



A hawksbill turtle cruises above a reef with re-browning coral
 Photo Julie Morgan

This issue is dedicated to our coral reefs

Did You Know ... that corals are desperately trying to keep up with climate change?

Global Climate Change is one of the greatest threats facing the world today, especially coral reefs. While governments argue about when we should be required to be carbon neutral, we're losing our corals. Well, not just our corals - in 75 years, quite a bit of Bonaire as we know it may be underwater. Always looking for the silver lining, as a biologist, I tell myself that this will give the remaining baby corals a place to settle and grow!

In recent years, we've seen coral bleaching almost every year, but the water usually cools down before significant coral mortality begins (if you don't know what coral bleaching is, skip to 'what is coral bleaching'). This year has been particularly extreme when it comes to water temperatures and coral bleaching in the Caribbean. Bonaire was at NOAA's Alert Level II for just over two months. According to their models we should be seeing quite some mortality. But STINAPA just finished a round of coral bleaching monitoring and, until now, although there is much more bleaching than years before, there is still almost no mortality (no corals dying from bleaching). And the water is slowly cooling off. We will continue to monitor, but we are starting to see corals getting their symbiotic algae

back, 're-browning', and we have hope that somehow our corals will yet again make it through this very stressful heating event.

However, we still have Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease, and although it is

thought to slow down during warm water events, its spread will continue as the water temperature drops.

Coral bleaching is traumatic for the corals and takes its toll, so therefore STINAPA urges divers and snorkelers to

be extra careful not to bump into corals during a coral bleaching event. Factors that may affect a coral's ability to resist bleaching is its general health and water quality. Our local and national governments, in partnership with STINAPA, have been working hard to improve Bonaire's coastal water quality through wastewater treatment and runoff control among other measures.

Some interesting observations we've seen during this bleaching event:

Massive Starlet coral, *Siderastrea sideraea*, turns a beautiful blue color when it is bleached. Unlike most corals that have symbiotic algae living in their soft tissues, this coral has additional symbiotic algae living in its skeleton (endolithic algae). These algae are able to remain in the coral during a warm water event. The reflection of light off these algae is blue. This may give this coral species a slight advantage since these algae continue providing sugars via photosynthesis to the corals while the other corals have lost all of their symbiotic algae during a bleaching event.



Yellow Pencil coral, *Madracis auretenra* (lower left – unbleached), and a Star coral, *Orbicella* (right – partially bleached). Photo: Caren Eckrich

Corals & climate change, to page 3

The Reporter retires "Flotsam and Jetsam"

A regular reader has helpfully pointed out that flotsam and jetsam can mean marine trash. So at *The Bonaire Reporter* we've decided to retire the term. "Flotsam and Jetsam," perpetuated as the name for the news thread that runs through the feature stories and columns in the paper, is an artifact of the paper's origins three decades ago.

One morning in the mid 90s a dinghy bumped against our sailboat *Maruba* in the anchorage. When Barbara and I went on deck a fellow cruiser handed up a single sheet of paper, printed on one side, that had been reproduced on a copier. It was the first issue of *Port Call*, the news sheet that was *The Bonaire Reporter's* predecessor. George and Laura DeSalvo, living a few boats away on *Oscarina*, were handed a copy too.

When the cruisers who started *Port Call* raised anchor and sailed away, George and Laura took over the little news sheet as a service to their fellow cruisers. Under their care the publication grew, began to include more and more magazine style content of interest to people living on the island, and started running ads. Eventually it moved ashore with George and Laura and was given a more appropriate name. (Barbara and I had also moved ashore in the meantime. She took on the desktop publishing responsibilities for the expanded publication.)



The Bonaire Reporter has now been the Island's premier (well, yes, and only) English language newspaper for a long time. Almost five years ago ownership of *The Reporter* passed into the capable hands of Julie Morgan, an ace photographer from a newspaper family, who had returned to Bonaire after wandering the world for 18 years. Under her management *The Reporter* has evolved into a more news oriented publication that long ago outgrew its salty beginnings.

DMR / Photo credit Clean Coast Bonaire

Government companies slow to catch up on financial reporting

The governance of Bonaire has been changing profoundly since 10-10-10. As a primary condition of joining the Netherlands as a municipality, the Public Entity of Bonaire (OLB) had to agree to adopt Dutch-style financial management and accountability, among other commitments. After a dozen years of nose to the grindstone work, the OLB itself has begun meeting the financial reporting requirement of the Financial Supervision Board (Cft). Some government companies, however, have been dragging their feet. While a few are close to meeting financial reporting requirements, several are still several years behind.

Bonaire has nine active government companies and five government foundations, which together employ 400 people. Government companies are formed as an instrument for guaranteeing that crucial functions and services are performed for the public. The government companies on the island include such familiar names as Bonaire International Airport, Water and Electricity Company Bonaire (WEB), Selibon, Telbo, and Tourism Corporation Bonaire. Several of the government companies are owned on behalf of the OLB by the Bonaire Holding Maatschappij (BHM). According to a recent OLB newsletter,

many of the government companies are close to meeting their financial reporting requirements. WEB, BIA airport, development bank OBNA and Oil Trading Bonaire are currently working on finalizing their 2020 annual accounts and will then be entirely up to date.

Other companies still have much reporting left to do, according to the newsletter. Bonaire Overheidegebouwen / Government Buildings (BOG), Tourism Corporation Bonaire, and TELBO are working on completing their 2018, 2019 and 2020 annual accounts. BonLab and the Bonaire Management Group (BMG), are still working on completing the years 2016 and 2017. The last annual accounts submitted by Selibon were for the year 2015, according to a recent BHM news release. In the release, Adely Susana-Jansen said that Selibon director Mr. Rudsel Leito insists that Selibon's parent company, BHM, is responsible for submitting Selibon's annual accounts. BHM maintains that it is responsible only for forwarding to the OLB an audited report that has been prepared by Selibon. Susana-Jansensays the difference of opinion has persisted for years. *DMR (Bonaire.nu)*

Water-en Energiebedrijf Bonaire (WEB), hosted the first-ever Collaborative Utility Conference Bonaire (CUCB), November 28 and 29.

Seventy-five utility experts, solution providers, and regulatory bodies from Bonaire, Aruba, Curaçao, Saba, and the Netherlands gathered to discuss the future of utility management.

Keynote speaker Mr. Hein Pieper, Chairman of the Rijn & IJssel Water Authority, addressed vital topics such as the effects of climate change and water circles for Bonaire.

The second day focused on climate change, sustainable and green energy, including hybrid, solar, wind, and battery technologies.



Other topics were; • possibilities for funds from the EU, • innovative battery-led hybrid system for sustainable electricity production on Bonaire, • the threats and opportunities that electric vehicles can present for the island.. Photo Skyview Bonaire

The REPORTER

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Yellow Pencil coral, *Madracis auretenra*, didn't bleach this time around. These corals are abundant on our reefs and are considered more of a 'weedy' species. These corals, unlike most of the larger corals, are brooders, not spawners. Fertilization takes place within the mother polyp and zoox are already in the larvae when they are released. Larvae land relatively close to the parent compared to spawning corals. Although much research has been done on these corals, I could find no clear consensus on whether they might be more resistant to bleaching events.

How do we determine if a coral has died during a bleaching event? If tiny turf algae begin to grow on the surface of the coral, we know it has died. Immediately after dying, these algae are very sparse. If this is the case, you can wave water over the surface of the coral and see the turf algae moving. If you see bits of color that are not moving, those are the symbiotic algae coming back into the coral tissue. If the coral is completely white – it is still alive.

What is coral bleaching?

Corals are animals. Reef corals have special algae called zooxanthellae, or zoox, that live within their tissues. The zoox convert sunlight into energy that they give to the corals in exchange for a safe place to live. Reef building corals can't live without these zoox. The zoox,

many different species with a round of different colorations, are what give corals their colors.

When seawater heats up too quickly, zoox become stressed and release toxic chemicals which, in turn, stresses the corals. When this happens, the corals kick out the zoox. They force them right out into the water. As the corals get rid of the zoox, they also lose their coloration and become lighter and lighter until all of the zoox are gone and the coral is completely white. Corals may live without their zoox for a short time – perhaps a few weeks – but without their main energy suppliers, the corals are slowly starving to death.

If the coral dies, fuzzy algae will start to grow on the white colony. However, if the water begins to get cooler – say cloudy skies for a week or two OR strong winds that replace warm surface waters with cooler water from the deep – then the corals may allow the zoox back inside and they will slowly recover (referred to as rebrowning).

Special thanks to our volunteers who did an amazing job helping out with the monitoring dives this year: Rich and Doreen, Dave, Camille and Danny!!! You rock!

Written by Caren Eckrich, STINAPA Biologist. Connecting People With Nature.

STINAPA Bonaire is doing their best to keep us all informed about the the state of Bonaire's reefs during the SCTLD (Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease) pandemic and bleaching. Biologists Roxanne Liana-Francisca and Caren Eckrich updated us on the state of our corals on November 30.

Bonaire has a long history of marine preservation, beginning with turtle protection in 1961, the prohibition of spear fishing in 1971, and protection

for coral, dead or alive, in 1975. (Noah, 08/025/2010) The fringing reef system extends along the entire coast from shoreline to 60m (197ft) deep. Coral cover is 40% on Bonaire while other Caribbean islands have less than 20%. Bonaire's reefs have 65 known species of coral.

Roxanne explained that Bonaire's reefs are resilient, having experienced sea urchin die off, white band disease, hurri-

Coral reef update, go to page 11



This brain coral, known as Tootsie, began her life on a plastic chair that was tossed into the water in front of Captain Don's Habitat due to the powerful waves from Lenny in 1999. She has suffered through several bleachings and bounced back. Dee Scarr named the coral Tootsie as it looks a bit like a tootsie pop. She has now succumbed to both SCTLD on the top and bottom with bleaching in the middle. Both are evident in the photo. Photo Julie Morgan

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Letters & Opinions

The opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed by the various authors and forum participants do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints of The Bonaire Reporter.

Letter to the Editor

I read with disappointment on Bonaire.nu that the Executive Council is sharing information on Facebook in Papiamentu only. I am very happy for those who are fluent in Papiamentu, but have they given any thought to those of us who are not? Will Bonaire's electronic and print news sources step up to share this information with the rest of us? We follow the laws applicable, the rules and regulations, and we participate in as many social events beneficial to all on the island and its maintenance as possible.

Facebook rules on Bonaire. Without FB one is up the creek. By personal choice, I choose not to subscribe to FB. I avidly follow electronic and print news publications. I so appreciate their existence on the island. I do have use of the Internet but few if any businesses on the island send emails. How about creating Internet blogs? I can sign up for those. Who is informing people without a computer other than the print publications.

*Masha Danki,
Earline Wasser*

ISLAND NEWS in BRIEF continued

OLB moves to retain island control of development

The Executive Council has appointed Michael Pieters, an experienced civil servant who has been head of Domain Management, to be the new interim director of the R&O department. The OLB has tasked Pieters with "optimising" the department. In the context of recent developments, optimising likely means the OLB wants Pieters to clean up Bonaire's development approvals and enforcement (VTH) functions before the Dutch do it for us.



Michael Pieters

The Hague overbudget on CN Healthcare

The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport spent 8.8 million euros more than it budgeted for healthcare for people living in the Caribbean Netherlands. Costs for sending patients to hospitals in the region (including Colombia) and for pharmaceutical care especially exceeded projections. The ministry budgeted 124 million in healthcare expenditures this year. *DMR*

Get the corona shot two weeks before traveling

The Public Health department advises citizens who want the corona shot and are going abroad to get the shot on time. Experience shows that travelers get the corona shot one day before departure. But it takes at least two weeks for the injection to have an effect.

