derived from our mission to deliver the best service and value to our customers. This can only be done by truly knowing our customers and what better way to do so than in a social setting?

Story Andre McKenzie / Photo Julie Morgan



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