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Sinterklaas finished his journey by horse this year, the Zwarte Piets accompanying him. The horse, Top Flier, is being led by its owner Norman.

Photo Julie Morgan



Sinterklaas came to town...



magical white horse greeting the children.

Sinterklaas is always accompanied by the Zwarte Piets who overtime have transitioned from the switch carrying, rather scary, helpers to happier Piets who give out candy and whom the kids seem to love.

The Dreamer's Sandy Balentein said, "We wanted to improve the celebration. We love it and wanted to bring it to another level. It's better for the kids and if the kids are happy, we are also happy,"

On December 5, Sinterklaas and the Zwarte Piets will visit

all the schools on Bonaire.

Sinterklaas, Sint Nicolaas and even Santa Claus originate from the real Saint Nicholas, a Greek-Christian bishop of the fourth century from Myra, Turkey. He was well known for being generous, gave secret gifts to the poor and was known as the patron saint of sailors and children. To learn more watch

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbUVKXdu4IQ>

Photos / story Julie Morgan

More photos on our FB page.

On November 18 downtown Kralendijk overflowed with excited kids and their indulgent parents, all waiting for Sinterklaas / Sint Nicolaas to arrive.

For the first time the old man in red arrived via the beautiful schooner the Lady Bellais. His helpers, 50 Zwarte Piets in their colorful attire covered the decks of the boat and many dangled from the ship masts as it docked at Bonaire's north pier. Lieut. Governor Nolly Oleana and his wife met the ship and welcomed Sinterklaas to the island. A white horse named Top Flier was waiting for Sinterklaas to mount and ride through the street to meet the almost 1000 people gathered to see him. The welcoming event was set up in the Wilhelmina parking lot with a stage and throne for Sinterklaas so he could observe the children and review their names in his big red book. The Piets entertained the crowd by performing skits, singing, dancing and throwing candy to the kids for several hours.

This year's Sinterklaas event was closer to the Dutch tradition than in previous years. Thanks to new organizers, the Dreamers, led by Jong Bonaire's Israel Caster and Sandy Balentin, who are Zwarte Piets themselves.

Traditionally Sinterklaas arrives by steamship from Spain to the Netherlands a few weeks before the feast of Sinterklaas on December 6. He travels through the streets on his



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FOR WHOM?

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"All fresh, made fresh, fast and fun"



Foxy Flamingo's Juanita chicken burger

When I first heard about Foxy Flamingo, I thought, cute name, what is it? The short answer is a cute little restaurant in Harbourside Mall. The long answer is the food is all fresh, made fresh and fast.

The owners, Frank van den Bosch from the Netherlands and Paul Cizek from the US joined forces and moved to Bonaire with the idea of bringing something different in the way of 'fast food' to the island.

Paul said, "There is nothing like this on the island. We wanted to focus on chicken, burgers and fries we thought would be

popular with the cruise tourist and also residents."

So why the name, Foxy Flamingo? The guys said they wanted something fun and playful and that is exactly how the menu reads.

All eight burgers, either chicken breast or country fried steak have women's names. And according to Frank and Paul the burger stays true to the name and reveals the true personality and taste.

There is the Foxy, "the original", a true southern belle that is crispy fried butter-milk chicken and ranch dressing. And for anyone who remembers The Golden Girls, there is Blanche "Spicy and a little Blue", a burger smothered in spicy buffalo sauce and blue cheese. The Juanita is, you guessed it, a kind of Mexican burger with avocado, cilantro, smoky salsa, pepper jack cheese and jalapenos. The list goes on.

Foxy Flamingo to page 7



(L-R) Owners Frank van den Bosch and Paul Cizek

FOR SALE! Regatta Residence 71 New Construction



- Location: Tera Kora, close to downtown
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Administrative agreements to be replaced by acts of parliament

Sometimes the news changes too fast to keep track. A news release from Saba announced last week that State Secretary Alexandra van Huffelen and Commissioner Bruce Zagers amicably signed a new Saba Package Agreement. Simultaneously a story appeared Kingdom Dossier reporting that long-delayed legislation has been enacted that abolishes the administrative agreement as a tool of governance, except for very special circumstances and only for limited periods.

Dutch administrative agreements are intended to assure that no more than two tiers of government are working together on the same issues, and that tasks of government will be performed at a level as close as possible to the people affected. They provide for mutual goal setting, defining the sharing of responsibility, the allocation of resources, all the functions that need to be performed to do the work of government effectively and efficiently.

After 10-10-10 the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations signed admin agreements with the various public bodies of the kingdom in the Caribbean. Bonaire and Saba have thrived under their agreements. Other island governments dragged their feet, however, objecting to their perceived "loss of sovereignty." Their complaints have some validity. Administrative agreements gave the Kingdom Council of Ministers the power to enforce cooperation and reforms.

That threat was apparently recognized years ago. In 2000 a member of parliament submitted an act to deprive the Kingdom Council of Ministers of the power to enforce cooperation from administrations in the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom. That act was approved



State Secretary van Huffelen signs Package Agreements for Saba with Commissioner Bruce Zagers (top) and for St. Eustatius with Commissioner Alida Francis (bottom) ... Photos GIS

by the House and Senate 2016, then disappeared. Last week it was announced, without explanation, as a Royal Decree in the Official Gazette.

DMR (Dossier Kingdom Relations)

Island government overhauling mandate regulations

The Executive Council of Bonaire is completely rewriting the mandate regulations that govern the civil service. The mandate regulations delegate to specific civil service positions the authority to make specific action and spending decisions on behalf of the government. The mandate regulations the island government has been functioning under are outdated.

To avoid confusion during the transition, the OLB has transferred all mandates except those vested in the Governor to Christopher Frans, the Island Secretary. Each authority will be re-vested in a designated position in the civil service as the decisions are made by the Executive Council and approved by Island Council. *DMR*



Christopher Frans, Island Secretary

OLB spending decisions criticized

According to the 2023 budget and the draft budget for 2024, the Island Council has allocated additional expenditures of \$2.5 million for the maintenance of BonLab, \$310,000 for sports, \$300,000 for Art, \$250,000 for Social Livability and outdoor recreation, and \$140,000 for agricultural affairs and fishing.

The Financial Supervision Board (FSB) has objected. That is how Bonaire's spending decisions used to be made. The FSB says the objectives and coverage of the added expenditures are not defined. The expenditures would violate the planned budget by reducing the provision for general reserves and by creating deficits. The FSB says deficit budgeting is no longer legal on Bonaire. *DMR (Dossier Kingdom Relations)*

Two rescued when boat grounds on reef

The Coast Guard helicopter lifted two men from their vessel when it went aground near Sorobon at midday on Tuesday, November 14. They were enroute from Curaçao to Los Aves when their boat lost power, drifted onto the reef, and started to fill with water. The vessel drifted into shallow water and rescuers tried to wade out, but the seas were too rough for them to reach the men.

All the security services on the island responded to the emergency: the Royal Military Police, the Dutch Caribbean Police Force, Customs, and the Coast Guard. *DMR*

A million more euros approved for BES climate planning

The Dutch government will make €1,000,000 available to Bonaire, Saba and Sint-Eustatius so each can develop their own climate adaptation and mitigation plan. The money will be added to grants that have already made available for the same purpose. The goal is have three approved climate plans ready for implementation in the Caribbean Netherlands in 2024.

The government has also committed to establishing one central point that will coordinate the support the involved ministries can provide each island. Consultations will take place in the coming months on how to go about that.

State Secretary Van Huffelen said, "Recent climate scenarios show that Bonaire, Saba and Sint-Eustatius will be confronted with the consequences of climate change now and in the future. Such as a rising sea level, an increase of severe storms, higher temperatures and the damaging and loss of vulnerable coral reefs. [The ministries] and I want to support the Executive Councils of Bonaire, Saba and Sint-Eustatius in tackling the challenges in the area of safety, health, socioeconomic security, economy and biodiversity that they face as a result of climate change." *DMR*

The REPORTER

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POLICE REPORT

Property Crime

Nov. 18/19. Between 11 p.m. on Saturday and 9 a.m. on Sunday, November 19, a large amount of cash was stolen from an unlocked pick-up parked on Kaya Grandi. After a neighborhood investigation, video footage from a security camera showed a man searching the vehicle. The man was recognized by the police and the man, 46, was arrested for theft at around 10:15 a.m. on Kaya Tintorero. During the search, the suspect was in possession of a quantity of cash and an object that appeared to be a firearm. This was all seized for further investigation.

Nov. 18. A black Rockwheel XPRO bicycle (E-Bike) was stolen between 12:30 a.m and 1 p.m. The bicycle was locked with a padlock, and parked without a battery outside the gate of a tourist accommodation on Kaya Yuma.

Nov. 17. Between 12:30 and 1:30 p.m. items were stolen from a car parked at the Andrea 1 dive site. Taken were a black hanging bag with a driver's license, bank cards, cash, a black Samsung A-54 telephone, Rayban sunglasses, keys and an identity card. The car was unlocked and its windows were open.

Nov. 17. A black helmet was stolen between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. The helmet was placed on a scooter seat next to a security booth at a tourist accommodation on Bulevar Julio A. Abraham.

Nov. 16. Between 7:30 a.m. and 5:15 p.m. unknown persons broke into a home on Kaya Gepi and stole, among other things, a black bag with several silver and gold earrings, several silver Pandora necklaces and a bracelet, a silver watch, cash, and a Chevrolet car key.

Arrests

Nov. 13. Around 10 p.m., the central control room received a report of a vehicle on Kaya Klafir that was left with the engine on for hours. When the patrol arrived, they found a pickup truck with two people sleeping. To check that all was well with the passengers, the officers opened the doors of the vehicle and spoke to the driver. When a strong odor of suspected narcotics was detected, the officers proceeded with a check under the Opium Act. There were three bags on the front passenger seat. The driver grabbed one of the bags and threw it into the bushes. The bag contained a number of plastic bags with suspected narcotics. Two blocks of suspected hashish were also found in the bag. During a search of the vehicle, another baggie of another suspected narcotic was found. As a result, the man, 35, was arrested for violating the BES Opium Act.

Nov. 11. Around 12 noon, a man, 38, was stopped while having a snack on Kaya Korona. The patrol recognized the suspect and arrested him for assault, vandalism, theft by burglary and violation of the BES Opium Act. Investigations into this case are still ongoing.

Nov. 10. Around 4 a.m. a man, 28, was arrested at Kaya L.D. Gerharts for violating the BES Weapons Act. The suspect was brandishing a knife and was probably having problems with another man. The knife was confiscated. The case is under investigation.