Citizens can get the corona shot by appointment at the Public Health department on Thursday, December 7, 2023 and Thursday, December 14, 2023. Call the free number 0800 0800. People who have been ill for a while and have been in bed can call that number to make an appointment to be injected at home.

Two new players in recent Island Council meeting

On November 28, 2023, the Island Council of Bonaire had its first decision-making meeting with acting governor Ingrid Sealy who took the chair in the absence of the current interim governor, Nolly Oleana. Sealy expressed her appreciation, saying: "It is an honor for me to chair the Island Council meeting today; it is a new experience, but I look forward to experiencing this important moment."



During this meeting, Delno Tromp was sworn in as a new member of the Island Council, replacing Clark Abraham who is now a member of the Executive Council. Tromp said: "I am grateful for the trust and I am committed to serving my people."

Ask Bob

Bonaire real estate advice



I received 10 year tax exemption from vastgoed belasting (non-resident property tax) on my new building when I built it. Now I want to sell it. Can I transfer the remaining tax exemption to the new owner?

Thanks, Jans

Hi Jans, that's a good question, and the answer is, it depends.

If you are selling a property and the new owner wants to live in it as a resident, then the tax exemption cannot be transferred to the new owner. However, if you are selling a property and the new owner is buying it as an investment and is not planning to live there then it is possible to transfer the remaining years of tax exemption to the new owner.

Everyone's situation is different, so you need to consult with your local accountant or tax advisor to be sure the tax benefits will transfer to you.

Regards,

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

Rijna credited with EU funding to BES for sustainable energy

Bonaire, Sint-Eustatius and Saba have been chosen by the European Union (EU) to take part in the '30 for 2030' project. The 30 islands will receive intensive support from the EU in achieving their ambition to achieve fully sustainable energy facilities by 2030. BES are the only islands in the Caribbean to win the funding. Former Lieutenant Governor Edison Rijna gets the credit for bringing this recognition and achievement to our islands.

Rijna is Special Envoy for the Caribbean Netherlands for EU funds, United Nations (UN) funds and economic ties with Latin-America. One of the responsibilities in his job description is searching out programmes and funding at the EU that offer opportunities to the Caribbean Netherlands islands.

He proposed the '30 for 2030' project to the BES government entities. When they responded enthusiastically, Rijna arranged support for the islands in writing their project proposals by hired experts from, among others, the Technical University Delft.

The EU sees the selected islands as examples to other islands, regions and cities. They will demonstrate that a dependence on fossil fuels can be phased out by full-scale investment in renewable energy. *DMR*

Flies, flies, and more flies. But why?

Reports started coming from all over the island. Small black flies were swarming in unprecedented numbers. The Supervision & Enforcement Directorate carried out a rapid assessment. Six super- and mini-markets had reported an invasion of flies, but investigators found no clear causes there. The Public Health Department's Vector team, which focuses on monitoring and controlling mosquitoes, found more flies than normal at the Selibon landfill. But that did not explain the increase in flies all over the island. Some people wondered whether the current weather conditions were responsible. No one could figure out how that might work though.

The Public Health Department emphasizes the flies pose no major risk to public health. But they say it is a good reminder that food should be protected against flies. *DMR*

POLICE REPORT

Always open. You can go to the intake desk at the Playa police station seven days a week, 24 hours a day to make a report or declaration, or if you need other help. The intake desk can be reached by telephone at 715 8000.

Property Crime

Between Dec. 2/3. A black and red Yamaha scooter with license plate MF-561 was stolen from in front of a tourist accommodation on the Kaya L.D. Gerharts. It was locked with a chain lock.

Between Nov. 26 /27. Tools were stolen from a car parked at a house on Kaya Caribe. Among other things taken were: one green welding machine, two green drills, a green grinding machine, a green electric screw-driver, from the Total brand, and two green Makita grinding machines.

Between Nov. 25 /26. Items were stolen from a car parked at a house on Kaya Karpitan. Two watches were stolen: a Citizen with a silver-colored case and black straps and a black Casio, model G-shock.

Arrests

Dec. 4. A man, 47, was arrested for assaulting and threatening a woman.

Dec. 2. A woman, 36, was arrested for assaulting a man.

Dec. 1. A man, 21, was arrested for threatening with a machete a man who allegedly accused him of stealing cash.

Nov. 26. During the night, 3:30 a.m. a man, 47, was arrested for assault with a weapon. The suspect was making noise in the casino at Bulevar Julio A. Abraham. He was warned several times, after which he threatened the guard. He was subsequently removed from the casino. Shortly afterwards the suspect returned with a machete in his hand and threatened the guard with it.

Nov. 23. A man, 30, was arrested for insulting an official in office, for public drunkenness, for resisting arrest with violence and threatening with public violence. Around 1 a.m. the central control room received a report of a fight at an entertainment venue on Kaya Hermandad. When the patrol arrived, they separated two people found arguing. One was injured but did not respond when the officers offered him medical treatment. He refused to identify himself and started insulting the officers. At that moment, the suspect was arrested in connection with insulting an official in office. During his arrest, the suspect resisted violently both verbally and physically. The officers spoke to him so that he would calm down and cooperate. He did not respond but continued to exhibit aggressive behavior, which forced the officers to use 'pepper spray' to keep the situation under control. When the suspect had to be transported to the police station, he started exhibiting physically aggressive behavior again. As a result, the officers were forced to use appropriate force to transport the suspect.

Dec. 3. The central control room received a report of a pick-up in the water near Sabadeco. The pick-up was with two wheels in the sea and two wheels still on the shore. A breath test was administered to the driver, 32, after which he was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. He was first taken to hospital by ambulance for medical treatment.

Dec. 3. Around 11 p.m. a plainclothes police officer who witnessed a Hit & Run on Kaya J.N.E. Craane managed to stop the car. The driver, 29, was arrested for driving under the influence.

Dec. 3. A car and a scooter collided on Kaya Neerlandia around 7:30 p.m. The driver of the scooter stated that he was driving past a number of stopped cars when he collided with a car that suddenly turned right. The driver of the scooter was taken to hospital by ambulance. The driver of the car, a man, 66, was arrested for driving under the influence.

Dec. 3. In the late afternoon hours a car rear-ended another car on Kaya Prinses Marie. The driver of the car

that crashed into the back of the other car, a man 55, was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.

Dec. 2 Around 2:30 a.m. the central control room received a report about a car driving without lights and knocked over a traffic sign on Kaya Neerlandia. The car was found a little further on the Bulevar Gobernador Nicolaas Debrot because the driver got stuck with the car on a large boulder. The driver, a man, 43, was so under the influence of alcohol that a breath test could not be taken. He was arrested for driving under the influence and for causing several collisions. He also received a ticket for driving without a license.

Nov. 24. On Friday, November 24, a man, 47, was arrested for driving under the influence.

Traffic violations

Dec. 2. A planned traffic control was held at Kaya Amsterdam. During the inspection, 9 drivers were stopped and checked. Fines were issued for driving without a driver's license 2x and without valid insurance documents 2x.

Nov. 30. A planned traffic control was held at Kaya Industrial. A total of 10 fines were issued for driving without: a seat belt on 5x; a driver's license 1x; a license plate attached 2x. Tickets were also issued for calling while driving 2x.

Nov. 25. A planned traffic control was held at Kaya Amsterdam in the early evening hours. A total of 41 vehicles were stopped and checked and 5 fines were issued. The fines were for driving without: proof of insurance, a driver's license and a license plate. A vehicle was taken into custody for driving without proof of insurance and driving with a license plate that does not belong to the vehicle.

Nov. 23. A planned traffic control was held at Kaya Internashonal around 5 p.m. A total of 15 vehicles were checked during the inspection. 7 fines were issued. (for driving without: a valid driver's license 3x; valid insurance 3x; a seat belt 1x.

Between Nov. 17 /24, tickets for traffic violations were issued during routine traffic checks. These were for driving without: a valid driver's license 6x; valid insurance 1x; a helmet 3x; a seat belt on 3x. Tickets were also issued for holding a phone while driving 1x and for parking incorrectly 1x.

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

Traffic accidents

Nov. 27. A car and a cyclist collided at around 7 a.m. at the intersection of Kaya Nikiboko Zuid and Kaya Monseigneur Nieuwindt. The cause of the collision was not known. The cyclist was checked by ambulance staff on the spot. Because the driver of the car was pregnant, she was also checked on the spot by ambulance personnel.

Nov. 21. Around 5:50 p.m. on Bulevar Gobernador N. Debrot a scooter crashed into the back of a car. The driver of the car stated that she was driving north on Bulevar Gobernador N. Debrot when she indicated with her turn signal to turn left. The moment she took the bend to turn, the scooter collided behind the car. The driver of the scooter stated that he had just purchased the scooter and was testing it out. He admitted that he was driving too fast and therefore did not see in time that the car in front of him had its indicators on to turn. The passenger of the scooter suffered minor injuries and was treated on the spot by ambulance personnel. The driver of the scooter was fined for driving without a driver's license, without valid insurance, without a license plate and without a helmet. The scooter was taken to the police station for safekeeping and can be picked up when the owner can show a driver's license, proof of insurance and a registration plate.

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.

Author Donates Books to Kiwanis



Evelien van Dort donated 14 books for children aged 4-12 to the Kiwanis Club of Kralendijk Bonaire for their work with children.

Evelien van Dort is a director of Kiwanis Club QUOTA Zeist. A children's and youth book author of 90 books, she is published in eight different languages, including Papiamentu. Her passion: to write books that children feel seen in and thus to encourage reading because reading expands your world. She and her husband have been organizing annual reading promotion projects in the Caribbean for 15 years.

In December, Kiwanis Club of Kralendijk Bonaire organizes various activities for children including a Christmas project at primary schools and a Sinterklaas party. Follow them on Instagram and Facebook to stay informed about their projects.

Quota Nederland Zeist e.o. was founded in 2002. Quota International is the oldest service club for socially active women. Quota was founded in America in 1919 and has more than 4,000 members worldwide, represented by 269 clubs in 14 countries.

Kiwanis Club of Kralendijk Bonaire thanks Evelien van Dort for her donation.

Kiwanis Club of Kralendijk

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Reviewing the rules and regulations of the BNMP

Kalli de Meyer and BNMP manager Judith Raming held their third Marine Park Platform to update those working in the Bonaire National Marine Park (BNMP) on November 23.

First and foremost, the Bonaire National Marine Park (BNMP) does not make the law; it implements the law. The BNMP can’t change the laws made in The Hague or by the local government. Conversely, if damage in the marine park results from a law, then the laws can be changed. But the laws are part of the Island Decree and changing the law is a very long process. The request for change goes to the executive and island councils, then to the second chamber in The Hague. Only the executive and island council can ask The Hague to change a law stated in the Island Decree.

Rules and regulations in the Island Decree are:

Diving

•Dive orientations are mandatory; users must do a buoyancy check at the company where diving or renting tanks and or at a place appointed. • SMB (surface marker buoy) is required, otherwise known as a safety sausage. • No gloves or knee pads without written consent • No feeding or taking of animals • No pointer sticks • No cylume sticks No spearfishing (Spearfishing Lionfish: this is an invasive problem on Bonaire and is handled locally) • Reef Ranger course is required for ALL watersports operators to be able to prolong or apply for a nature permit.

Wind/Kite Surfing

•No surfing in the BNMP • No surfing in the buffer zone – 500m around Klein • Kite surfing is only permitted at a distance of at least 75m from share in the dark blue water. (exemption corridor is at Atlantis) • Windsurfing is only in the appointed zones Lac and outside the bay • Foiling is not allowed in the marine park but is currently condoned at Lac. (currently not being enforced)

BNMP Platform update, go to page 23



Photo Julie Morgan



AMP Motors official opening on November 24 gave Bonaire an opportunity to chat with the complete staff from Curaçao. Besides the cars in the showroom, several were on display in the parking lot including STINAPA's solar powered trucks. Guests could ask questions about what going electric means, sit in the vehicles and an even take a test drive. Owners Michael de Sousa and sister Danielle Koolmeyer pulled the plug on a charging vehicle and toasted with champagne to mark the opening. AMP Motors is at Southbeach Mall #6. (See their ad on page 22.) Photo Julie Morgan

Sign up for Ride for the Roses, January 28

In less than two months, on January 28, people of all ages will have the opportunity to help in the fight against cancer by participating in the eighth edition of Ride for the Roses. The date was announced December 1 in a press conference at Orco Bank, the main sponsor of the event for several years. Ride for the Roses president Jursi Marshall and treasurer Anne-Marie Mercera gave the specifics of the race while Orco's Desiree Alberto and Abigail Paula expressed their pride at once again being the primary sponsor. Cancer Fund Bonaire's Shahira Antonia thanked everyone for holding this important fundraiser.

A symbolic check from Ride for the Roses Foundation for \$8000 was presented to Hospice Kas Flamboyan for the purchase of four much needed mattresses.

Ride for the Roses is not just a ride. Participants can choose to walk, swim or boat for the Roses. The bike (ride) and walk both begin at the stadium. Riders and walkers can choose between a short or long walk. The swim, in association with Jong Bonaire, is from Kas di Regatta to Karel's Beach. At the finish line everyone receives a rose.

The schedule:

7 a.m. Walk starts

7:05 a.m. Ride starts

(8 a.m. Arrival first walk participants • Start Entertainment)

8 a.m. Swimmers register at stadium

8:30 "Swim" Bus departs to "Kas di Regatta"

9:15 a.m. - Yoga for swimmers

9:30 a.m. Swim starts

10 a.m. - Arrival first swimming participants at Karel's beach bar

12 p.m. - End of event

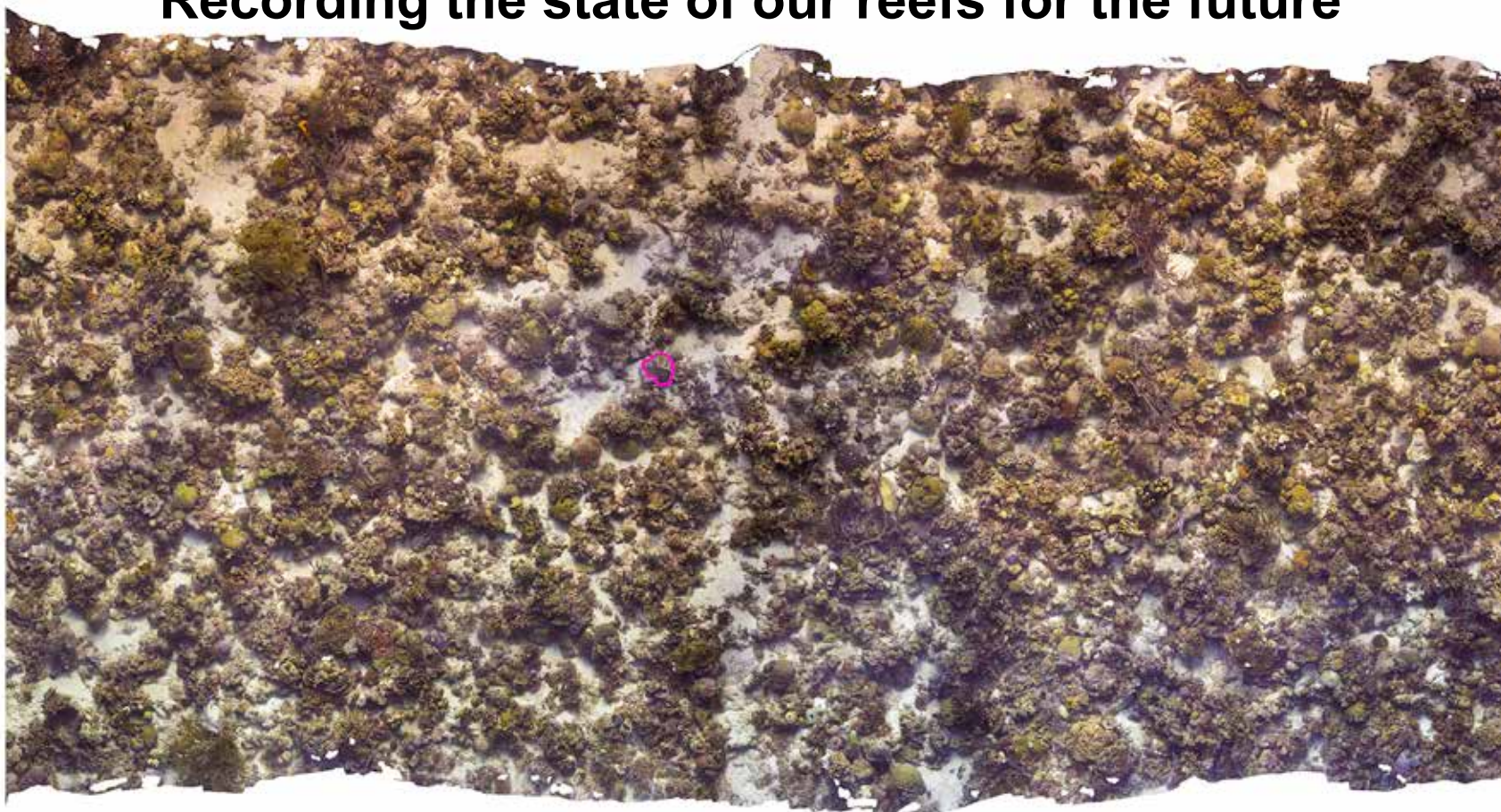


Ride for the Roses 2022, Photo Julie Morgan

Tickets are just \$20. Each person receives a commemorative t-shirt and bag. Registration is either online www.ridefortheroses.org or participants can purchase a ticket at the Rincon gas station, de Freewieler, Yogarriba, Bon Bida or from one of the Rose's board members. T-shirt and bag pick is January 25, 26, from 5 – 7 p.m. and January 27 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Orco Bank,

Volunteers for the event can sign up at: signup@ridefortheroses.org.

Recording the state of our reefs for the future



We've all heard stories of Captain Don hacking through coral because it was so thick you couldn't walk out from the shore. That was 60 years ago and while we can imagine what that might have looked like, we don't have detailed records from that time. We don't know how many species of coral there were, or how much of the reef was living compared to today. Most people alive today have no idea of how much Bonaire's reefs have changed in this time and may assume that the state of the reef today is how it's always been. This is the shifting baseline, a gradual forgetting of how much our ecosystems have changed.

This is why getting detailed records today is so important. Imagine the reef 60 years from today, how will it have changed? What will the people alive in 2080 know about the reefs on Bonaire? Will any of our efforts to restore or protect our reefs have been successful? How will the future guardians of Bonaire's coral guide their actions? For the coming generations to answer these questions we must today record the state of the reef.

And with the technology we have available today we can preserve intensely detailed images of the reefs. This is why STINAPA directed a series of baseline scans to establish how abundant our reefs are. Happily this was done before the great losses coming from Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease. These records are the highest detailed images of our reefs we have



Two records of Sand Dollar's Bari Reef: 1. (Top) An orthomosaic scan showing a detail of an area marked on the overview Bari Reef map and 2. (Bottom) the DEM or depth map of Bari Reef.

ever had. They record the health of even the tiniest fragment of coral for future study. We had to develop a new method to capture scans of this quality. Comprehensive scans like these are important because once the corals are dead, we will have no other way to really know what was once possible.

To capture these scans, two divers work in tandem with one operating the cameras and the other defining the site boundary. You might have seen some 1 meter length pvc pipes placed on the reef, labeled for research. These pipes are placed by the second diver to define a scan area that is roughly 18 m by 100 m (59 ft x 328 ft). That's about half the distance between Sand Dollar and Buddy Dive. The first diver carries two cameras

attached to a stereo camera rig, which allows covering more reef area while swimming. The first diver swims back and forth across the scan area starting deep and moving shallower with each pass. Meanwhile the second diver is at the surface getting GPS coordinates of the scan area. This ensures future scans will cover the same area, allowing us to track the progress of individual colonies of coral over time.

In total this project collected approximately 34,000 square meters of sub-centimeter resolution benthic data across 18 sites on Bonaire. The detail of the entire scan is incredible as we could tell a frogfish from a sponge. This is very likely the largest survey ever completed

on Bonaire and a huge achievement that would not have been possible without the support and dedication of STINAPA and the collaborators contributions to this endeavor. Each of these scans is an excellent census from the reef crest to the mid reef covering depths as shallow as 8m (24ft) and as deep as 21m (78ft). Sites were selected to represent the east coast of Bonaire, from the north to the south, as well as around Klein Bonaire.

We've completed capture and processing of all the scans for this year. The next step is to categorize the data within each scan. This means we outline on the computer what we see in each of the scans. We identify whether something in the scan is

living coral cover, coral species, algae cover, sponge diversity, or coral disease. This is a laborious process and we are engaging with students at the University of Bremen in Germany to help with the categorization. After we get some of the scans categorized, we will explore using Artificial Intelligence to do the categorization for us. It's hard to understand the scale of the project and the benefits that AI categorization promises. I estimate given our current resources we could categorize by hand ~5 to 10% of the existing data. We can use these hand categorizations to train an AI to do the work for us. I don't yet know how much of the existing data we will need to categorize before we have an AI trained well enough to finish the job for us, but I believe we will need more human effort than we currently have to finish this job.

It's been a difficult year for Bonaire's corals, which compared to the rest of the Caribbean have been healthy and abundant. The corals of Bonaire are the foundation of the rich biological legacy that so many enjoy, but this year we realized that that legacy isn't guaranteed. Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease, finally came to Bonaire. Decimating corals where it passed. We lost many of the corals forming Bonaire's biological legacy and it's not over yet, as we are still in the outbreak phase of the disease. But work like this ensures that future generations will have a more clear picture of the reefs that they inherit from us.

Story / Photos Danny Vallentyne

Nazis on Bonaire - Part III

In the last episode of Nazis on Bonaire we determined Hans Hass was a Nazi, and backed up our discovery by a number of documents retrieved from the German National Archives. In this episode we try to gain insight in his career under the aegis of the NSDAP, and try to find out what he did to avoid exposure.



Hans (who evidence brands a Nazi) and Lotte Hass on Bonaire in 1953. They are speaking with one of Bonaire's most eminent citizens and businessmen, L.D. Gerharts.

of the Führer and the party that granted Hass the resources to carry out his expedition.

Why haven't we seen anything of his devotion for the regime before? There's plenty of information available: Hass was a well-known personality during the Third Reich.¹⁰ Every move he made under the patronage of the NSDAP was meticulously registered. Why did he think he'd get away with it? I have a theory.

VII.

In post-war West Germany, the occupying powers took a number of actions to identify individuals suspected of collaboration with the regime, and bring them to justice: the *Entnazifizierung*, denazification. Every German had to fill out a *Fragebogen*, a list of questions concerning his or her activities during the twelve years of the Third Reich, whether he or she had been a party member, to which NSDAP-subdivisions they'd belonged, things like that. Thus, every individual was classified into one of four stages, ranging from fully innocent to war criminal.

But: Hass wasn't a German. He was an Austrian. He returned from Berlin to Vienna right after the war.

In Austria, after the allied occupation

in 1945, steps were taken to denazify the country, just like Germany. About 700,000 Austrians had joined the NSDAP, and their approval of Hitler's invasion of the country had been enormous.

After the war, however, most Austrians didn't see themselves as perpetrators: Hitler had invaded their country, and in their post-war indignation they considered themselves as victims of a totalitarian regime, led by Germans. They couldn't have helped it - they argued - if they wanted.