Driving under the influence

Nov. 20. Around 2:20 a.m., a woman, 18, was arrested for driving under the influence. A patrol on Kaya Internashonal had stopped the scooter driver when her passenger was spotted

without a helmet. The passenger received a ticket for not wearing a helmet.

Nov. 19. Around 3 a.m. two cars collided into the back of each other near the Soeurnan di Roozendaal roundabout. Car 1 then crashed into an electrical box. The driver of the car that caused the accident walked away but a little later the owner of the car and the driver returned to the scene. Following the result of a breath test, the man, 27, was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. He was also fined because he couldn't produce a valid driver's license.

Nov. 17. Around 10 p.m., a man, 46, was arrested at Kaya Monseigneur Nieuwindt for driving under the influence and for violating the BES Compulsory Identification Act. The suspect did not want to cooperate with the identification requirement and was quite rude. He was arrested and taken to the police station for a breath test.

Nov. 12. In the evening the Dutch Caribbean Police Force (KPCN) conducted an alcohol breath test check of 36 drivers on Kaya Ir Randolph Statius of Eps. (24 car drivers and 12 scooter drivers). During this check, two people were arrested for driving under the influence, a woman, 25, who was given a driving ban of one hour and a man, 43, who was given a driving ban of three hours. A machete and a joint were seized during the check.

Nov. 10. Around midnight, a man, 57, was arrested for driving under the influence. He drove into a fence on Kaya Papa Cornes and then tried to drive away. A citizen at the scene managed to block the vehicle and call the police. When the patrol arrived, the administered a breath test and, as a result, he was arrested. He was unable to show a driver's license because it had been confiscated by the police last September for driving under the influence of alcohol.

Driving while your driver's license has been suspended is a criminal offense and you risk a prison sentence or an extension of your driving ban.

Nov. 10. Around 3:40 am, a patrol on Kaya L.D. Gerharts spotted a car weaving across the road. The patrol followed him and the driver was ordered to stop on Kaya Nikiboko South. As a result of breath tests the suspect, 33, was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol and his driver's license was confiscated. All his required documents were in order, and his car was taken to the station for safekeeping.

Traffic violations

Between Nov. 1 and Nov. 17, police issued fines during a planned traffic check on Kaya Internashonal and during routine traffic checks. Fines were issued for driving without: a valid driver's license 5x; valid insurance 5x; a seat belt on 5x, a license plate 4x. Tickets were also issued for holding a phone while driving 1x; for parking incorrectly 1x, for reckless driving 1x, and for arson 1x (in connection with violation of Environmental Legislation).

The fines for the above violations varies between \$30 and \$225.

Traffic

Nov. 14. Around 7:15 a.m. the central control room received a report of a collision between two cars on the corner of Kaminda Djabou and Kaya Neerlandia. One of the passengers, a minor, was slightly injured. The ambulance personnel took the two minors who were in one of the cars to the hospital for

medical treatment and check-up.

Nov. 11. Around 4 p.m. a patrol spotted a scooter driver on Kaya Industria driving without a helmet and without a license plate. The driver did not respond to police signals to stop but increased his speed after looking back. On Kaya Industria Pariba, the patrol managed to block the scooter so that the driver had to stop. The driver was ticketed when unable to show a valid driver's license and insurance. The scooter was taken to the police station and taken into custody.

Nov. 10. A single-vehicle collision occurred in Amboina when the driver of a car became ill behind the wheel and crashed into a fence of a house. He was taken to hospital by ambulance.

Nov. 9. Around 5:45 p.m. A scooter driver fell into a hole in the Kaminda Lagun road and lost control. He was taken to hospital by ambulance for medical treatment. The driver was ticketed for driving without a driver's license.

Nov. 9. Around 7 a.m. two vehicles collided on Kaya Korona near Kaya Frater Odulfinus. Car 1 went to overtake another vehicle and collided head-on with approaching car 2. The driver of car 2 was seriously injured and was taken to hospital by ambulance. A breath test was taken from the driver of car 1, but the result was negative. The driver, a man, 38, was arrested for causing a collision with injuries, driving without a valid driver's license and driving without valid insurance. Upon his arrival at the police station, the suspect required medical treatment and was taken to hospital by ambulance.

Fire

Nov. 16. The central control room received a report around 1:45 p.m. that a pickup was on fire in front of a house on Kaminda Mexico. The fire brigade extinguished the fire which is believed to have been caused by batteries left in the vehicle. No one was injured.

Public Order

Nov. 15. Around 1 p.m. the central control room received a report of a cruise tourist who had become ill while snorkeling with a group. He was taken to shore by boat where ambulance personnel immediately performed resuscitation while he was rushed to hospital. Unfortunately, the man, born in 1953 in the United States, died after arriving at the hospital.

Nov. 14. Around 11 p.m. the central control room received a report of a vessel that was stranded near Sorobon. A patrol was immediately dispatched and upon arrival they could see the vessel in the distance. Given the sea conditions and there being no other way to get to the vessel, the Coast Guard decided to call in the helicopter. The boat with two men on board was on its way from Curaçao to Aves when it suddenly ran into trouble south of Bonaire. The captain stated that he was not feeling well so he ordered his crew to sail. A little later he heard a loud bang and saw that she was stuck on the reef. At that moment the boat began to fill with water. The two men were brought safely to Sorobon beach by helicopter.

Nov. 13. Around 1:15 p.m., the central control room received a report that a person who showed no signs of life was found in a building on Kaya Sabana. After an examination, the medical examiner declared a natural death. The man with initials P.A. was born in Haiti on November 12, 1961.

Nov. 9. The central control room received a report that ammunition was found in the sea near a tourist accommodation located at Bulevar Gobernador N. Debrot. The ammunition was confiscated. The case is under investigation.

Have you seen or heard anything that could help the police? You can report this via 715 8000 or anonymously via the anonymous tip line, 9310.

OLB to start over on spatial development plan

The Executive Council of Bonaire has decided to dump Development Plan 2023-2027 and start over. The target year for implementation, 2023, is almost over and no 2023-2027 development plan yet exists. Current and new development applications will continue to be approved or refused according to the development criteria declared in the 2010 plan.

New decisions must be made about such matters as population growth targets, housing and social facility inventories, a strategic environmental assessment, and coordination with the BES plan. Challenging choices are also required regarding implementation, supervision and enforcement. *DMR / Photo SkyviewBonaire*



Candidates line up for Miss Bonaire 2024

The candidates vying for the title of Miss Bonaire 2024 were officially introduced on November 16 at Dabboussi Center.

The candidates who were attired in evening dress were presented to the crowd by Miss Bonaire president Roderick Beaumont assisted by vice president Geraldine Mathilda.

The young ladies each gave a personal mission statement for becoming Miss Bonaire. The Marriott Bonaire will be the site of a night of a (pre-) beauty show on January 13 and the new Miss Bonaire will be elected on March 9.

L-R: Ruby Pourier, Miss Bonaire 2023; Mireska Winklaar, Miss Tera Kora; Maria-luisa Troncon, Miss Rincon; Samantha Chaco, Miss Noord Saliña; Angie Daza, Miss Nikiboko, Zahira Avila, Miss Kralendijk and Caroline Porras, Miss Tourism 2023.

Photo / Story Julie Morgan



Nazis on Bonaire - Part II

IV.

As a diver visiting Bonaire, I always was impressed by the iconic picture of Austrian pioneer diver Hans Hass and his movie star wife, both posing carrying a camera, gazing towards a far horizon.



Hans and Lotte Hass

The picture, probably dating from the late fifties, was taken in a somewhat Riefenstahlesque way, from a slightly lower standpoint. The décor is clearly Bonairean. Hass, a famous under-water cinematographer, had invented an under-water breathing device that made diving accessible to everyone. After a vacation on the island during the summer of 1939, publishing his first book, *Jagd unter Wasser mit Harpune und Kamera* (Hunt under water with harpoon and camera), he had put Bonaire on the dive map.³

Shortly afterwards his second book, *Unter Korallen und Haien. Abenteuer in*

der Karibischen See (Among Corals and Sharks. Adventures in the Caribbean), appeared, in 1941, also depicting his Bonairean diving adventures.⁴

His books, and, in a later stage, his films, made him famous in the Third Reich. Asked, during an interview in 2009, whether the regime used his adventures for propaganda purposes, Hass denied any interest or involvement in politics. He merely published his books and made his films - he stated - to finance his future expeditions.⁵

And that's where the first questions arose.

V.

Hans Hass continuously worked and published in the Third Reich. To be able to publish, a writer or a film director needed studio capacity, or paper to print his books on. The only way to get either of them, was a membership of the NSDAP and the *Reichskulturkammer* (the Reichs Culture Guild, RKK) or one of her subdivisions. There was no way he could publish books or release films without being a member of the NSDAP.

But Hass consequently denied his formal bonds with the regime. His biographies, that can be found all over the internet, don't mention an NSDAP-membership either. His career, however, suggests he was an active member of the party, being sponsored by them not only materially, but also by financing the expeditions he had planned in the Aegean after he moved from Vienna to Berlin in 1941.⁶

Hass' application to the Writers Guild, first and second pages.

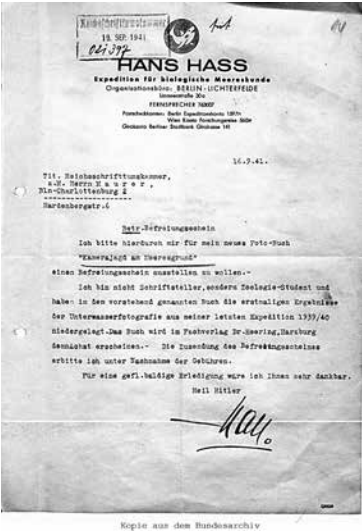
A short search in the *Bundesarchiv*⁷ produces a number of documents proving the assumption he was a party member is correct. He applied for membership of the NSDAP in September 1937, and of the 'Reichsschrifttumskammer' (Reichs Writers Guild, RSK), a subdivision of the Reichskulturkammer, on November 22, 1938.

So, Hans Hass was a Nazi.