That attitude wasn't very much acknowledged in the Netherlands, where the fiercest Nazis were Austrians: Arthur Seyss-Inquart, *Reichskommissar* of the occupied Netherlands, hanged in Nuremberg in 1946, Head of the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt*, SS-general Ernst Kaltenbrunner, ditto, and Johann Rauter, *SS-Obergruppenführer* and General of the SS, executed in 1949: a merry bunch of Lederhosen-clad butchers.

The Jews didn't acknowledge the Austrian's innocence, either. After the war, returning Jews were denied citizenship: "we welcome Austrians, as Austrians. Not as Jews." Of 100,000 deported Jews, 6,000 returned.¹¹

So: Austria's denazification didn't work out as well as it did in Germany. Eventually world politics messed things up indefinitely, and since the Western allies wanted to keep Austria out of the Soviet bloc, they allowed a gradually milder denazification. In 1950, a full amnesty was declared. That's probably how Hass could get away with his party membership.¹²

VIII.

After the collective amnesty, Hass established a clean picture of his past, developing a necessarily innocent, idealized biography. That's the reason why we find - everywhere - a ver-sion of his life, stripped of the brown edges. No one on Bonaire ever knew of Hass's Nazidom, and, in 2019, the island was even preparing to host the celebrations for his 100th birthday. Ironically: an island so racially diverse and relatively tolerant celebrating a Nazi's birthday...

Hans Hass has made a serious mistake trying to whitewash his past. Had he confessed in 1945, asking forgiveness for his misconceptions and wrongdoings, acknowledging his responsibility contributing to a conviction that cost the lives of about 50 million and ruined the emotional well-being of many more: we could have lived with it. Or at least we could have tried.

But applauding a man who categorically has denied his sympathy for a despicable regime for almost seventy-five years? Come on!

Gijs Borsten

("Nazis on Bonaire Parts I & II are available from our online archives at <https://bonairereporter.com>.)"

Part I appeared in *The Bonaire Reporter*, Nov. 8-22, year 30, issue 22. Part II appeared in *The Bonaire Reporter*, Nov. 22-Dec. 6, 22, year 30, issue 23.)

⁸ Karin Gradwohl-Schlacher (2018). *Literatur in Österreich 1938-1945. Handbuch eines literarischen Systems*, Bd. 4: Wien. Wien/Köln/Weimar: Böhlau, p. 324 f.

⁹ The expedition was sponsored by the RFR (*Reichsforschungsrat*, *Reichs Research Council*) and the *Kriegsmarine*, the Navy. Chrysoula Kambas, Marilisa Mitsou (Hrsg.) (2010). *Hellas verstehen*, p. 172.

¹⁰ Among others, the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* regularly published stories by and about Hass. I.e.: „Wir lebten unter Fischen. Abenteuer in den Karibischen See“, *BIZ*, 14.11.1941; „Der junge Zoologe Hans Hass vor dem Abstieg in den Meerestiefe“, *BIZ*, 17.12.1942; Mein Weg zu den Haien, *BIZ*, 21.1.1943.

¹¹ Monique Broeshart (2005). *De problematische denazificatie van Oostenrijk*. In: *Historisch Nieuwsblad* 7/2005. Utrecht: Veenmedia.

¹² There's no 100% certainty that Hass didn't join a denazification program.

Well-being in the Caribbean vs European Netherlands — We're happier, less educated, employed but poorer ...

Although material well-being levels are relatively low, most inhabitants of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba are satisfied with life. Disposable income is lower than in the European part of the Netherlands, and many people find it difficult to make ends meet. Income inequality is also high on the islands.

These are among the results presented

in Statistics Netherlands' (CBS) second edition of the Monitor of Well-being and the Sustainable Development Goals 2023 for the Caribbean Netherlands.

Well-being refers to the quality of life here and now and the extent to which it is or is not achieved at the expense of the well-being of future generations and/or people elsewhere in the world. The mon-

itor for the Caribbean Netherlands is still under development.

This year's monitor focuses on the period 2015-2022. It includes the well-being dimension 'here and now' and nine of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

SDG 1: No poverty, • SDG 3: Good health and well-being, • SDG 4: Quality education, • SDG 5: Gender equality, • SDG 7:

Affordable and clean energy, • SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth, • SDG 10: Reduced inequalities, • SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities, • SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions



Jonathan Croes was installed as a member of Rotary Club Bonaire (RCB) last week. Jonathan is the third generation of Croes to join Rotary. In a meeting where partners were also present, RCB president Jan Okhuijsen had the honor of welcoming him.

Rotary is there for everyone who is wants to contribute to a better world. Involvement and camaraderie are important characteristics of Rotary.

Each board year, Rotary Club Bonaire (RCB) organizes two fundraising

events: the Rotarally that will take place again soon and the FERIA on King's Day. With the proceeds, the Rotary funds social causes, both worldwide (polio out of the world) and locally on Bonaire (Slagbaai weekend for children, Alzheimer's, Mantelzorg, Social Minimum for the BES Islands, Tera Barra, among others).

In his acceptance speech, Jonathan Croes said he appreciated the fact that in addition to his work as manager of Rocardo, he can now make a social contribution as a member of Rotary.



Scuba Diver 2024 - Reader's Choice Awards Bonaire scores in 10 categories

Scuba Diving magazine announced the results of its 2024 Reader's Choice Awards in the November 2023 issue, recognizing Bonaire in 10 categories.

Bonaire's reputation as a diver's paradise continues to dominate the scuba scene as the island secured 10 different awards in the 2024 Reader's Choice Awards, including four number-one ratings.

For the 31st consecutive year, Bonaire has maintained its reign as the number one Shore Diving Destination in the Caribbean/Atlantic region. The island also received

first place in three other categories: Best Beginner Diving, Best Underwater Photography, and Best Snorkeling. The Island was awarded second place for Best Macro Life and Best Health of Marine Environment and third place for Best Overall Destination, and Best Advanced Diving. Bonaire also received Reader's Choice rankings in Best Value (5th) and Best Wall Diving (8th).

The 2024 Readers' Choice Awards are published on www.scubadiving.com and in the November 2023 issue of the magazine. TCB / Photo Julie Morgan



<https://www.scubadiving.com/worlds-best-scuba-diving-destinations-visit-2024>

Looking into Bonaire's musical past



Gonsalvo helps his young students to construct their own bari.

Photo Julie Morgan

Mangazina di Rei's Nos Zjilea gave attendees taste of Bonaire's cultural past on November 25 with a look at the musical instrument the Bari. Local Bonaireans have been making and playing this conga like drum for hundreds of years. Unlike many traditions this one is kept alive by training the younger generation to make and play their own bari.

Gonsalvo Goeloe, a regular contributor at Nos Zjilea, brought his bari students along with their baris in various stages of construction. He illustrated how it's done and why it's important to continue this tradition.

With translation from Nos Zjilea's Iza-in Mercera, Gonsalva explained the instrument would be played by the workers after a hard day in the field or at the salt pans. They would sing songs speaking of the current events of the day, good and bad. The song fests mostly happened at the end of the year after the harvest and when preparing for a new year.

The bari is made from either the kadushi cactus or La Palacia tree. The wood is taken during a full moon so it is easier to work with. Only green or fresh wood is used so it is easier to bend. Slats of the drum are put together with glue and the spaces are filled with a type of wood filler. A fresh goat skin is stretched over the top. The skin is kept in place with roots from a tree to hold it in place and then another root is added to tighten it.

Several members of the crowd volunteered to play the bari with instruction from Gonzalvo. A few of the visiting Miss Bonaire candidates gave it a try too.

The Miss Bonaire candidates from Bonaire's five barrios explained why they were qualified to represent the island.

Live musical entertainment was from Giovanni Mercera and Nel and the Band. Local crafts, plants, food specialties and locally made drinks were available. The wood baked oven was fired up and guests could watch as the ladies first made the

bread, baked it and served it to those lucky enough to make an order. As always the Mangazina di Rei museum was open to view more history of Bonaire.

Located in Rincon, Mangazina di Rei's Nos Zjilea is held monthly and it's free.

For more information visit <https://mangazinadirei.org> or Mangazina di Rei on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/mangazinadirei> Story / photos Julie Morgan



Gonsalvo Goeloe teaches Paul Bouman to play the bari. Photo Julie Morgan



Bonaire Windsurf Place

New energy with the same island feel



If you know windsurfing on Bonaire, you know the names Elvis Martinus, Patun Saragoza and Roger Jurriens. Their names are synonymous with windsurfing. They were the first to make the sport popular and put Bonaire on the map for windsurfing with the first windsurfing shop, Bonaire Windsurf Place.

Back in the early 80's Elvis and Patun were already competing in the sport. They traveled to Aruba in 1987 to try out the competition in the new Aruba Hi-Winds Pro-Am, which is now the longest running event in the Caribbean. They met Roger who had his own windsurf shop and came up with an idea to make a business together on Bonaire. At that time windsurfing was not popular on the island. Roger had the connections with windsurfers, knew how to teach and how to get equipment.

Roger said, "I would set up a day trip to Bonaire for windsurfing. They would visit Aruba and Bonaire for a few days and windsurf. Most of the guests were from the U.S. that came to Aruba. Because the windsurfing was so good in Bonaire, I killed my own business."

In 1995 Elvis, Patun and Roger started the Bonaire Windsurf Place (BWP) and in 2002 Roger moved to Bonaire full time. The team began promoting and marketing not only in the U.S. but in Europe, Austria, Germany and Switzerland.

Moving forward to 2023, Elvis, Patun and Roger decided it was time to retire.

Elvis said, "We are retired, but I don't like that word. We are all in our early 60's or mid 60's. We don't like the new trend of social media, but we know that's how you have to do it [market] now. We don't know anything about it; we are old-fashioned."

Former windsurf teacher at BWP and pro-windsurfing sponsored competitor Clay Davelaar is taking over the marketing job and has signed on to be the new manager of BWP.

Elvis said, "He is a good candidate for management, and he will continue with the passion we have. Clay is a part of our family. The concept stays the same and it will be the same place... We will have the same staff but also some new staff – not everything will change."

In addition to his windsurfing experience, Clay has experience with tourism, cruise ships, tourism tours and he has worked in entertainment.

Clay said, "I talked with Elvis and Patun about how to upgrade and modernize and I have their blessing. We will do upgrades, rebranding, the logo, website, marketing and personalize the building. The logo is new but the same, we don't want to lose the identity."

Roger, Elvis and Patun agreed, the feeling has to be the same. For us it's very important that Clay can keep and give that island touch and serve our clients and get better every day. It's a new energy with the same Bonaire Island feel.

"We are just improving what we already have. Big changes, but not too big.

Our guests are like family and we will still come and meet with them and surf with them. We aren't going anywhere, we'll still be hanging around," said Elvis.

Bonaire Windsurf Place is located at Sorobon beach and open every day from 9:30 a.m. – 6 p.m. For more information visit <http://www.bonairewindsurfplace.com> or on Facebook.

Story Julie Morgan

Bonaire Windsurf Place, We are just improving what we already have. Big changes, but not too big. The staff with old and new faces L-R: Nigel, Djurick, Marc, Youp, Elvis, Iris, Clay, Djodjo, Ro, Roger and Patun . Photo Marc van Swoll

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Coral reef update, from page 3

canes and mass bleaching. This year our reefs are experiencing challenges that previously have affected only other islands’ reefs.

SCTLD and bleaching. Bleaching, a global problem due to climate change, is occurring with increased frequency and severity. Mass bleaching is not only on Bonaire, but other parts of the Caribbean, Florida and the Great Barrier Reef. (See Caren Eckrich’s story page 1.)

Our other major challenge is SCTLD. A disease that was first seen in Miami in 2014, then spread throughout the Caribbean. It was positively identified on Bonaire this last February. Bleaching and SCTLD affect the reef differently. A bleached coral is very much alive and can recover. Roxanne gave this analogy: When a coral is bleached it has a fever but when it gets a disease, it is like you cut off a finger.

How to distinguish between SCTLD and bleaching. Splotchy coral is bleached. If it is fully white and there is algae growing on it with borders, it is diseased. The skeleton is apparent on a diseased coral and not on a bleached coral.

When SCTLD was discovered on Bonaire, six out of eight high risk species had SCTLD and some 905 infected corals were recorded. STINAPA introduced measures to curtail the disease as it can spread rapidly. From the time of infection a coral colony can die in days

(although sometimes a colony can take weeks to months to die).

Steps taken to combat SCTLD

1. Monitoring the disease

When SCTLD was confirmed on Bonaire, STINAPA designated ‘No Dive areas.’ They announced a regimen for divers to use to decontaminate their gear before/after diving. The regimen is still in place. You can learn to disinfect your gear at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=laVvK0FgF5A>

Roxanne said, “Unfortunately, SCTLD has now been found everywhere between Karpata and Playa Funchi. It was definitely found, even where there was supposed to be no diving. As of now, we only know of a few places on the east coast. We probably won’t know until after we are out of the bleaching in another month or two. Then we will have a better indication.”

Stinapa’s strategy right now is to attempt to hit it all. Divers are treating corals with antibiotics (Amoxicillin) at trial sites. Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire (RRFB) is helping with genetic banking and assisted reproduction

2. Genetic banking and assisted reproduction

Roxanne explained that, in the last spawning events, even corals with active SCTLD spawned or were trying to spawn. Long term, if there is some level of spawning and everything is released in the water...there is a chance. We are collecting the gametes to promote

fertilization. Coral nurseries that are elevated such as at Something Special have less infection. Corals are encouraged to spawn in controlled conditions such as aquaria and in labs.

3. Treatment

Some corals have been treated to try and keep them alive. Treatment will not be everywhere, and only certain coral species are good candidates. Roxanne said, “Brain coral responds well, Maze coral doesn’t work. Flower corals are impossible and Pillar Coral doesn’t work.”

Some kind of resistance is being seen in the reef as though certain corals have an auto immune system. But Roxanne thinks we may lose all our boulder brain corals.

Roxanne said, “Everyone wants to know what is going to happen but there are no assurances. Evidence that we have is that once the bleaching is gone, SCTLC will more than likely come back. Maybe less maybe more.”

Volunteers (not dive shops) will be accepted to assist with treatments after going through training. There will be no unsupervised treatments. The no dive reserves will be the first sites for the applications. If you would like to volunteer to assist with coral treatments, call STINAPA (+599 717 8444) and they will send you an email with a link.

The next STINAPA presentation will focus on climate and vegetation reconstruction at FORMA on December 7 at 6 p.m. (See page 21.) Julie Morgan



Anthony Angila won \$10,000 in TCB’s Tourism Innovation Project with his “Kunuku Life” project. Anthony, who plans to share the beauty and love for the “Kunuku Life” with both visitors and locals, also plans to invest in a zipline at his family’s kunuku, adding a new attraction to Bonaire.

In August of this year, TCB and the Chamber of Commerce (KvK) offered a \$10,000 prize for the best tourism idea. The project was an invitation to help reimagine, reinvent, and redefine tourism on Bonaire.

Of the nine candidates who presented innovative ideas, three were selected as finalists: Jose & Vanessa Martis with their project “Glamping,” Saeed Lourens and his concept “Nature Cooking,” and Anthony Angila, with his project “Kunuku Life.”

The panel of judges included Miles Mercera (TCB), Paul Coolen (Sapias Holding), Benita Wout (MCB), Maarten van der Scheer (BIA), Veroesjka de Windt (BONHATA), Gunther Flanegin (Harbor Master OLB), and Phar Martha (KVK).



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1



2



3



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Parrots and People

by “Mel” McCombie

Shake A Tailfeather

When the song “Shake A Tailfeather” came out in 1963, no one thought it was about parrot dancing. It turns out that it’s not just humans who dance, but parrots as well. And I’m talking about true dancing, spontaneous rhythmic movement in response to music, not a courtship dance. Parrots are among very few creatures who can dance. Indeed, other than humans and parrots, no other creatures really dance, though Asian elephants are known to swing their trunks in time to music.

Parrot dancing came to public attention in late 2007, when the owner of a sulfur-crested cockatoo named Snowball could no longer care for him, and dropped him off at the Birds Lovers Only parrot rescue in Dyer, Indiana. The owner left a CD of Backstreet Boys music, and a note stating that Snowball liked to dance. The rescue director, Irena Schulz, couldn’t believe Snowball’s moves, and uploaded a grainy video to YouTube. Snowball became a celebrity, and humans realized they had

competition on the dance floor! The center photo shows Snowball in his 2007 debut, dancing to “Everybody.”

It turns out that scientists watch YouTube, and one viewer was a neuroscientist, Ani Patel. He’d published a paper recently on true dancing—defined as spontaneous rhythmic movement to external music—and he wondered why it was so rare in living creatures? He reasoned that dancing requires a connection between hearing and movement centers in the brain, something that only exists in vocal learners. The rescue allowed Patel to work with Snowball. They learned that not only could Snowball dance, but he enjoyed all kinds of music, and created new dances as he was exposed to Bruno Mars, Pink, Lady Gaga, Queen, and even jazz like Dave Brubeck.

Patel’s undergraduate assistant, Joanne Jao Keehn, catalogued Snowball’s moves. Keehn, a trained dancer herself and now a professor in California, coded and catalogued his movements. Some, like headbanging, body rolls, and voguing, humans do. Some involving the feathers of Snowball’s yellow crest are beyond our range. (How I wish humans had cockatoo-style crests!) Her work cemented the idea that Snowball really dances.

He came up with the moves himself and combines them in response to music. Like anyone who enjoys dancing, Snowball has a repertoire of moves that he varies. The left photo introduces a video of Snowball’s catalog of dance moves:

The science suggests that dancing requires a set of mental skills and behaviors. To dance, you must be a vocal learner who can connect sound and movement; able to imitate movements; able to learn a sequence of actions; attentive to the movements of others; and social with long-term bonds...also known as a human or a parrot!

I am eager to hear if any of you have seen Loras or prikichi dancing. And to show it’s not just Snowball, the photo on the right introduces Frostie the bald-eye cockatoo dancing to Ray Charles’s “Shake a Tailfeather”!



Now excuse me as I watch Snowball and work on my moves.

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



(L) Snowball’s moves, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7IZmRnAo6s>

(R) Frostie dances too <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0bt9xBuGWgw>



Buckley’s Books

by George Buckley

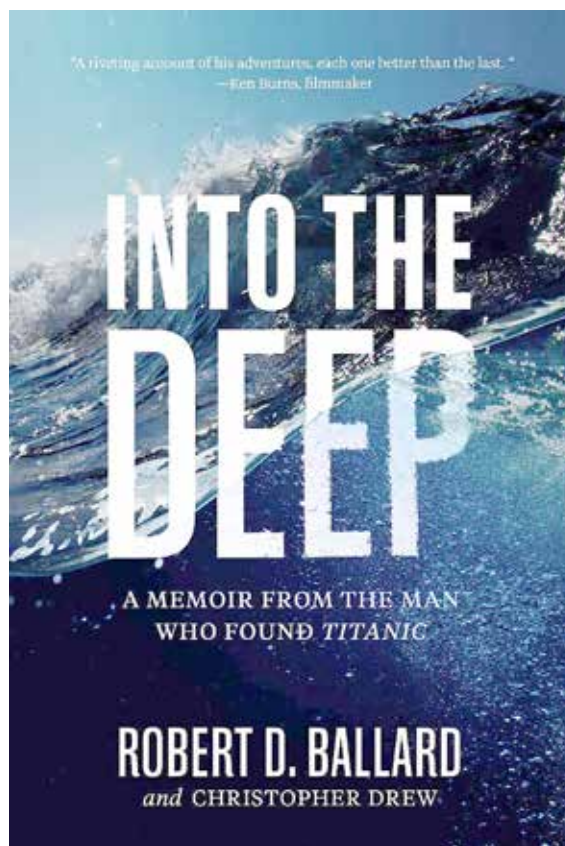
A Memoir from the man who found the Titanic

“Into the Deep” tells deep sea explorer Robert Ballard’s story of inspirational research, dedication to task and dogged hard work as he became an ocean exploration pioneer.

It has been called “a page turner with every chapter a cliffhanger that delivers yet another surprise” by National Geographic Explorer in Residence, Enric Sala. James Cameron said, “Bob Ballard has inspired generations of ocean explorers including myself.”

Decades of scientific exploration and discovery are detailed from the early days of a career at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) and use of their deep sea submarine Alvin to discovery of hydrothermal vents and the lost ocean liner Titanic, the development of high tech deep ocean research equipment at his Deep Submergence Lab, collaborations with the US Navy, the National Geographic Society and many more stories of cutting edge scientific endeavors.

Ballard’s career from student, graduate student, Naval Officer, husband and father to scientist and pioneering expedition leader are told in illuminating detail. He also tells of his time as a young member of the Boston Sea



Rovers, ‘the most prestigious dive club on the planet’ and how ‘It is hard to express how much the Sea Rovers would influence my life’. He was the Sea Rovers Vice President when I was beginning my work with them.

His latest endeavor, the Ocean Exploration Trust, is the culmination of decades of combining scientific re-

search at sea and pioneering technology with education and outreach. Beginning with a series of National Geographic articles and films in the 70’s onward, Ballard then created the Jason Project to engage students and teachers in ocean exploration projects. He also founded an ocean engineering and archeology program at the University of Rhode Island that has inspired many careers in the ocean sciences. The Ocean Exploration Trust has its own ocean exploration vessel, the E/V Nautilus, taking teachers on research expeditions that are shared with students the globe over, often via live broadcasts while at sea. Besides an on board scientific staff, it has a unique ‘Scientist on Call’ program where scientists from numerous universities and ocean institutes can be consulted in live time about discoveries from the expeditions.

Enjoy reading the book and by all means check out the Ocean Exploration Trust and the E/V Nautilus!



George Buckley has been coming to Bonaire since 1976, working with Captain Don (who called him CLAM for his work with mollusks), Hendrik Wuyts and others on environmental and educational projects and films. He has led over 100 study groups to Bonaire with many of his students returning often. Semiretired from decades of teaching Environmental Management and leading an active graduate program in Sustainability, he now works with many environmental groups and as an environmental consultant.

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A Garden? Just Do It!

by Angliet, Nature Lover

Chocolate and Christmas at Grandma’s house

Living in Suriname as a child, I remember so well the cacao tree in the back yard. I was crazy about sucking on the ripe cacao beans that had a sweet sour taste. We would rinse the beans and put them on the hot zinc roof on top of the barn. Cacao beans are hidden in a strong pod so with a stone we would break the pods open to see where the beans lay in a kind of structure. When young, the pods are green but once ripe and juicy the pods turn yellow-brown.

My darling grandma used to collect the beans that we put on the zinc roof, rinse them again and dry again on the zinc roof for a while. When she had a good amount, she put them all on a piece of zinc on a wood fire, turning them until lightly roasted and then cooled. She ground them in an old fashion way, stone on stone, into a fine powder. After that, she added water to the powder until it became a thick paste. She made a kind of cookies with the paste and dried them again on a piece of zinc in the sun. And she always kept the cacao bars in glass bottles ready for any kind of cuisine.

Around Christmas season, Granny had bottles full of cacao bars. In the morning she put water in a pan, added some cooked milk from the cow, and when boiling she added the cacao bars into the hot liquid with some pure brown cane sugar and finished it with a cinnamon stick. I used to stay with Grandma on the weekends. Can you imagine what it meant for a child to enjoy the most delicious homemade beverage a child could wish for at Christmas? And imagine the smell in that old wooden kitchen when all the old pots and pans were filled with all kinds of sweet and delicious things. As a child I could not resist putting my fingers in all the pots and licking them. Granny saw everything and more than a few times I had to pay a heavy bill for my naughtiness if she was in a bad mood.