To be continued

Gijs Borsten

("Nazis on Bonaire Part I" appeared in *The Bonaire Reporter*, Nov. 8-22, year 30, issue 22 which is available from the online archives at <https://bonairereporter.com>)



Hass as an Entrepreneur: asking permission to publish his book

⁴ Hass, Hans (1941). *Unter Korallen und Haien. Abenteuer in der Karibischen See* Berlin, Deutscher Verlag

⁵ In: Christof Kohler (2009). «Der Hai wollte ein Stückel von mir», in: *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 8.2.2009

⁶ Chryssooula Kambas, Marilisa Mitsou (Hrsg.) (2010). *Hellas verstehen. Deutsch-griechischer Kulturtransfer im 20. Jahrhundert*. Köln/Weimar/Wien: Böhlau, p. 169-172

⁷ *Bundesarchiv*: The German Federal Archives, Berlin and Koblenz

Paul said, “The chicken burger is chicken breast and unlike any other on the island. The steak burger is chicken fried steak or a country fried steak.”

Since they opened in May, their ‘skinny fries’ have become a beloved item on the menu especially with kids. The fries are made and shipped to Frank and Paul’s own specifications. There is a secret to good fries, and they have nailed it.

“We don’t need the clown here (McDonalds) because we have the fries and breakfast muffins,” said Paul.

Yes, Foxy serves breakfast. The breakfast muffin is a combo of eggs, cheese, a sausage patty, bacon or all of the above on a muffin. The guys have shipped New York bagels in to create bagel sandwiches and there is an omelette brioche sandwich with all types of add-ons. And they even have tater tots!

Paul said, “We have snackies too. Our chicken wings are either country fried, or mesquite smoked for eight hours.”

And then there’s the Mexican eggroll, sliders, salads and a fried cheesecake burrito with caramel.

If you are thirsty, Foxy Flamingo has all types of drinks: fruit smoothies, frozen lattes, espresso, homemade limeade, beer and specialty frozen drinks.

Happy Hour is Friday from 5-6 p.m. and specials on burgers are every day.

Foxy Flamingo is open Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. Food is available for take away, delivery with delivery@brothers.com or enjoy at their location in Harbourside Mall. For up-to-date specials visit Foxy Flamingo on Facebook or call +599-789-3625 to order.

Story / Photos Julie Morgan



Ask Bob

Bonaire real estate advice



Dear Bob,
I am buying a house and my real estate broker says that I can choose which Notaris office to transfer the deed. How do I know the best one to choose? Carl P.

Carl –

That’s a great question. To start with there are only two Notaris office on Bonaire. Notaris Rispens (www.bonairenotaris.com) and email: robin@bonairenotaris.com and Notaris Arends (www.notarisarends.com) and email: kenneth@notarisarends.com). Either office can transfer the deed for you. If you don’t have prior experience with one of them, you can always ask your real estate broker for their advice.

The Notaris acts as an independent

third party to your transaction. Once you decide to purchase a house, your deposit money and the rest of the purchase price will be held in their escrow account. The Notaris is responsible for checking the title of the house that you are selling and removing any liens or mortgages that may be on the property. They will also process your mortgage if you are buying your property with a bank mortgage.

The prices that the Bonaire Notaris charges are regulated, so both office will charge approximately the same fee. The Notaris fees are charged on a sliding scale and are partly based on the purchase price of your new property.

Other services that the Notaris provides include drafting wills, settling estates of people who have passed away, transferring ownership of company shares and offering

Bob Bartikoski,

Re/Max Bonaire Broker/Owner

If you are looking to buy or sell a home on Bonaire, or if you have a real estate question for Bob, email him at info@bonairehomes.com.

Bonaire: +599-717-7362.

Toll free from US: 1-866-611-7362

Working in partnership to help visitors discover Bonaire



(L-R).
Ruby Pouchet, STINAPA;
Jodelly Hunt, BIA booth attendant;
Elesjör Angel, TCB;
Miles Mercera, TCB;
Cristely Cranston, TCB.
Photo TCB

BIA’s information booth

TCB in partnership with STINAPA Bonaire, has launched “It’s in our Nature” Airport Information Booth at Flamingo Airport Bonaire. The booth is available for

both arriving and departing visitors.

“We are delighted to collaborate with STINAPA on this project,” said Miles Mercera, CEO of TCB. STINAPA, the Bonaire National Marine Park Foundation,

is known for its dedication to preserving and protecting Bonaire’s unique natural resources. Their involvement in this project reinforces the importance of sustainable tourism practices and environmental awareness.

The information booth will offer a wide range of resources including brochures and maps. Visitors can buy their nature fee at the booth.

Signs around Bonaire

In the first phase of the Bonaire Signage Project, TCB, Fundashon Históiriko Kultural Boneriano (FuHi-KuBo) and Openbaar Lichaam Bonaire (OLB) have worked in partnership to place 26 signs around the island. The signs shed light on historical sites, popular tourist attractions, and cultural highlights. Historical stories and images came from FuHiKuBo who assisted in selecting the signs’ locations by contributing invaluable stories and photos from their extensive collections and archives. TCB



The harmful consequences of plastics



Gevolgen translates as "consequences". Photo Rotary Bonaire

twice the size of Venezuela. There is also such a garbage patch in the Atlantic, just above the Caribbean Sea.

But the decomposition process continues. The plastic eventually disintegrates into infinitesimal pieces called microplastics. Those microscopic pieces of plastic already are in our bodies. Microplastics have also already been found in the placenta of pregnant women. So it is also in our babies. Every child has microplastics in their body. With the use of plastic bottles in which milk is heated, 1.6 million pieces of microplastics are fed to babies every day. The long-term

effects are not yet known. Ms. Dermout advises everyone not to use plastic, but glass bottles.

Boyan Slat

Already when in high school, the Dutch inventor, Boyan Slat, was concerned about the large amount of plastic in the sea. As a student he designed a system that would allow plastic to be fished out of the ocean and in 2013, founded the Ocean Cleanup Foundation (<https://theoceancleanup.com/>) to make it a reality.

Meanwhile, the collection system has been perfected and there are also collec-

tion systems called interceptors, to catch the plastic in the rivers before it washes into the sea. The plastic is collected for recycling, but of course it is much better to tackle it at the source and use much less plastic.

What can we do ourselves

Everyone can contribute. Therefore, the following tips:

- Buy less plastic stuff or buy plastic stuff second-hand for reuse.
- Consciously choose packaging without plastic.
- Take your own bag to the supermarket
- Take part in clean-up campaigns.
- Bring plastic for reuse to the collection points of Selibon. At Bondigro is a collection point for bottle caps that are processed on Bonaire into products such as key chains and flower pots.
- Never throw away plastic in nature.



Rotary Club of Bonaire

Across all the world's oceans, millions of pieces of plastic are accumulated in garbage patches. The largest garbage patch is in the Pacific Ocean, with an area

Make Bonaire Accessible

by Ria Evers-Dokter

The happiest season.....

Only two weeks away from December, it is hard to believe. People are starting to decorate for the holidays, shopping trips are being planned, the decorations are checked, lists are made, vacations are planned.....I love this time of the year.

But the year is not over yet! We just had a special edition of **Special Olympics Kingdom Games** and it was a great success! Everywhere you see the athletes, they are wearing their medals with pride. And it is not just the athletes who can be proud. It is the parents, the organizing committee, the sponsors and all of us on Bonaire who are proud. This puts Bonaire on the map in a very special way. Thank you so much, special athletes and Special Olympics Bonaire.

Bonaire is also preparing for ratification of the **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**. The conference was very successful and now we are on the way to make this happen as soon as possible. Nothing is obvious because everything must be seriously thought out. It may take a little while longer... but be prepared, very soon it will be a fact.



Special Olympic medal holders, Bonaire Kingdom Games, 2023 Photo SkyviewBonaire

"Ieder(in)" is a Dutch umbrella organization for persons with disabilities and chronic diseases that wants to check if persons with a handicap or chronic diseases can properly participate in the elections. It is not only about the accessibility of the location and the ballot papers, but also about how you are treated at the locations and the programs of the political parties. If you have positive remarks.... they are also of importance. This is very important because voting is a fundamental law for every citizen. The email address is : post@iederin.nl

Remember: if you want to learn about handicaps, you should talk with the experts with experience.

And after the elections, we still have a few celebrations to enjoy depending on where you are from and your personal preferences. Whether it is Thanksgiving and Saint Nicolas you want to celebrate or Christmas, it does not matter. As long as you do so with those that matter to you.

Preparation is the keyword here. If you want to celebrate big or small, at work

or with family and friends, enjoying the preparation is just as fun as the festivities itself. Sending cards is a thing of the past. Everybody emails, apps and calls nowadays. But there is nothing more special than handwritten cards and invitations. The same goes for the decorations, make them yourself or buy handmade gifts.

There are many charitable organizations that have no funds to speak of. During the holidays these organizations organize BBQ's, Christmas markets, sales and other events to make some money. This is where you should shop first.

And should you want to donate, you might think of these organizations first. You might even consider inviting special people over for your events or dinners.

And at the end of the year your eyes will not only sparkle from the fireworks.... but for the joy of giving. Happy Holidays everyone.



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.

Washington Slagbaai National Park re-opens with limited access

Washington Slagbaai National Park has reopened, though some routes are still closed to the public while work continues restoring damaged roads. A temporary two-way route denoted with red markings provides access to Slagbaai and Wayaka 2. The park is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visitors are not allowed to enter after 12 noon however. And they must exit between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. DMR.

Dutch protection against discrimination extended to BES

According to article 1 of the Netherlands Constitution, equal treatment is a constitutional right. No one can be discriminated against because of their gender, age, origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or other reason. The cabinet has now officially extended the protection of the equality legislation to the people of Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba. Residents of these islands who feel discriminated against on whatever grounds now have recourse to the legislation. They can submit a complaint to a new BES anti-discrimination service and ask for free help and advice. As an ultimate appeal, they can ask the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights (*College voor de Rechten van de Mens*) to rule on their case. A proposed revised law is expected to come into force in 2025. DMR

Amado Vrieswijk wins silver in world windsurfing competition



At the Slalom World Championships in Japan in mid-November, Bonaire windsurfer Amado Vrieswijk took the silver medal. Scoring 10,300 points in the competition, Vrieswijk was edged from first place by only 200 points. Italian Matteo Iachino won the gold with 10,500 points. DMR (Bonaire.nu)

Mark Volmerink now heads finance department



Mark Volmerink, who grew up in Curaçao and studied accountancy in the Netherlands at the HEAO and the Vrije Universiteit (VU) of Amsterdam, is the OLB's new head of the finance department. The finance department is responsible for the financial administration and management of local taxes. In addition to the integral management of the department, Volmerink is responsible for, among other things, orderly financial management, unqualified auditor's report, planning and control cycle and reports. He has been living and working on Bonaire since 2017. DMR

Search is on for copyrights to Bonaire's traditional songs

Servisio di Kultura, Arte i Literatura (SKAL) wants to recreate, record, and preserve the musical folklore many Bonaireans listened to while growing up. The songs of San Juan and San Pedro, for instance, as well as harvest songs like Remailó, Sebé, and Buchi Marti' Òm Felipi. Before SKAL can proceed, it needs to find any copyrights to the songs, and who owns them.

SKAL also wants to interview people who know the history of each traditional song, the original lyrics and melody, and the original key and chords.

People with information can contact Felix Thomas or SKAL on telephone numbers +599-7155322 or +599-7018253. The information can also be emailed to skal@bonaigov.com

WINAIR adds third interisland flight

Passengers from Bonaire can now fly between St. Maarten, Aruba, and Curaçao three times a week instead of two. WINAIR is offering promotional fares for travel between the islands until the end of December. DMR



Fundashon Mariadal demonstrates medical drone potential

Fundashon Mariadal and AVY Drones for Good teamed up to conduct a demonstration flight of the use of drones to deliver blood and medications during the conference of the Dutch Caribbean Cooperation Airports held on Curaçao from November 5 through 8. Flying an autonomous drone at an altitude of 120 meters, they simulated a "delivery" from the Curaçao Bloodbank to the Jet-center at Curaçao Airport. In a real-life emergency, the blood would have been flown to another destination in the Dutch Caribbean where it might have saved a life.

The drone delivery project complements Foundation Mariadal's active support for the creation of a Dutch Caribbean air ambulance service equipped with electrical powered planes. Mariadal is also promoting a future role for the islands as an education hub where young local and international students of the Dutch Kingdom can be trained in the technologies that support sustainable aviation. DMR

Bonaireans go to the polls November 22

On November 22, 2023 Bonaire joined the rest of the Kingdom to vote in the House of Representatives elections.

Two swim teams bring silver home to Bonaire

Bonaire Teams U14 and U16 both won silver last weekend when they competed in against teams from the Caribbean and US to participate in the 2023 Under-14 Co-Ed CARIFTA Water Polo Championships held Miami, November 10-12, 2023.

Photo thanks to Aquatics Federation Bonaire





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AMP Motors founder and current director Michael de Sousa thinks ahead. Even though he is the owner of Mickey's Muffler and Exhaust in Curaçao, he had the insight to see electric cars are the future.

De Sousa said, "At first it looked like a threat because electric cars don't have exhaust. But it is the next revolution, inevitable and the natural progression. We'd been following the whole electric movement and thought the technology was great, but it just wasn't there yet, and the vehicles were too expensive."

In 2017-18 he thought the tech was where it needed to be and contacted the Chinese as he believed they were more advanced than the United States and Europe. He asked the Chinese to send over a few vehicles to test.

"It's one thing for them to tell us what they actually do and an-

AMP - it just makes sense



other for us to try them firsthand," said de Sousa.

De Sousa managed to get a partnership and began to bring in large vans and trucks that run

completely on solar, such as the truck STINAPA purchased.

De Sousa said, "Our basic premise is to get these vehicles to an affordable level so the average person can afford it. These really expensive vehicles like Tesla or Audi ... are too expensive for the masses to buy. If you get a vehicle the average person can afford then you are really making a change."

AMP is not only about cars. It has the capability to supply commercial vehicles including semi-trucks which can then be personalized for individual businesses.

"The commercial company has to have another benefit rather than just going environmental; it also has to [have a benefit] on a finan-

cial level. We have saved companies a lot of money by them going electric," said de Sousa.

Electric vehicles require no real maintenance: no oil change, no filters, no spark plugs, no transmission. There are fewer parts which means fewer problems and less maintenance. The voltage is constant, so the batteries last a long time. Test electric vehicles have hit the 100k mark with requiring more than replacement brakes and tires.

For the electrical maintenance, a scanner forms a link with the factory for firmware or software updates; A full scan provides information about the motor and if it is charged properly.

"You buy an electric vehicle and there is nothing else to do but drive. Electric will be the future. Everyone will want the electric. Gas vehicles will depreciate even more. This will save you money and you are doing something for the environment and looking at all those factors, it just makes sense," said de Sousa.

On Bonaire an electric vehicle is typically charged every few days or once a week. There are no long distances to travel as we live on an island. Depending on the type of AMP vehicle, a charge can have a range of up to 402 km (250 mi) and speeds of 150 kpm (93 mph).

De Sousa said, "Our growing concern is Global Warming. Our oceans and atmosphere are heating up and dumping a bunch of CO2 in the air from gas fueled cars just doesn't make sense. The technology is there but if we can't make it accessible to the masses then it is just a really cool toy. If we all do our part, then we might just be able to make a difference."

AMP Motors official launch is November 24, 6:30 p.m. when the showroom will be open for everyone to have an up-close look at the cars. The seven member AMP team will be on hand for questions. AMP motors is located at Southbeach Mall, Kaya Industria 17, Unit 6 and in Curaçao at Caracasbaaiweg 53. For more information visit AMP.cw.

Story / Photos Julie Morgan



Sunfish team receives big support to compete at Worlds

Bonaire Sunfish Sailing Team is headed to Miami, Florida December 2 to compete in the 52nd ISCA (international Sunfish Class Association World Championship 2023). The Bonaire team of sailors include first timer to the competition Dedrie Pedersen, third timer Ralf Theijse and eighth timer Ton Nuijten.

The 2023 world championship was originally scheduled in Ecuador in September, but the venue was cancelled as the boat provider Laser Performance cancelled their agreement to supply boats.

A new location was selected at Coconut Grove in Miami for December, but no Sunfish are provided as is usually the norm in the championships. It looked like the Bonaire team would not be able to make this year's Worlds due to the expense of shipping their boats to compete. It was announced boats would be available for lease in Miami and some 16 local sponsors stepped up to support the team. Thanks to these sponsors the Bonaire team will be sailing in the championship: Guardian Group, Elegance Spa, Sebastian's, Voyager Bonaire Car Rental & Tours, Sentro Dental Bonaire, Delfin's, Sebastian's Beach, Budget Marine, Del Mar, Ezone, Melisa Sailing, TCB, Obersi (Xerox), Sunshine Market BV and the main sponsor is Indebon.

The event is scheduled from December 3 – 10 with race days on December 5-9. Some 100 sailors will be competing in the 2023 championship. Good Luck to our Bonaire team! Julie Morgan



(L-R) Dedrie Pedersen, Ton Nuijten and Ralf Theijse Photo Julie Morgan

Reef Glimpses by Dee Scarr

“news” release:

New Shark Species Discovered on Bonaire

Lake Rotterdam, located in the corner between the WEB desalination plant and Bonaire Boatyard, has been the home of Hato’s primary mosquito-breeding facility since 2022. Now, in the fall of 2023, an exciting discovery has been made: a new species of shark has been found in Lake Rotterdam!

The shark was originally named the “Lake Rotterdam Bull Shark” but the possibility of confusing its location with Rotterdam, in The Netherlands, caused the name to be changed to the Bonaire Bull Shark. Its scientific name, *Carcharhinus bonairiensis imaginarius*, means “Imaginary sharp white shark from Bonaire.”

Bull sharks are known for several characteristics, the most famous of which is their ability to tolerate waters of low salinity. Certainly, no other type of shark could survive in Bonaire’s freshwater Lake Rotterdam.

Bull sharks are also known for their interest in, and ability to, eat just about anything. Apparently, the Lake Rotterdam individual (or individuals) has/have been thriving on a diet of mosquito larvae!

How to deal with the Bonaire Bull Shark has split government officials into two factions. One faction favors draining Lake Rotterdam and relocating the Bonaire Bull Shark(s) to the ocean. This would have the advantage of reopening Kaya Rotterdam to non-amphibious vehicles.

The second faction supports adding the Bonaire Bull Shark and its unique habitat to Bonaire’s other underwater attractions.

“This is fantastic!” says one dive tour company owner. “We like to bring trips to Bonaire, but our clients complain that Bonaire diving is too tame. They’ll be thrilled about this new opportunity to dive with a large, dangerous shark in waters of limited visibility!”



The newly-discovered Bonaire Bull Shark flourishes in Lake Rotterdam. Photo Julie Morgan

No Bull About Bull Sharks

Lake Rotterdam has been on my mind since it began raining this year. *The Bonaire Reporter* and I hope you enjoyed the preceding flight of fancy; what follows is truth, not imagination:

Bull sharks, *Carcharhinus leucas*, are found in warm waters around the world. They’re unique among sharks and rays for their ability to tolerate water of varying

salinity levels, and they’re especially attracted to areas where rivers drain into the sea. In fact, bull sharks do more than hang around in estuaries: they swim up freshwater rivers as well, and flourish there.

Have you heard of the Lake Nicaragua sharks? It turns out that they’re not a separate species, they’re bull sharks, and they’re not trapped in Lake Nicaragua but



Photo Dreamstime

can swim to the sea and back. In fact, bull sharks have travelled more than 1000 miles up the Mississippi River, and are also seen in the Tigris, the Euphrates, the Zambezi, the Ganges, and many other rivers. The best stories are from Australia, however. When rivers overflowed in 1996, several bull sharks were trapped in a golf course lake (thus changing, forever, the meaning of the term “water hazard”).

Female bull sharks generally reach 8’ (2.5 m) or so in length, males are a bit smaller, though 13’ (4 m) individuals have been recorded. The babies are born alive, at a little over 2’ (70 cm) long. They’re able to live independently from birth, which is a good thing, since they get no parental care.

The International Shark Attack File lists bull sharks as the third of the “big three” sharks, those most implicated in attacks on humans: great whites, then tiger sharks, then bull sharks. In contrast, nature channels show biologists peacefully free diving, photographing, and even touching large white sharks and tiger sharks.

It’s never bull sharks, though, is it?

At Florida’s Mote Marine Lab in the 1970’s, Perry Gilbert trained a bottlenose dolphin to attack, by butting, a sandbar shark. However, when he took out the sand

shark and introduced a bull shark (a close relative: the same genus but a different species), the dolphin refused to approach it.

So, much as we might like to see sharks on Bonaire, it is a bit of a relief that that we’re not likely to see bull sharks. We don’t have any rivers dumping fresh water into the sea, we don’t have a lot of beaches, we don’t even have a lot of shallow water. In fact, REEF’s fish surveys, which began in 1993, have never recorded a single bull shark sighting here.

And REEF’s surveys are likely to continue to *not* record bull sharks here, except for the Bonaire Bull Shark. Keep an eye out for it.



Dee has been guiding divers on Bonaire since 1982. She’s written about her undersea experiences in her books *Touch the Sea*, *The Gentle Sea*, and *Coral’s Reef*; in *Dive Training Magazine* from 1990 to 2000,

with “Coral Glimpses” in *The Bonaire Reporter*; and now with “Reef Glimpses.” through touchthesea.com.