Looking back, I would not want to miss one moment of those cozy days with my sweet grandma.



From the cacao bean to the cookies and cakes and sweet drinks of memory

The cacao bars were also used in cakes and cookies and with fingers and tongue I licked the pots and pans used for the cakes. And when the fresh warm bread was just out of the oven, butter was added that melted immediately and served with a warm cacao drink, hmmm yummy.

Christmas in my mind is a time with Grandma, cacao drink and the cozy sweet smelling kitchen. The good old days full of sweet memories!

Some cacao facts. Cacao is a well-known ingredient in cuisine during this holiday season, so I looked for some information to share with you. The cacao beans grow in a pod from the Theobroma tree, native to the upper Amazon region. Today 70 % of cacao beans are grown in West Africa with a small percentage in South America. The trees can grow up to 5 meters(16.5 ft) high and live for up to 50 years old. They produce fruit after four years. One can get a tree

by planting a fresh bean (not an old or roasted one, just a fresh one) in a container with soft wet dirt.

Cacao nibbs, pieces of roasted cacao beans are ground into powder, but also inserted into chocolate bars to give additional “crunch” and made into cacao paste, butter, beverages and sauces. (Wikipedia)

According to Allyson Kramer, nutritious cacao nibs add on intense chocolate flavor to foods along with a soft crunch. They have been used in making chocolate for centuries, but have only recently entered the modern culinary realm as a coveted ingredient on their own. The nibs taste bitter in unsweetend dark chocolate and can be used in a lot of deserts and dishes. They can last several years when stored in an airtight container in a cool dark, dry location.

- Cacao is very healthy.**
- In ancient times The Amazonian Indians knew about the healthy power of cacao.
 - Minerals: Iron, magnesium, phosphorus, zinc, manganese and copper,
 - Cacao nibs are highly nutritious containing: protein, fiber, healthy fats, oxidants. (flavonoids).
 - Raw beans are more healthy than roasted beans and there are more than 300 types of cacao trees.
 - White chocolate has no cacao powder but only cacao butter.

Chocolate (cacao) is one of the most beloved food types in the entire world. Especially at Christmas, chocolate brings the seasonal feeling into the air. I have a little cacao tree planted in a pot. Hopefully one day I will enjoy my own homemade chocolate at Christmas just like my sweet Granny did.



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.

TCB takes seven students to Brussels

Tourism Corporation Bonaire (TCB) invited seven Bonairean students who are currently living in the Netherlands to the prestigious BELUX Travel Awards in Brussels.

TCB was represented by Miles Mercera, Director; Marjolein Oleana, Business Manager & Europe Liaison; and Elesier Angel, Cruise & Project Coordinator. They spoke to the seven students about TCB’s current objectives and efforts to promote Bonaire. During the session, TCB received valuable feedback from the students, which resulted in a fruitful exchange of ideas and perspectives.

The students present, Jaedan Crestian, Sabine Schlepfer, Giani El Hage, Ruthgainy Frans, Alexander Tromp, Kirsten-Marie Martines and Tharia Phelipa, responded with enthusiasm to the opportunity to be involved in TCB’s activities.

The TravelMedia Belux Travel Awards have been called the Oscars of the Belgian travel industry. TCB is committed to engaging young Bonaireans in the travel industry and will continue to involve students with tourism events and fairs in the Netherlands both for the students’ own personal growth and to interest them in the travel industry. *TCB Communications*



Piss and Vinegar

by Gijs Borsten

A tsunami of retards

So, the General Elections in Motherland went slightly wrong. Geert Wilders' 'Freedom Party,' 'PVV,' collecting about 25% of the votes, has taken the leading part in shaping a new government, although, right now, it's not quite clear which of the Quislings sauntering around in the wings will step forward to help him into power.

For the first time since WWII, Motherland's political landscape is dominated by a party, operating under an absolute leader (Wilders is the party's only member; his word is law), boasting an agenda that is almost entirely unconstitutional, and discriminatory to the bone.

Wilders doesn't make a secret of the fact that he is representing the interests of all Motherlanders, regardless of their ancestry, as long as they are ethnic Dutch, and culturally rooted in the Judeo-Christian and humanist tradition. Thus, cleverly coupling ethnicity and religion, he plans to deny citizenship - retroactively, if possible - to everybody being of the wrong descent or believing in the wrong God. Slegs vir Blankes, basically.

His stance towards Northern ethnicity is more or less the same as Hitler's, (who used, instead of 'Judeo-Christian,' 'Aryan' as a catch-all term), whose policies were equally intended for the greater good of a lily-white 'Volk.' History tells us what happened the moment he got the chance to use them as a pretext to clean up the place a bit.

Examining the plans Wilders has got up his sleeve for Motherland, we can characterize them as consistently (ethnic) nationalist, anti-EU and in favor of a Nexit. He is deeply nativist (the idea being closely affiliated to the Nazis' 'Blut und Boden') and rabidly anti-Muslim (which is strange, Wilders' mother being of Indonesian descent). On the side, he is a climate denier, anti-LHBTQ+, anti-immigration, and as a friend of Putin and Orb  n, opposed to supporting Ukraine. No excuses or compensation for slavery. The works, therefore.

The outcome of the elections shows, that a substantial section of the population in Motherland loves his ideas. Strangely enough, however, the major part of Wilders' electorate stems from rural areas, where the Judeo-Christian Supreme Being still is firmly in the saddle: not an immigrant in sight.

Paradoxically, densely populated, urban areas like Amsterdam or Utrecht, like Bonaire housing a very diverse population, generally chose for more tolerant, environmentally friendly politics.

The reason why so many people voted for a wannabe populist autocrat seems unclear at first sight. Motherland's population is said to be one of the happiest in the world. Simultaneously, however, a substantial part of the electorate votes for a person stating the country is close to hell on earth, engulfed by immigrant thugs and thieves, and by 'woke,' terrorists.

How does this paradox come into existence? Why do people fall for someone who promises to save them from a non-existent dystopia, presenting an irrational, unrealistic, and fact-free program as a solution?

Because they're stupid. They're massively, profoundly and unforgivingly stupid.

Leafing through a number of books on political aberrations in recent history - specifically on the roots of totalitarianism - I stumbled upon the name of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German theologian during the Third Reich. His explanation for the massive maliciousness of his fellow countrymen during the closing years of the Weimar Republic, forecasting what Hannah Arendt later would mention in her 'Banality of Evil,' was that '... stupidity is a more dangerous enemy of the good than evil.' Why? Because you can fight evil. Against stupidity you're defenseless:

"Neither protests, nor force can touch it. Reasoning is of no use. Facts that contradict personal prejudices can simply be disbelieved - indeed, the fool can counter by criticizing them, and if they are undeniable, they can just be pushed aside as trivial exceptions. So, the fool, as distinct from the scoundrel, is completely self-satisfied. In fact, they can easily become dangerous, as it does not

take much to make them aggressive. (...) Never again will we try to persuade the stupid person with reasons, for it is senseless and dangerous."

The correctness of his theory is substantiated by the standard platitude used by the PVV-electorate to prove the correctness of their viewpoint, that generally sounds like 'Ja, maar het IS toch zo?': 'Yes, but it IS true, isn't it?'

The consequences of the brown tsunami in Motherland for the Antilles, although Wilders once said he intended to dispose of them and their inhabitants by selling them on the internet, probably will be limited. Willem Cecilia, commenting on the Dutch elections in *Boneriano*, states that some anxiety would be in place for the islands because of the man's Anti-antillianism. I personally don't think the future looks that dreary.

Wilders only acquired 25% of the seats in Parliament. As we have seen during the past weeks, potential coalition partners, seeming secure immediately after the elections, are shying away one by one because of Wilders' radically unconstitutional and - both morally and financially - unenforceable agenda.

His voters, falling for his populist babbling, expect rapid results that won't materialize. They'll be disappointed, and Wilders will be traded in for yet another witchdoctor in a heartbeat. It happened before.

Besides, the legislation that has been established over the last couple of months, aiming at improving the living standards on the BES-islands, cannot be easily reversed. Trust me: If we hold our breath for a couple of months, the menace is over, and it's back to the ballot box once more.



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. Currently retired.



The kids hold a mock Island Council Meeting

On November 24, the Youth Participation Group of OLB (Public Body of Bonaire) toured Passangrahan, and then held a mock Island Council meeting.

In the Children's Island Council, the young commis-

sioner first presented a plan. A question and answer session followed, after which the members of the Children's Island Council voted on whether the proposed plan should be implemented.

The activity was designed to teach about the decision-making process, teamwork and the responsibilities of public service.

Reef Glimpses - Surveying the Reef

by Dee Scarr

Stony corals build the reef. Their colonies can grow for decades, even centuries, and they never die from old age; when it grows big enough, each coral animal (called a “polyp”) splits into two coral polyps, and the colony can grow that way forever.

Unfortunately, coral colonies can die, but only from injury or disease. Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD) ravaged reefs in South Florida and the rest of the Caribbean for years. Bonaire, a world leader in protecting its coral, could not protect our coral from SCTLD. STINAPA used scientific and local knowledge of currents and other factors to create the system we now use to prevent spreading the disease ourselves.

Every polyp in a coral head over a meter in diameter can be killed by SCTLD in less than a week. The BNMP has a program whereby volunteer divers can help to apply antibiotic paste to corals newly affected by SCTLD; contact them if you’d like to help (stinapabonaire.org). As for the corals that have already succumbed to SCTLD, if we’re lucky and larval corals settle on that dead coral, tiny new coral colonies can begin.

There’s a question that hovers in the background here. Let’s take it out, dust it off, and face it: what’s the difference in a reef habitat between living stony coral and dead coral rocks?

We are or will soon be – unfortunately -- in a position to answer that question from first-hand experience.

I’m not talking about drawing conclusions such as, “Gee, I didn’t see a single French angelfish on that dive, so they all must be gone.” I’m talking about really comparing what you used to see to what you see now. This could be done by each of us keeping an eye on the local fish and invertebrates (anemones, crabs, sea cucumbers, etc.) on our favorite dive sites, and recording their presence or absence over time. It would be even better if we could share our results with others and compare different time periods and look for trends.

How convenient that the Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF) has been doing this in the Caribbean since the early 1990’s! Not surprisingly, Bonaire has been one of the favorite locations for fish surveys: seven of REEF’s top ten Caribbean sites for largest numbers of species recorded are on Bonaire!

REEF has thirty years of information about Bonaire’s fish that we can compare with the information they get now, but only if they get the information! So, we need surveyors.

I had surveyed for years, then quit. The top surveyors from Bonaire include Cassandra and Franklin Neal. In 2020, Cassandra



The banded coral shrimp would be on my invertebrate list. Photo Dee Scarr

submitted more surveys than anyone in the world! She and Franklin have passed away, and as yet no one has caught up to them in survey numbers including, Linda Baker of the Carib Inn, Kim White, and myself. We’ve each submitted more than 1000 surveys, which earns REEF’s Golden Hamlet Award; the first person, ever, to earn a Golden Hamlet Award was Linda Baker. Bonaire resident divers have been notably active in REEF surveys.

I’m starting to survey again – in fact, I turned in my first post-SCTLD survey right before I began writing this. If you are an active surveyor, good for you! If you’re not, think about it. It costs nothing; once you register with REEF (reef.org), you can submit your surveys online, and you thus join us in documenting the answer to the difference between living coral habitats and rock habitats.

In relation to fish and marine turtles.