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WEB threw a party for their employees to celebrate WEB's 60 years of service to Bonaire. The guests, dressed in white to honor the occasion, were welcomed with a drink and snack and were treated to cultural music from hand organ musicians and cultural dances by Monique and Donny Winklaar.

WEB's office parking lot was converted into a portal back in time by Hype Events. Old photos were displayed along with everything electrical - old light fixtures, bulbs, and lanterns. And, of course, there were a few water spigots.

Plenty of seating and tables were available for WEB's 160 employees and their guests. While servers bustled from table to table with appetizers and drinks from the bar, the Academy of Performing Arts Bonaire entertained with several dances.

Guests were shown a documentary chronicling WEB's history. The film included photos of the early days of WEB, the story of the 2005 fire and interviews with past and present employees. Produced by Boi Antoin's team at Fuhiku-

bo, it is narrated in Papiamentu, and will soon include English subtitles.

Joanne Balentien, chief financial officer of WEB Bonaire, addressed the crowd and called upon 20 retired WEB employees to receive a thank you gift for their commitment. A champagne toast ended with a fireworks display at the stage.

In recent years WEB has upgraded its desalination plant to become Bonaire's sole producer of drinking water. It is expanding Bonaire waste water services and is moving toward more 'green energy' from renewable and sustainable sources.

Julie Morgan Story /Photos



Carlos Martis began working at WEB in 1963. At the 60th anniversary celebration he was accompanied by his granddaughter who also works for WEB.

WEB Bonaire's chief financial officer Joanne Balentien coordinated and planned the 60th anniversary celebration to thank the retirees and employees for their dedication to WEB.

Gingerbread Cheesecake by Chef Corjan Hoogerheide, Lekker Thuis



1 ¼ C cream cheese, at room temperature
2 egg yolks
2 egg whites
1 1/14 C whipped cream
1/16 C gelatin
2/3 C milk
1 1/8 C gingerbread nuts (gingerbread cookies)
1/3 C sugar
10 t cinnamon liqueur
1 1/3 C spice nuts
1/3 C melted butter

Chop the gingerbread nuts finely and mix them with the melted butter and divide this over a baking tin lined with greaseproof paper, and place it in the refrigerator so that it hardens.

Beat the whipped cream with half the sugar to a yoghurt consistency.

Soak the gelatin in a bowl of cold water.

Boil the milk and dissolve the gingerbread nuts in it,

add the soaked gelatin and let it cool.

Beat the cream cheese together with the egg yolks until fluffy with the mixer, then add the cooled milk mixture and beat well.

Finally, beat the egg whites until stiff with the rest of the sugar and now fold all the components together.

Now pour the cheesecake mixture into the baking tin or springform pan of 20 cm (8 in) and let it set in the refrigerator.

Cut and eat with some reserved gingerbread nuts and gingerbread nuts



Each month Chef Corjan Hoogerheide of Lekker Thuis will be sharing the recipe for one of his personal dishes created from Bonaire's fresh ingredients.

Here a new sweet recipe for "Sinterklaas" December 5

Nature cooking school

In recent years, Bonaire, fed by over-priced imported food, has rarely thought of itself as an island capable of producing its own fresh vegetables and fruit. But all that is changing with the regrowth of Bonaire's LVV (department of agriculture, livestock farming and fishing) and companies like Bon Tera, Daily Fresh and Nature Cooking School. Bonaire is waking up to the fact that growing its own food is possible.

Saeed Louren's Nature Cooking School Bonaire is dedicated to educating people about growing, cooking and eating local food and Saeed's dedication is paying off. The

school will celebrate its one year anniversary on Bonaire in December.

Originally from Curaçao, Saeed studied education and HORECA (hotel, restaurant, café) in Holland. He returned to Curaçao to teach special education, cooking and gardening. Saeed met Roland van Reenen, known for his work in permaculture, the growth of agricultural ecosystems in a self-sufficient and sustainable way. (youmatter.world)

Saeed said, "We both needed some money, so we teamed up. 'You can cook, and I can talk about the plants.' For three years we taught in different Curaçao neighborhoods. It was



Saeed instructs his students on the correct way to cut vegetables. Photo Julie Morgan



Saeed in the garden. Photo Julie Morgan

government funded, but the government changed, and the program was cancelled."

Saeed decided to move to Bonaire in 2014 and taught in the schools and LVV. After discovering the New Earth Cooking School in Bali he spent a month there learning about innovative ways of growing and preparing food in

Nature cooking school, to page 21

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A Garden? Just Do It!

by Angliet, Nature Lover

Veggies

In my enthusiasm with all the rain I planted a lot of veggies. All are growing but no fruit yet. I wanted to show you my good-looking young plants to inspire you to start gardening too.

Pattypan squash. I was at a friend’s recently, and he showed me some pattypan squash right from his garden. I was impressed with the cool flat plate - shape and nice, white color that is so attractive for creative cooking. I asked for seeds, planted them in my garden and you can see how they are growing in the photo. Pattypan squash, also known as Lemon Sun F1, is an ornamental pumpkin that is sometimes light and dark green, yellow, orange and white.

The rainy season is a great time to grow pattypan by seeds in cups or old pots in black dirt or mixed soil. It’s better not to plant the seeds flat but on their side because they can rot easily when lying in too much water.

After the young plants pop up, they can be replanted in bigger containers or straight into the ground where there are no iguanas. Water the plants often if there is no rain and they need plenty of sunlight. Keep an eye out for the white fly as they love these plants. If you find them just cut off the sick leaves and spray with tea made from neem leaves.

After a few weeks the plant will flower and fruit will begin to develop. Once the pattypan has fruit, check them every day because they grow very fast and in a few days they will become giants. The best taste and quality is when the fruit is 8 -10 cm (3-4 in) wide. When bigger the fruit has less taste but it’s still very nice in soup. They can grow as big as 15-20 cm (6-8 in) wide. Cut off the fruits with a sharp knife. They will last for a while if in a dry area with fresh air, but not too long. Pattypan can be prepared in many ways. Any type of cooking you



Left top patty pan
Left bottom spinach
Right top pumpkin
Right bottom tayerblad

do with a pumpkin is possible with pattypan. It’s most tender when immature and can be scooped out easily and mixed with herbs and spices. A nice creative way is to remove the top of the pattypan and fill it with vegetables, risotto, meat or a mix of all of this and cook in the oven. The flowers are good to consume in salads, fried in omelets or just straight in the mouth. Stew young pattypan in its skin with curry spices with or without meat for a great meal.

This veggie is very healthy. It contains 90 % water, antioxidants, omega 3 , magnesium, copper, vitamins A ,B, C, a lot of fiber and no fat. So it’s good to lose weight and very soft and easy to digest making it perfect for babies and older people.

Winter squash. I also planted the casual pumpkin which is called winter squash. There are 45 different varieties of winter squash in the family *Cucurbitaceae*, which includes melons and cucumbers. It’s interesting to know that pumpkin contains potassium, Vitamin A, beta Carotene, antioxidants and a lot of fiber.

What else is in my garden? **Spinach**, *Basella alba* is it’s Latin name and it’s a member of the Family Basellaceae. As a leafy vegetable it can be cooked or raw in salads. It loves full sunlight in tropical humid climates and grows easily on Bonaire. Plant it in recycle bins and you can keep it on the porch. It contains protein, carbohydrate, a rich source of Vitamin A and C, B Vitamins, folate, Calcium, manganese, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, zinc and iron. They say, when the world is in trouble, have spinach in your garden.

Last but not least, my beloved **tayerblad**. It’s well known in Surinam and LVV is full of it. A very healthy vegetable known as Arrow leaf, elephants ear. malanga, or American taro with the Latin name *Xanthosoma sagittifolium*. It grows by root in pots and pans easily and very soon you will have its leaves for soup, or to wok with fish or meat or with other leafy veggies. Tayerblad is one of the first vegetables babies in Surinam are fed and that continues for a lifetime.

So, I’m happy and fully busy in my garden these days and enjoying all the healthy green that pops up in my recycled pots and pans .It’s the season to go full out for gardening. Just do it. NOW !!



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.

BONHATA looks back at 2023

The Bonaire Hotel and Tourism Association (BONHATA) held its annual general meeting on November 1st at Delfins Beach Resort and welcomed multiple new companies to its network of over 120 members.

During her welcome speech, BONHATA CEO Veroesjka de Windt emphasized the importance of sector collaboration: “Our members are not just a mix of players in the tourism industry, they are a powerful collective voice that propels Bonaire towards a more prosperous future.”

The evening also highlighted key advocacy efforts led by BONHATA, addressing issues that affect the island’s tourism industry.

Airlift Challenge

The ratio of airlift to room inventory continues to be an important challenge for the island. In 2023 the association contributed greatly to solving this challenge by contributing over 200 thousand dollars to the United airlift guarantee, which has resulted in extra flights from New Jersey to Bonaire.

Central Dialogue

BONHATA represents the interests of the tourism sector as a member of the Central Dialogue, a consultative body of employers, unions, local government, and Chamber of Commerce. BONHATA, along with Business Federation Bonaire have sought to represent the sector’s view on the social minimum and advocate for resources to be directed to employers to accommodate the drastic changes.



Left to right: Omar el Hage, Jose “Junny” Janga, Celine Van Meer, Luite Berkenbosch, Claire Sealy, Charles Vos, Veroesjka de Windt, Arnd Chirino, Paul Coolen, Chris Opgenoort, Michiel van Heusden. Photo BONHATA

Stakeholder Involvement

To get ahead of future issues, BONHATA proactively advocates for the involvement of relevant stakeholders in the process of policy formulation. During the annual meeting, members were able to give input on topics they would like to see addressed in the coming year.

Looking ahead, Arnd Chirino and Omar el Hage are two new members of BONHATA’s staff. BONHATA’s

board added Delfins Beach Resort Bonaire, represented by Chris Opgenoort; and Vincent van der Valk replaced Tom Peters for Van der Valk Plaza Beach & Dive Resort Bonaire. BONHATA extends its gratitude to Tom Peeters for his many years of service and dedication.

Founded in 1980, BONHATA has been at the forefront of the island’s tourism industry for four decades. For more information, please email info@bonhata.org.

Piss and Vinegar

by Gijs Borsten

Fighting Poverty Questioning Supermarket Prices

I. Incited by the research paper issued by the ‘Commissie Thodé’, not unexpectedly presided by Bonaire’s former Lieutenant-Governor Glenn Thodé, a large majority of Motherland’s Parliament voted for the increase of Bonaire’s minimum wages, pensions and benefits.

It’s about time.

The committee determined, the earnings of an average Bonairean family of three (one parent, two children) typically cover about 35% of the monthly cost of living, leaving, in other words, a deficit of two-thirds of the essential expenses every month. ‘The working poor’, as the committee stated, involves about a third of the population of the BES-Islands.

II. Since it’s election time: although the vote in Parliament was overwhelmingly in favor of the law, a number of parties voted against it, not unexpectedly all on the extreme right of the political spectrum.

- The parties voting AGAINST the increase were:
- Partij voor de Vrijheid (PVV, led by old time fascist and Muslim-eater Wilders)
 - Forum voor Democratie (FvD, Motherland’s #1 Wacko, Baudet)
 - JA21 (the 21st party established by Joost ‘Keep on Trying’ Eerdmans)
 - BVNL (of Slumlord/’Entrepreneur’ Van Haga, mother party of the regretfully departed party ‘Belang van Bonaire’)

Remember: Make them pay. Don’t vote for them. They don’t like you, and want you to remain poor and submissive. Ignore them.

III. The question is, whether the effect of the increase will last. A number of employers already suggested that the increasing labor costs would cause them to raise their rates. They’re a bunch of whining toddlers. Fiscal con-

ditions for the private sector on Bonaire are ridiculously favorable compared to Motherland. If you can’t make a profit here, you’ll remain poor everywhere.

Simultaneously, on Bonaire, prices for practically everything (the only exceptions I can think of being cars and gasoline) are outrageously high. How come a plane ride to Curaçao costs as much as a ticket to AMS? Why is an internet connection at snail speed three times more expensive than a 300 Mbps connection in Motherland? Why do they charge us four times the Dutch price for a box of tiny bottles of Amstel? Cellphone subscriptions? Water? Electric?

IV. When asked, numerous people tell you why retail prices on Bonaire are so high: everything has to be imported, by ship, by plane, by whatever. Personally, I doubt that distance is the real reason for the high prices. Moving a 40ft. container doesn’t cost a fortune. But then: maybe the real problem is obvious. Let’s have a look at the numbers.

V. To be able to compare Bonairean to Dutch prices, I selected three different items at Tweel. I purchased a pack of ground coffee (DE, 250 gr.), a 2-liter container of ice cream, and a pack of toilet paper (9 rolls).

I paid \$5.79 for the coffee, \$6.52 for the ice cream and \$8.39 for the toilet paper.

Browsing the Dutch AH website, I found exactly the same products were €3.99 (\$4.34), €2.79 (\$3.03), and €3.59 (\$3.91) respectively, \$20.70 in total on Bonaire, and \$11,28 in Motherland. A difference of \$9,42, or slightly over 45%, at the expense of the Bonairean consumer.

That difference in pricing means that moving a larger quantity of the commodities across the ocean can be very lucrative. When we move – for example - 25 m3 of coffee and 25m3 of toilet paper to Bonaire using a 40ft container (67,8m3, leaving 17,8 m3 of empty space), the picture looks as follows (the ice melted before I got home, so we’ll leave that out).

A pack of toilet paper, to start at the lower end, measures 0.32X0.29x0.12m1, about 0.011136m3. In 25m3 we can fit about 2100 packs. Supposing our islandic greengrocer pays the web shop rate (which he doesn’t, AH has a reputation of squeezing out his suppliers), he

makes about \$9,408. A pack of coffee, measuring about 0.14x0.045x0.08m1, takes a tiny 0.000504 m3 of space. In our 25m3 we can squeeze about 49.603 packs, producing a total difference compared to Motherland, of \$71,924.

The examples I used are arbitrary. I could have used higher-end products that would have showed an even more remarkable outcome. I could have used lower-end products, that showed the contrary. But remember: regarding the acquisition I used Dutch retail prices, already generating fat profits for AH, and I didn’t use 17,8m3 of container space.

On the one container, our greengrocer makes slightly over \$80,000, while investing about \$223,488, yielding a gross profit of about 34%. Why get rich renting cars?

Of course, there’s the transport charges. Shipping a 40 ft container, at consumer level rates, is about \$6,000, and a couple of hundred for handling, paperwork and taxes on Bonaire, leaving plenty to make Tweel’s owners happy.

VI. Trying to understand why Bonaire is so excruciatingly expensive, it’s clear that it’s not just the distance that has to be covered to get the stuff on the island that causes the problem. Mainly, it’s a consequence of a lack of competition: supermarket ownership on Bonaire is mainly oligarchic, explaining the high margins.

The number of examples I used is limited. To find out how extensive the problem really is, isn’t up to me. Maybe Unkobon will be able to paint a broader picture of the problem. They’ve got the intrinsic knowledge. Maybe it’s a government task to prevent supermarkets increasing their prices even more. But as long as there’s no real competition, consumers are doomed to pay the price.



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.

Dutch build first hydrogen-powered inland shipping barge

Lenten Scheepvaart (the Netherlands) has constructed the world’s first-ever newbuild hydrogen-powered inland shipping barge, the Antonie. The barge is powered by a fuel cell which converts hydrogen into electricity. The electricity charges battery packs which supply the electric propulsion system. So the Antonie will sail completely emission free. The barge will also feed itself in a sense. A dry cargo vessel, it will transport salt for Nobian, a company that produces essential chemicals for various industries. Novian will turn some of the salt into chlor-alkali. Hydrogen is a residual product of that process. A hydrogen bunker station has been built at the Nobian factory to refill the Antonie’s fuel tanks.

DMR



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-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, by Warehouse Supermarket.

Pakus di Pruga (Animal Shelter flea market.): Pakus is closed until we build.

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. After hours: +599 777 8444.

Washington Slagbaai Park: Open daily. 8-5 (entry to 12 p.m. Visitors must exit by 4 p.m.) \$40 (Free with proof of Nature tag)

Open now July 2023 - July 2024	Terramar Slavery Exhibition: WE ARE Monday - Saturday 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Friday, November 24	Terramar News Cafe: How the Climate Crisis affects you. 7-9 p.m. Language: Papiamentu.
Saturday, November 25	Nos Zjilea Cultural Event 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei, Rincon. Enjoy the music, dancing, crafts, amazing food and drink.
Sunday, November 26	Sobremesa's fun street art workshop . 4 p.m. \$40. Anyone 16+years can try their hand at spray can/graffiti/ street art on an object they would like to decorate. See poster page 19
Tuesday, November 28	Rincon Cruise Market 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the corner of Kaya Rincon and Kaya Commerce. Local art, music, and food.
Thursday, November 30	Shopping Night . 6-9 p.m. Happening every month in downtown Bonaire. TCB says: "Experience the shopping scene after hours, when the shops are open until 9 p.m. "

Let's talk about diver safety



Jason Buttenshaw

About 20 dive professionals, some seasoned, some new, attended a presentation on Diver Safety by Jason Buttenshaw on November 19 at Sugar Thief.

Jason told the crowd, "Safety is my passion," and with his record of 24 years at Fairfax County Fire and Rescue department, as a fire academy paramedic, a Public Safety diver and instructor, we believed him. And with those accreditations, Bonaire's Hyperbaric Chamber doctors George Matook and Lucia were impressed enough to attend.

Jason told the crowd that after working in the dive industry on Bonaire for the last few years, he sees things that could be run a bit better regarding diver safety.

Jason said, "We could all up our game and we're all pros here, but we have deviated from what we know. We go to 50-75 ft in an environment we are not supposed to live in... and we are taking people down there. Have we deviated? At some point have we become complacent?"

Recently a 70-year-old man was announced a casualty after snorkeling off a local snorkel boat. There was no oxygen or AED (defibrillator) on board, because it isn't required.

"Bad things can happen, traumatic events and the first time you see that then you will never unsee it," said Jason.

How much experience do we need? We can't train for everything but when things go sideways, we have to use all our skills. Undergoing certain education courses to keep up our skills is a part of being an active instructor, but very often that doesn't happen as complacency sets in. Should it be up to the resort or business to ensure their instructors are up to date?

"We are not going to change the standard, but we can elevate our own standards, more AED, more oxygen and annual training," said Jason.

He reminded everyone that this is not a sermon but a conversation among dive pros. We need to figure out the problems.

Diver Safety presentations will be held the third Sunday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at Sugar Thief, 8 Kaya Inglatera.

Let's Go Dive Bonaire is Jason Buttenshaw's new diving enterprise, a custom dive program to prepare divers safely for the next level of training. 599-785-1746.

Photo/story Julie Morgan

Events, Meetings, Sports

12 steps 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.

Art Gallery Sobremesa Bonaire View or buy art from Bonaire's local artists. Opening hours are Tue-Fri 2 - 5 p.m. and Sat 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Abraham Boulevard 10.

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>

Cyclovía 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: Nov. 5

Diver Safety. Presentations with Jason Buttenshaw held the third Sunday of the month 6:30 p.m. at Sugar Thief, 8 Kaya Inglatera.

Noodling in the sea. Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday 9-10 a. m. across from Parke Tului on the waterfront. See Facebook [Bonaire Free Noodlers](https://www.facebook.com/BonaireFreeNoodlers)

Pickleball. Wednesdays & Fridays 6 - 8 p.m. at Jong Bonaire. Come join the fun. A sport for all ages.

Racing / Fevering. The Onima fever platform is available every Tues. Thurs. Sat. and Sun. 4 - 7 p.m.

Shopping Night. 6-9 p.m. The streets come alive on the 30th of each month in downtown Bonaire.

Tennis Lessons for kids age 6 - 12. Free. Every Saturday. Courts at Eddy's. Email info@bonairetennisassociation.com. Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Bonairetennis/> Paul Ruijs +599 782 4569.



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 / Tuesday - Nicole Pelletier of the Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation Presentations. **Nov 27 7:30 p.m.** at Toucan Diving. **Dec 4 5:15 p.m.** (note the earlier time) at Buddy Dive Resort (Blennie's Restaurant) 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.