With invertebrates, doing it ourselves would be the only way. REEF does some invertebrate surveys, but not in the Caribbean. When I asked them about it, their reply included this (TWA, Tropical Western Atlantic): We survey invertebrates in temperate regions because there is a higher volume of them than fish in those areas, and they serve as a better indicator for the health of those ecosystems. Here in the TWA, we have tons of fish, and they are much stronger ecosystem health indicators.

Bottom line is that REEF doesn’t “have the capacity to survey both fish and invertebrates.” Curses!

REEF is probably considering recording every invertebrate seen, which would be unwieldy if not impossible in the Caribbean. What would work better for our purposes would be a short list of common critters. Even if all we did was look for them in a single area we often dive, that information, over time, could help to fill out the answer to the question of how SCTLD is affecting life on our reefs. Do you have ideas for invertebrate surveys? Please share them!

Like abandoned buildings in a city, many of our coral formations have been “emptied” of their occupants by SCTLD.

So, it’s time to get started on those fish surveys!

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.



If you survey one of these, you’ll have to know it’s a viper moray. Photo Dee Scarr

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Blame the Ballast by Sarah Egner



Photo Stephen Frink

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MARITIME TRANSPORT HAS MORE TO DO WITH CORAL DISEASE than you might think. Just like most animals, corals can get diseases. Researchers first recognized coral disease in the early 1970s. It has increased over time and become a significant threat in many areas of the world.

Changes in tissue color indicate coral disease; when tissue loss accompanies those changes, the coral is no longer alive. There are more than 20 recognized coral diseases, but many have unknown origins. While some known pathogens naturally occur in the water, research has shown that humans also play a role in this threat.

Some human influences are indirect, such as warming waters, increased nutrient loads, and sedimentation, but humans have had a direct impact in causing coral disease. For example, a bacterium found in human sewage was identified in 2010 as the source of whitepox disease, which targeted elkhorn coral and served as a primary contributor to the drastic loss of this species throughout the Florida Keys in the early 2000s.

Stony coral tissue loss disease (SCTLD) has made headlines more recently throughout Florida and the Caribbean, which are hot spots for coral disease. First appearing in waters off Miami, Florida, in 2014, SCTLD has now spread throughout most of the Caribbean. As is typical of coral disease, SCTLD has had an impact on the afflicted corals as well as the entire ecosystem.

Coral bleaching, which drastically affected coral reefs this past summer, is also connected to coral disease. Corals bleach when stressed, and while a bleached coral is not dead, it is weakened and more susceptible to disease. Some studies have shown that corals can become diseased by ingesting bacteria or zooplankton carrying the pathogen. While corals feed on zooplankton as a secondary form of energy, bleached corals have expelled the symbiotic algae that provide their primary energy source and rely solely on zooplankton. Bleached corals, therefore, potentially have an increased chance of ingesting food that carries pathogens.

BALLAST WATER CONNECTION

The maritime industry is connected to coral disease because of ballast water, which ships use to manage their draft, trim,

and stability. Ballast water can be fresh or salt water brought into and released from tanks in the ship's hull, depending on the cargo load. The maritime industry has used this practice for hundreds of years.

Ballast water is often loaded at one port and unloaded at another, potentially on the other side of the world. A diverse community of microorganisms such as bacteria, parasites, microbes, small invertebrates, eggs, and larvae fills this water. Researchers have documented that hitchhikers in ballast water are a primary source of marine exotic species (a plant or animal taken from its native region and introduced to a new area).

Scientists are still studying the connection between coral disease and ballast water, but they suggest it is reasonable to assume ballast water serves as a vector for some diseases. An unidentified pathogen caused the die-off of *Diadema antillarum*, long-spined sea urchins, throughout the Florida Keys and Caribbean in the early 1980s. When the same thing happened in 2022, science was better prepared to identify the cause.

The Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) determined that the culprit is microscopic organisms called ciliates. "Ciliates seem to thrive in nutrient-rich shoreline habitats," STRI reported. "The disease seems to originate in calm water ports and harbors. Then it appears to spread through the water across a wide space, perhaps in currents, with floating vegetation or carried by migratory fish or sea birds." Or it could possibly spread with ships taking on water for ballast in one port and discharging it in another.

The spread of white band disease, which decimated staghorn and elkhorn populations throughout the Florida Keys and the Caribbean in the late 1970s, is thought to be due to pathogen introduction via the Panama Canal or ballast water transfers. An analysis of the spread of SCTLD, which evaluated outbreaks in distant or isolated locations, suggests that ballast water likely played a role in the spread of white band disease as well.

MANAGING THE PROBLEM

Advancements in ballast water management occurred after recognizing some large ecological impacts from the spread of exotic species in the 1980s. The International Maritime Organization issued guidelines for ballast water in 1991, and in 2004 they

adopted the International Convention for the Control and Management for Ships' Ballast Water and Sediment, which took effect in 2017.

Regulation can be complicated because it entails international and national management. The Coast Guard set out rules effective in 2012 prohibiting ships from releasing untreated ballast water in U.S. waters. Various agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency, have since enacted new rules and regulations.

One strategy to reduce the transport of hitchhikers is ballast water exchange (BWE), which entails flushing out a ship's coastal ballast when the ship is at a minimum distance from land and replacing it with open ocean water. While BWE reduces the concentration of coastal organisms in the ballast water, one strategy alone won't completely eliminate them.

Ballast water management systems include techniques such as mechanical filtration, gravity separation, ultraviolet (UV) radiation, chlorination, and ozonation. The effectiveness of each technique is species dependent. UV radiation is commonly used, for example, but it does not mitigate SCTLD spread through ballast water. Filtration, chlorination, and ozonation — all of which have logistical and financial challenges — are likely more effective for this disease. Regardless of what mitigation protocols are most efficient, it presumes that ships, whether freighters or cruise ships, will invest the time and expense to do it properly.

WHAT DIVERS CAN DO

As a diver, you can play a key role in preventing the spread of coral disease. A coral's primary defense mechanism against disease is a layer of mucus that covers the coral. If you touch, stand on, kick, or otherwise disturb the coral, you remove the mucous membrane and increase the coral's susceptibility to disease. In a time of thermal stress, exacerbated by water contamination, corals need all the help they can get.

Always control your buoyancy, especially when taking photos — research shows that is when most damage from divers occurs. Some pathogens might survive on dive gear, so decontaminating from one site to the next or renting gear locally could be beneficial.

Coral reefs worldwide are up against a lot of threats; ballast water is just one of many. As divers, let's do our part!

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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.
Thursday, December 7	Reconstructing past vegetation and climate on Bonaire. Talk by Kees Nooren, researcher in Paleocology and Climatology 6 -8 p.m. Location FORMA, Room 18. See page 21
Saturday, December 9	JICN (Prison) Market - 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Handmade furniture, toys, paintings, jewelry, Christmas decorations and more for sale. In parking lot of JICN (Plantage Aruba - east of LVV, south of Animal Shelter)
	Bario Festival Nort'i Salina - 6 - 10 p.m. Visitors can get acquainted with Bonaireans, the island's culture and its products.
Friday, December 15	Kingdom Day - Public Holiday. Marks the date in 1954 when Queen Juliana signed the Charter for the Kingdom of Netherlands. Most government offices and businesses are closed.
Friday, December 22	Christmas Shopping Night - 6 - 9 p.m. Evening shopping in downtown Bonaire.
Monday, December 25	Christmas Day - Public Holiday. Most government offices and businesses are closed.
Tuesday, December 26	Boxing Day - Public Holiday. Most government offices and businesses are closed.
	Marshe di Rincon 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the corner of Kaya Rincon and Kaya Commerce. Local art, music, and food
Saturday, December 30	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, December 31	Oliebollen fun race - The last mountain bike race of the year on Bonaire is the famous FREE De Freewieler Oliebollen fun ride 3 p.m.
	New Year's Eve- The Island celebrates with pagara (fireworks). Some hotels throw special parties.
Monday, January 1	New Year's Day - Public Holiday. Most government offices and businesses are closed.

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 a.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
	Fishing line clean up North Town Pier. 9 a.m. at Dive Inn. See page 21.

Coming Up in 2024

Ride for the Roses January 28. Ride, Walk, Swim or Sail to support the fight against cancer. Walking is 7km or 9km. Cycling is either 13km or 20km. Swim is 700m.

Pop-Up Artist – Gabrielle Wilson at MoltenWolf Glass – Saturday, January 20 in the store 9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Annual Lora (Parrot) Roost Count. The first roost count of 2024 is coming up. Help count the parrots in January, 2024. Contact us at info@echobonaire.org.

Open Bonaire Bridge Championship 2024. January 31. Participants can register via the email address bridgeclubbonaire@gmail.com.

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 water-front. See Facebook [Bonaire Free Noodlers](#)


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 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: The final presentation of the year will be December 11th at Divi Resort 7:30 p.m. On a break til January 2nd. 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.

Tentative cruise ship schedule				
DATE:	CRUISE SHIP	TIME	PIER	CAPACITY
Wed. December 6	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	0800-1800	North	2417
Thurs. December 7	ROTTERDAM	0700-2000	South	2668
Fri. December 8	NORWEGIAN PRIMA	0630-1800	South	3099
Sat. December 9	CARNIVAL GLORY	0800-1700	North	3540
Mon. December 11	AIDAPERLA	0830-1800	South	3286
Tues. December 12	SILVER SHADOW x	0700-2300	North	388
	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	0800-1800	South	2417
Wed. December 13	CARNIVAL HORIZON	0700-1500	South	4683
Thurs. December 14	CELEBRITY REFLECTION	0700-1700	South	3046
Fri. December 15	ENCHANTED PRINCESS	0700-1600	South	3660
Sat. December 16	CELEBRITY EQUINOX	0700-1700	South	2852
Sun. December 17	STAR PRIDE	0730-1700	North	312
Mon. December 18	SERENADE OF THE SEAS	0800-2000	North	2500
Tues. December 19	BRITANNIA	0700-1800	South	3674
Wed. December 20	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	0800-1800	North	2417
	INSIGNIA	1300-2200	North	702
Sat. December 21	MARELLA DISCOVERY	0630-1300	North	2074
Sat. December 22	NIEUW STATENDAM	0730-2000	South	3152
Sat. December 23	STAR PRIDE	0830-1800	North	312
	REGAL PRINCESS	1200-2000	South	4250
Sun. December 24	COSTA FORTUNA	0800-2000	North	3470

Let's go shopping Holiday markets

Kooyman's Christmas Market,
Thursday, December 7, 4 - 8 p.m.

JICN (Prison) Market
Saturday, December 9. 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
See page 20 for directions

Delphins Christmas Market,
Tuesday, December 19.

Christmas Shopping Night -
Friday, December 22, 6 - 9 p.m.
Evening shopping in downtown Bonaire

Photo: Christmas shopping night in Kralendijk, 2022
Photo Julie Morgan



Reconstructing Bonaire's past vegetation and climate

Islanders at the Helm welcome you to a presentation on ongoing research at Washington Slagbaai Park.

Kees Nooren, researcher in Paleoecology and Climatology will talk of pollen and diatom-based reconstruction of past vegetation and climate on Bonaire. The aim of the research: to produce paleoecological and paleoclimatic records for insular Caribbean (the Bahamas; the Greater Antilles and the Lesser Antilles). Findings of short sediment cores collected in 2022 at 12 coastal lagoons on islands of Sint Maarten/Saint Martine, Curaçao, Bonaire and Aruba reflect changes over the past 200 – 300 years.

Saliña Bartol on Bonaire is the most promising site to reconstruct vegetation and climate for the past 2000– 3000 years. The researchers are now working to recover two long sediment cores that may allow a reconstruction much further back in time up to period before the first humans settled on the islands.

Please note the correct location, as using Google Maps with the address Kaya Barracuda 33 may mislead you. FORMA is situated in Antriol, at the former school of Papa Comes, just behind the Curoil gas station.