You can help keep Bonaire clean

Saturdays	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/
Sunday, Dec. 10	Clean Coast Bonaire. 8-10 p.m. Te Amo. Donate your time. Work as a citizen scientist to collect marine litter & data. . https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=clean%20coast%20bonaire

Tentative cruise ship schedule

DATE:	CRUISE SHIP	TIME	PIER	CAPACITY
Fri. November 24	STAR CLIPPER	0800-1700	North	180
Sat. November 25	CLUB MED 2	0800-1800	North	439
Sun. November 26	CELEBRITY EQUINOX	0700-2200	South	2852
Mon. November 27	ROYAL CLIPPER	0800-1500	North	246
	AIDAPERLA	0830-1800	South	3286
Tues. November 28	CARNIVAL HORIZON	0700-1500	South	4683
Wed. November 29	AIDADIVA	0630-1800	North	2500
Mon. November 30	EXPLORA I	0700-2000	North	922
Fri. December 1	STAR PRIDE	0830-1800	North	312
Sat. December 2	EVIRIMA	0800-2100	North	298
Sun. December 3	EUROPA 2	0700-2200	North	544
Mon. December 4	NORWEGIAN PEARL	0600-1400	North	3099
Tues. December 5	BRITANNIA	0700-1800	South	3674
Wed. December 6	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	0800-1800	North	2417

Bonaire's entrepreneurs learn from each other during GEW

GEW is an annual celebration of entrepreneurship that takes place in over 200 countries worldwide. Organized by the Global Entrepreneurship Network's partners across the globe – including Amilea Pieterella-Merchant in Bonaire – GEW enables businesses, non-profits, entrepreneurs, and ecosystem champions to organize events focused on key themes related to entrepreneurship. GEW 2023 took place between November 13-19.

Digicel Business again organizes a successful seminar for local entrepreneurs

Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) is more than just a celebration; it is a platform that empowers individuals to shape their entrepreneurial dreams into reality. Digicel Business believes in nurturing local talent, promoting innovation, and contributing to economic growth, and GEW aligns perfectly with those core values.

Digicel Business participated in the Start Up Huddle seminar, where three local entrepreneurs were put in the spotlight. Ivan Abdul, Head of Business Sales at Digicel Bonaire, told both the public and those watching the live streaming from home about the solutions that Digicel Business has to offer.

“At Digicel Business, we don't just offer mobile services, but we offer solutions to your challenges,” Ivan said. He continued explaining “It's not just an ‘off-the-shelf’ service. Customers can walk in at our Corporate Department,



(L-R) Ivan Abdul of Digicel Business Solution is interviewed by Andrew Tweebloom of GEW-B Photo Julie Morgan

and we will do an assessment of your challenges and based on that advice what services you might need. We can offer a lot more, such as Managed Wi-Fi, Cloud PBX, cyber security, etc. We try to keep your hands free, for you to concentrate on your core business while we make sure that you have a reliable connection for your business.”

Besides the Digicel Business Team, three local entrepreneurs; Thuersten Winklaar, Reksel Engelhart, and David Martinus were also put on the spotlight. Their locally produced documentary about Thuersten was shown and left the audience speechless and emotional. They also had the opportunity to talk about

their business and challenges they faced while founding their businesses.

Bonaire honors its entrepreneurs during the Business Hall of Fame

On November 13, Bonaire acknowledged its entrepreneurs with a Business Hall of Fame. Held at the Marriott, the evening honored businesses selected by judges and the public as most successful in five categories. The winners of the categories were:

- Best large, established business – Karel's Beach Bar and Watersports
- Best start up five years and under – Kids Cab

- Best innovative company (thinking out of the box) – Velitt Experience
- Best use of technology (IT, website, apps, gadgets, delivery inventions, sales or advertising) – Voz di Bonaire
- Best customer service – Pasa Bon Pizza.

The nominated businesses had to show merit in most - if not all – of the following criteria: Industriousness; Overcoming adversity or competition; Community involvement; and Quality of service.

Behind the scenes

The second edition of the Business Hall of Fame was five years in the making before being launched with a logo and a detailed program. It is an innovative idea of the GEW team, designed to involve, inspire and celebrate entrepreneurs to reach their potential. The Hall of Fame is a formula that gives back to local entrepreneurs. This business-to-business event would make an excellent new event for all GEW countries worldwide.

Please like our Facebook with Live stream and pictures of our GEW Week 2023, keep track of our GEW Website, for more information and updates.

Thank you to our GEW-B team, sponsors, all nominees and the public. We look forward to all inhabitants on Bonaire joining GEW for a memorable celebration. Kudos to all.

Amilea Pieterella-Merchant, GEN



Looking forward to November's Nos Zjilea PON'E BARI RONKA

In the 17th century, when slaves came to the island to work in the salt pans, they played an instrument known as the Bari to express frustration, anger, and joy. After the slaves gained their freedom, playing on the Bari became a treasured tradition. At the end of each year, our ancestors gathered at the traditional location, Piedra Pretu, on Bonaire's windward shore, to play the Bari and sing about everything which occurred during the year.

This Saturday, November 25, elders will share their knowledge about our Bari traditions at the cultural event Nos Zjilea. In the past, the Bari was made from “boko,” a barrel of meat or rum. Nowadays, we still observe certain traditions when making a bari. Gonsalvo “Kòra” Goeloe will explain making ‘bar’i to the youngsters in the Talento Kultural group. At Piedra Pretu, our elders came together to sing songs with special significance. Wesley St Jago, known for singing songs of the ‘bari,’ will share his experience of singing ‘bari’ songs. One person you always see dancing the ‘bari’ is Lulu Chiki. He will tell us how he started dancing the ‘bari’ from a young age together with his elders and family.

One of the trending topics is the ‘Green



Education’ project for schools. Sherwin Pourier will explain how we can inspire children to plant their own fruits and vegetables.

As always, the cultural market will offer local natural juices, herbal teas, delicacies, crafts and art. The kitchen opens at 10 a.m. with a wide variety of soups, various local Creole dishes and a delicious grill. We can expect to hear and see “LIVE” performances of “Giovanni Mercera” and the local band “Nel & his

Gang”. The entrance is free.

Experience ‘Nos Zjilea’, the monthly cultural event of Bonaire, this month on November 25 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei. It doesn't get more local than this. For more information, please visit Mangazina di Rei's Facebook fan page,

www.facebook.com/mangazinadirei.

Izain Mercera

DCNA and FPNA host symposium on Nature-Based Solutions



ism Authority, VNO Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, Grant Thornton, Dutch Postcode Lottery and Pelican Adventure for contributing to the symposium and supporting an environment of collaboration and progress, exemplifying the power of partnership in driving positive ecological change.

Learn more about the DCNA by following the DCNA on social media via Facebook (Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance), Instagram (DCNAnature), LinkedIn (Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance), and visiting their website, <https://dcnanature.org>.



Always pleased to be charmed, Her Royal Highness Princess Beatrix receives with delight the lora portrait she saw being painted earlier. Photo via DCNA

Organized by the DCNA in collaboration with the 'Fundacion Parke Nacional Aruba' (FPNA), both non-profit organizations advocating nature conservation, the event had the distinct honor of hosting Her Royal Highness Princess Beatrix, accompanying dignitaries including the Governor of Aruba, the Prime Minister of Aruba and the Minister of Nature for Aruba, delegates from the DCNA, FPNA, valued nature partners and other stakeholders. Photo via DCNA

Recently, on November 10th, the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) gathered environmental stewards at the University of Aruba for the "Nature-Based Solution for Ecosystem Restoration" symposium.

Organized by the DCNA in collaboration with the 'Fundacion Parke Nacional Aruba' (FPNA), both non-profit organizations advocating nature conservation, the event had the distinct honor of hosting Her Royal Highness Princess Beatrix, accompanying dignitaries including the Governor of Aruba, the Prime Minister of Aruba and the Minister of Nature for Aruba, delegates from the DCNA, FPNA, valued nature partners and other stakeholders.

Nature-Based Solutions

Amid the global conversation on climate change, there is an increasing interest in Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) as a strategy to mitigate various environmental risks, from flooding to landslides. NBS solutions promise not just ecological stability but also broader societal advantages, including economic growth and enhanced public health. As more entities recognize the importance of harmonizing ecosystem health, climate action, and sustainable development, NBS has found its place in major global policy conversations, including the UN's Sustainable Development Agenda 2030.

In the symposium NBS experts delved into topics including theory; conserva-

tion challenges and opportunities on islands; funding mechanisms; and establishing collaborative frameworks for NBS partnerships. The symposium concluded with a discussion involving real-world case studies.

As the Dutch Caribbean islands confront unique ecological vulnerabilities – balancing the rich biodiversity with threats from human activities and climate change – the importance of local adaptation of these Nature-Based Solutions cannot be overstated.

DCNA extended its gratitude toward the sponsors; Milton Harms Fonds in collaboration with Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds Caribisch Gebied, Aruba Tour-

Creating optimal health by Irene da Cunda Costa The breath of life

The connection between respiration and state of mind is irrefutable. Breathing can be used as a tool for wellbeing, but it can also be a source of chronic stress.

The fight or flight response was first described by Walter Bradford Cannon in 1935 as bodily reactions of a perceived danger. It involves an increase in respiration rate, heart rate and blood pressure due to vasoconstriction, shift of the blood flow to the limbs, decrease in saliva production and mydriasis (increase of the pupils' diameter).

When we are relaxed, we breathe using mainly our diaphragm and we breathe through our nose. When we perceive a threat, we need to put our body in action to prepare for fight or flight, therefore we need extra oxygen to run or fight. We use auxiliary muscles to increase the tidal volume (the amount of air exchanged in each breath) so our chest goes up with

each inhalation. We also increase the frequency and breathe through the mouth. Some people always breathe this way, whether there is a perceived danger or not, so they are always giving the brain the signal that they are under stress. It is important to identify when our breathing is a source of chronic stress and do something about it.

Dysfunctional breathing is not always diagnosed as the detrimental effects can be subtle and take time to show. Some people can live all their lives breathing wrong. But chronic stress is something that sooner or later will take a toll on one's health.

For example, chronic mouth breathers constantly inhale colder and dryer air, which produces chronic inflammation. They also have problems with their teeth, gums and breath. Sometimes they even have malformations in the structural bones of the face. Mouth breathers don't sleep well because they snore and neither do their partners. When people don't have a good rest daily performance is impaired.

Fast and shallow breathing can lead to hyperventilation. An extreme hyperventilation can cause a panic attack but on a more subtle level it can maintain a permanent state of anxiety and shortage of oxygen delivered to the tissues. As counterintuitive as it may sound, one might think when one breathes more there will be more oxygen available to the tissues. But for the hemoglobin to release the oxygen, there must be a certain level of carbon dioxide in the surroundings, which is not the case when hyperventilating.

So, observe your breathing and the breathing of your loved ones. Close your eyes and observe your breath, your posture, the flow of air and the speed. What do you use to inhale (mouth or nose), length of inhalation and length of exhalation, is your breathing silent? Do you move your thorax or your abdomen? Where is the air located upon inhalation? Is there a pause? How do you feel?

Breathing in a relaxed situation should be through the nose, slow (12 to 18 breaths per minute), effortless, soundless, regular and using primarily the diaphragm. After the observations, determine whether you

need to seek re-education. Sometimes a mind body practice like yoga or Pilates can help or maybe you need to go to an otorhinolaryngologist, allergist or a phono audiologist. You can also detect dysfunctional patterns in your loved ones through this simple observation.

Breathing is the most important function to stay alive and to have a full life. We come into the world on an inhalation, and we go out on an exhalation. In between, we breathe. We can breathe our way to wellbeing or just survive through dysfunctional breathing. Don't disregard this very important function and don't take it for granted just because you survived you aren't necessarily breathing the right way.

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.





Reef Renewal receives \$1.8 million for Coral Seeding

Reef Renewal Bonaire (RRFB) is teaming up with FUNDEMAR and SECORE International to spearhead a 3-year restoration project in the Caribbean. The project has received \$1.38 million in funding from the Coral Research & Development Accelerator Platform (CORDAP), a UN grant program designed to accelerate research and development for coral reef restoration worldwide.

FUNDEMAR's land-based coral larvae rearing facility in the Dominican Republic will be expanded to double their current capacity, and a new facility, meeting similar needs, will be designed for RRFB in Bonaire. Both facilities will greatly increase each organization's capacity for Coral Seeding, allowing more coral offspring to be reared and safeguarded in a controlled setting before outplanting. The facilities will also be used for education and research purposes.

Coral seeding

Coral seeding aims to speed the return of coral cover to a disturbed or damaged reef by increasing the number of coral spawn/larvae that can settle naturally on the reef. (<https://gbrrestoration.org/program/coral-seeding-by-assisted-larval-movement/>)

"As the Caribbean faces increasingly challenging ocean conditions, harnessing the latest technologies for large-scale coral breeding takes on an ever more crucial role in assisting the recovery of endangered coral populations. As restoration-focused organizations, it's important to unite strengths to amplify our efforts and promote the restoration of stronger, more resilient coral reefs," said Francesca Virdis, Chief Operating Officer, Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire

The three organizations, RRFB, FUNDEMAR, and SECORE have cooperated for years. Their new project will work to expand novel coral breeding technologies at key stages of Coral Seeding methodology: • collecting coral spawn and assisted fertilization, • mass coral larvae rearing, • coral settlement, and • improving survival of corals after seeding them on the reef.

"Coral reefs are in a critical period, where threats seem to never end. CORDAP offers a unique financing platform, encouraging coordinated cooperation projects and generating strategic alliances between experts, communities and countries to achieve their survival with haste," said Rita Sellares, CEO FUNDEMAR.

Thanks to Communications, Reef Renewal Bonaire



TOP:
SECORE International staff checks inside a floating larval nursery during coral spawning season. A similar structure has been deployed in Bonaire's waters a number of times, including in May at Oil Slick Leap.

Photo Paul Selvaggio

LEFT:
Young corals grow on settlement substrates that can be seeded onto the reef. Photo Paul Selvaggio

Nature cooking school, from page 15

harmony with the Earth, 'empowerment through food.'

He returned to Bonaire ready to open a school, but Covid squashed that idea. Then he learned about a property that would be the perfect location for his nature cooking school.

When he advertised a cooking class on Facebook, four people signed up and the Nature Cooking School Bonaire began.

Saeed divides his school time between teaching special education children and tourists, local residents and companies.

"The tourists want to learn about the culture and the food. And the companies, it's good for them to be outside every once in a while... People can enjoy the simplest things and just enjoy nature. Sit under a tree and enjoy," said Saeed.

Usually a group of five or more attend the cooking lessons, either in the morning or afternoon. Each workshop is followed by dining. A typical meal is plant-based but sometimes features fresh fish or goat. Nothing is imported. There is no standard menu but on occasion there will be stewed

papaya, plant-based burgers, coconut rice, moringa bread or smoke stuffed eggplant. Natural juices and teas accompany the meals.

As for the special education kids, every eight weeks, Saeed and a special education teacher from different schools teach 10 boys and girls, ages 10-13. The kids do a lot of work in the garden learning what vegetables and fruits to plant and how to plant them. The garden is planted in layers with: banana, eggplant, papaya, pomegranate, okra, almond, casava, soursop, guava, sugar apple, mango and herbs. The kids have cooking classes in the kitchen and in nature on the kunuku. They learn nutrition and various cooking techniques such as how to cut the vegetables.

Saeed said, "Most kids have a resistance to food that's good for them, so we fix stuff they like, like pizza. We make a dough of plaintain, ripe papaya in a sauce and the cheese is coconut cream with turmeric. Add some casava and bake it. They learn about everything that grows around them. We turn it into a comfort food with the food they like. For pizza – we just go to the garden and that gives them the connection to go to the garden for food."

On the last day the students give a presentation about what they learned and what they cooked for their teachers and parents.

"It's all about the experience of the children. They can get recognition, so they feel like they have done this. The most important thing is for them to have the tools to cook and know where the food comes from," said Saeed.

The cooking school is in a testing phase in working with the schools. Saeed hopes it will eventually be a part of the curriculum. He is trying to obtain funding for the project from OLB. In the meantime, the cooking school has received support for materials from Kooyman and LVV.

Nature Cooking School Bonaire is one of the finalists in Tourism Corporation Bonaire and the Chamber of Commerce Innovation project. The event is scheduled for November 30. The winner will receive a type of Shark Tank investment of \$10,000.

Nature Cooking School Bonaire is just for kids on Tuesday and Wednesday. The regular school for tourists or residents is on demand Thursday and Friday with private groups on Saturday. Cost is \$80 per person for a breakfast/lunch class or dinner class. No alcohol or bar.

Visit Nature Cooking School Bonaire on Facebook or call 701-7723 for a reservation.

Julie Morgan Story /Photos

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Pets of the Week

This very relaxed and pretty boy is Harvey.

Look at the colour of his eyes, aren't they beautiful?

Harvey is a young male cat of 1 year and 2 months old. He just appeared at a house, together with his brother Hunter. The people who lived there already had two cats and two more was too much so they were brought to the Shelter. The boys have been at the Shelter 10 months.

Harvey is a sweet cat, loves to cuddle now and then and loves to be near you.

Harvey is castrated, vaccinated and tested for FIV/L. He will be chipped when you decide to adopt him.

Come and take a look at our pretty boy, I'm sure you fall in love with him.

Monique Degenaar



Harvey

If you would like to meet our cats and dogs, please come to Animal Shelter Bonaire, Kaminda Lagun 26A. Open Monday - Friday 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 2-3:30 p.m. Saturday 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. nonstop. You can also call 701-4989 or 717-4989 to make an appointment, via whatsapp, facebook messenger, or email animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com

Dear Dog Lovers,

My name is Collin. I'm an older male about 8 years old.

By the end of this year I will be a shelter resident for 2 years. On New Year's day 2021 I was left tied to the back gate. The Shelter people were on property taking care of all the other residents and for me it was the nicest welcome I ever had.

I got a nice bed, food and a bath, so I went into the new year smelling all nice and taken care of.

My true wish is to have a home of my own where I will be allowed to be an old man, and sleep in and wake up for cuddles and treats. I don't mind if you have a busy schedule, I will do fine on my own at home.

I'm good with female dogs, but cats I'm not so sure about.

Kids are fun, but only if they already have experience with dogs. I don't like it if they run after me as that really scares me a lot.

I hope this will be my last year at the Shelter and that you are willing to give me a home.

Sanne Attevelt



Collin



Dive Friends has a new look

We have a new brand identity!

With our new logo, new brand identity and new website, we're ready to develop ourselves further as a dive operation. It's fresh, friendly, and eco-minded.

We launched our new look just before DEMA 2023, which was a successful event for Dive Friends and Bonaire. We met many amazing people, discovered new brands and dive operations from around the world.

Shelter News Call for Volunteers

We are in need of some "task specific" volunteers.

Now that the rainy season has begun, we really need someone to come once or twice a month to trim trees and bushes, cut/kill weeds, trim grass, etc. on and around the property. We have most of the necessary equipment, we just need an able-bodied volunteer to handle the job. Days are of your choosing, as well as the hours provided they are during our opening hours or on Sunday mornings.

We also are in need of a "handyman". A person (man or woman) who can come to the Shelter once or twice a week to take care of identified minor maintenance issues and small repairs. Again, days and hours of your choosing provided they are during our opening hours or Sunday mornings.

And of course, we ALWAYS need volunteers to help with cleaning and feeding our 250 residents. Days are of your choosing and hours are from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

If you are able to help, or know someone who can, please email us at animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com Jane Disko



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Parrots and People

Up At Dawn by “Mel” McCombie

If you’ve spent some time on Bonaire, you have probably been awakened by a raucous dawn chorus of Loras and prikichis chattering, calling, and generally making a racket... just when you were hoping to grab another hour of sleep. I have noticed this particularly in the summer when there is less food for Loras as the northern part of the island dries up from lack of rain, and the parrots move

south. All parrots are diurnal, not nocturnal. It is easiest to find food and remain safe from predators during the day. They don’t see well at night and need to tuck in and sleep just after sunset. You may have noticed Lora activity just before sunset (see “Pandemonium of Parrots,” May 10-24, 2023, issue 10). But why the pandemonium just after dawn?



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All birds vocalize at sunrise, and some even before dawn. Scientists note that the earliest morning singers are male. Their robust songs advertise to females what fine mates they would make, as well as warn other males to stay away from their territory. Our Loras and prikichi don’t sing or call before dawn (sigh of relief!), but they do announce themselves as soon as pink paints the sky. What sounds to us like a noisy racket of squawks and cries are unique calls. Not every member of the flock can sleep in the same place, so the group reunites in the morning. Flock members recognize each other’s calls, and answer, affirming that they are safe. Since so much of a parrot’s day is spent foraging for food, and there is safety in numbers, this flock roll call helps Loras know all is well and that foraging can begin.

If you wake up hungry, you are not alone. Parrots awake hungry, and as soon as the flock roll call signals safety, they begin look-

ing for food. They call to each other to announce what they’ve found to eat and share the bounty.

Morning noise is also healthy, a sign of flock cohesion and communication. Companion parrots often chatter and vocalize in the morning to their humans, checking in with the flock just as wild parrots do. My cockatiel Dickens always said “good morning, I love you” only after awakening, and just before tucking into a bowl of food. So, when the pandemonium of parrots awakens you around dawn, I hope you can rejoice in their calls. And if not, try ear-plugs.



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

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