Fishing Line Clean up

On Sunday, December 10, Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB) will be cleaning fishing line around the North Town Pier. Meeting time is 9 a.m. at the Dive Inn. We will be hosted by Dive Friends Bonaire who will also kindly sponsor our air tanks (INT). Thanks Dive Friends!

Please remember to bring your dive qualification cards, Marine Park tag, shears/line cutters and mesh bag. Permission has been granted by the Harbour Master but please note that diving under this pier is entirely at your own risk.

We realize that the North Pier is part of a

red area on the contamination map of STI-NAPA. Please remember to use the STI-NAPA regulations and guidelines for the rinsing procedure after the dive and to limit your dives to one area per day.

Would you like to join? Please e-mail cepa@bonaireturtles.org.



Creating optimal health

by Irene da Cunda Costa

How to identify irrational beliefs

The stream of thoughts or our internal dialogues is the way we think. We are emotional beings that reason. In the quest for survival emotion preceded reasoning. For a long time, we supported a dichotomy that divided rationality from emotionality. Now we know that they go together. Science has confirmed that decision making is both based on rational recollection of facts, which is mainly done in a conscious way, and an underlying emotional mechanism controlled by somatic markers that catalyzes the process. If this was not the case, decision making based on pure rationality would be impossible as we would never be able to gather all the possible available data, so the process would never be completed. There is no point in discussing if our life is based on rationality or emotions, both are equally important.

Albert Ellis, creator of Rational Emotional Behavioral Therapy and Aaron Beck, creator of Cognitive Therapy, were arriving at similar conclusions roughly at

the same time, even though they were not working together. They both identified several types of cognitive distortions or biases in the way of interpreting reality which resulted in irrational beliefs or irrational thoughts. In fact, we are always filtering information, as it is not humanly possible to perceive the entire spectrum of reality. Some degree of filtering is functional, but excessive filtering produces suffering. One characteristic of irrational thinking is how far it drifts from consensually accepted reality.

Both psychologists draw some of their conclusions while working with patients that were suffering. Beck identified the triad of depressive thoughts, which are negative labeling about oneself, negative expectations about the future and a negative view of the world. Ellis said that irrational beliefs distort reality, are illogical, are limiting, create unnecessary suffering and promote dysfunctional behaviors. Can an irrational belief be neutral or perhaps create happiness? I believe so, and

in that case there is no need to examine it or change it. Can this condition change? I also believe so, sometimes an irrational belief protects us from some pain. Many times, that is the way they start in our lives. A classic example is that when a child is abused by an adult, he or she is going to develop a set of protective beliefs and behaviors that might work at that point in time, but later in life they will turn into limiting beliefs. The child would probably become overly suspicious to protect him/herself from harm. Later in life, thoughts like: "I can't trust anyone" or "anybody that comes close to me might harm me" limiting the enjoyment of relationships. Therefore something that was created as a protective strategy later becomes a limiting factor in the pursuit of happiness.

The bias in processing information is also a key factor. We agree that we always filter reality, but irrational beliefs go to extremes polarizing reality into black or white, all or nothing, everybody or nobody. It can also focus the attention only on those factors that confirm the thought (this sounds pretty much like the Internet algorithm....)

Another key factor to identify irratio-

nal beliefs is the use of the subjunctive verbal form: would/should and would/should have, as whatever would have been. In fact it is not, so dwelling in that tense drifts you away from what it actually is towards what you think it would/should have been. Ellis talked about the "musts", like "everybody must love me", "I must be successful in everything", "life events must be exactly the way I expect them to be", "people must behave in a certain way" etc.

There are many more ways to identify irrational beliefs and I am going to dedicate a few more articles to this. When I was 19 years old, I was introduced to the thoughts of Albert Ellis and Stoic philosophy. As a personal testimonial, I can say that it was a game changer in my life.



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

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Shelter News



Time To Start Giving Pet Stress Remedy

Fireworks season is just around the corner and while humans may enjoy the dazzling displays and noise, it is a terrifying time for our dogs and cats. NOW is the time to start preparing your pets for this stressful time of year. The best way to do that is with Florence Ditlow's **PET STRESS REMEDY**. The Remedy should be started the first weeks of December and continued through the fireworks season. Add just a few drops every time you fill your dog or cat's water bowl or put a few drops on one paw each day. The Remedy will be available soon at Animal Shelter Bonaire, DA, Just for Pet and the Shelter booth at the cruise market on cruise ship days.

Florence Ditlow, a retired professional registered nurse, has produced Pet Stress Remedy here on Bonaire since 2006. With her all natural calming aid for pets, she has been helping Bonaire's dogs and cats stay stress free during fireworks for 17 years. And she has been helping Animal Shelter Bonaire all those years as well! All sales of Pet Stress Remedy are donated to the Shelter. Pet Stress Remedy will not only help your pets with their anxiety during the fireworks season, it will also help all the animals at Animal Shelter Bonaire. *Jane Disko*

Rules and Regulations BNMP, from page 6

Commercial operation of boats

- Boats are not allowed to travel in the marine part at more than 10km (6.21mph) per hour
- Outside of the MP the speed is 20k (12.4mph)
- Mooring field is 5km (3.1mph)
- Lac is 4k (2.5mph in the channel and 2k (1.25mph) in the bay; pass at least 50m (164ft) from other boats with minimum speeds near jettys and piers. No boating in the light blue waters. Travel in the dark blue. This pertains to jet skis as well as boats.

By law a violation is mandated to the harbour office. BNMP can make an incident report to the harbour office but cannot enforce. Maritime police, military police and coast guard can enforce. If the incident occurs several times, the owner's boat registration can be taken.

Public Moorings

- Boats under 13m (43ft) are allowed on the public moorings
- One boat per mooring or up to three boats under 4m (13ft) in length
- Boats must tie up by the bow
- Limited to maximum of 2 hours; first come first served. A Reservation system pilot program is in the works but it is more complicated than expected. There will be no additional public moorings. Island ordinance allows 26 maximum.

Nature Permits

- All companies working in the marine park are required to have a nature permit to operate commercially. They are obligated to check validity and collect and transfer money for the nature fee/tag.
- Nature Fee. Purchase of a nature fee/tag is required by all park users. (Exception – a current Bonaire sedula holder or someone younger than 13 years)
- Annual Fee for Commercial Operators is \$1000 per year.

STINAPA is currently 'turning a blind eye' to this payment by operators who have a nature permit. The cost was not decided by STINAPA but with other government agencies: TCB, Spatial Planning and OLB. Suggestions were made that it should be priced in regard to the size of the business. Currently of the over 200 companies operating the marine park some 40-60% are operating illegally without a permit. The fee will be collected in 2024, otherwise the companies will no longer be allowed to operate. Many companies have applied for the nature permit. The decision was made to collect in 2024, but due to the backlog of applications no invoices will be sent out. By law anyone caught by a ranger without a permit cannot operate in the park. Negotiations are ongoing with the government on how to handle this.

Island Decree Underwaterpark Bonaire (Eilandsbesluit Onderwaterpark Bonaire)



Pet of the Week

Do you remember our Geisha?

She's such a pretty female cat of 8 months old.

Lately she hasn't been happy at the Shelter. She was stressed so we found her a nice foster family for her and she is doing very well in this relaxed new temporary home.

She is as lovely as she can be. Look at the beautiful markings on her forehead and her fluffy tail; she is just gorgeous.

If you want to meet this lovely lady let us know in advance. We can make sure she will be at the Shelter when you come to adopt her.

Geisha has had all her vaccinations, sterilized, tested FIV/ L negative, dewormed and will be chipped once you tell us you are going to adopt her.

Monique Degenaar

If you would like to meet our cats and dogs, please come to Animal Shelter Bonaire, Kaminda Lagun 26A. Open Monday - Friday 10



Geisha

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

Make Bonaire Accessible

by Ria Evers-Dokter

Dinner and a movie and more.....

Many people ask me, why do you only write about accessibility and why so much?

The answer is very simple because it is a must! In the seven years that I have written about this theme, not much has changed on Bonaire. Even worse - accessibility problems seem to be multiplying. When you take a tour around our lovely island it seems that there are many people who think they have more rights than others. They claim sidewalks for terraces, plant trees and post propaganda materials. More cars than ever are parked on sidewalks and in handicapped parking spaces. Almost every pathway seems to have been paved with gravel (a living hell when driving in a wheelchair or using a walker).

On the other hand, we have a few successes: a project that repairs roofs for those who need the repairs is very successful; more and more bathrooms are being prepped for handicapped use; and the new lift for getting safely into and out of aircrafts is installed and working. So that is worth a big applause.

MiVaBo decided to offer a really nice project. Going out for a movie is normally not a pleasant experience for persons in a wheelchair or using a walker. You get stuck in the gravel and once inside you get to sit up front or along the sidewall. And when you are handicapped, you want to enjoy your outing to the fullest. That is why MiVaBo decided to invite and treat a group of elderly and handicapped persons to "dinner and a movie" at Red Palm.

After inspecting the location for accessibility it appeared perfect and the decision was made very quickly.

It was perfect with lovely seating, nice table decorations, friendly staff, good

food and sweet punch. The movie, Zulai-ka, kobra ta duru, was in Papiamentu, so everyone could understand and identify. The ambiance was great and everybody had a nice evening. The ride home was lit by the full moon. It could not have been better. We had our own Luna Yen and Dinner and a Movie is definitely a project that should be repeated.

On the way home everybody could enjoy the wonderful Christmas decorations and lights. The spirit of Christmas hung in the air.

We have our hopes up for December 3, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. A conference has been organized to get things going as soon as possible.

Since Christmas is not very far away, I made a little list of wishes:

May all those handicapped get all the rights they deserve, may accessibility turn into a normal thing as soon as possible, may there be lots of appropriate activities for everyone with a handicap and may all the parents and anyone working with this special group of people get all the guidance and help they need.

And for Christmas, little gifts, donations and nice wishing cards would be nice and encouraging. 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.

Look what's new at Phish Phactory

Can you believe it? Phish Phactory will be 10 years old next year and they just keep getting better and better. In the next couple of months, the bag side of Phish Phactory will be opening an online store to make it even easier for both new and loyal customers to buy direct from wherever they are.

But until then, Phish Phactory is announcing a 2023 holiday collection of 14 newly designed limited edition beach bags will drop on December 9. The three color one-of-a-kind bags are 15 x 17 x 5 in and measure 25 inches from the bottom to the top with the handle making them perfect for all your beach stuff. Like all Phish Phactory bags the new bags are created with repurposed sails to keep in line with their policy of not adding to the worldwide waste problem.

Owner Suus Doherty Zelders said, "We use recycled sails because we don't want to create a lot of waste. We still have to buy new materials, but we use it with the old sails that have been washed and repurposed. The products are durable and good for many years."

In addition to the new special edition beach bags, Phish Phactory has added some amazing new products in the last few months. Customers will find colorful quick drying kite sail bags with pockets, computer laptop bags, Doppkit (travel toiletry) bags with waterproof liners and fanny packs with pockets. Other products available are glasses cases, small and medium wallets, cushions, canvas shopping bags and even dog collars and leashes.

"We believe in our product and foresee a bright future in the next 10 years," said Suus.



The other side of Phish Phactory is the sails. Suus' husband Eunan continues to grow his business of creating the best sails, kite repairs and custom canvas work.

Suus said, "We want people who think of Bonaire to think of Phish Phactory and people who think of Phish Phactory to think of Bonaire."

The Phish Phactory is only on Bonaire but more and more people will know it very soon with the new web-

site and online store.

Phish Phactory bags will be at the cruise market on all cruise ship days. And you'll find Phish Phactory at the Kooyman Christmas Market on December 7 and the Bonaire Christmas Market on December 22. For more information visit Phish Phactory Bags on Facebook and see their ad on *The Reporter* business page 22.

*Story Julie Morgan
Photo Phish Phactory*



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