



Happy Holidays!
Bonaire's Iconic Salt Pier
by Dominique Serafini

What is your holiday wish for Bonaire?

A lot has happened this year with the ever-present threat of climate change, over development, over population, crisis on our reefs and a new government. Bonaire is evolving and changing and everyone has their own ideas and 'wishes' for a better Bonaire. With that in mind, *The Reporter* reached out to a variety of people on Bonaire to voice their true wishes for the island.

To get back to the old time 50 years ago without so many cars, hotels, restaurants. When the life in Bonaire was so quiet - unhurried, unpolluted, unforgettable. Maybe they will realize they are destroying the life on the reef and on land and the only real treasure of the island was the coral reef.

Dominique Serafini

Our Christmas wish for Bonaire is healthy affordable foods for everyone.

Brenda and Phil Shelton

Our holiday wish for Bonaire is a permanent holiday from cruise ships. The polluted ballast, the illegal dumping, the tacky crowds, and the excess traffic on Bonaire.

Mel McCombie and Harris Friedberg

For Christmas, I hope all the fishes 'wishes come true! And I wish the corals a happy, HEALTHY and cool (but not too cool!) New Year!

Lynne Culbreth

My Christmas/Holiday wish for Bonaire is: That all the coral reefs will heal!

Alvin Clemencia

My wish is for folks to remember why they came to Bonaire, why they love Bonaire and act accordingly. Another wish of mine is that we stop saying: "us and the locals." And my last wish is not to overcrowd our lovely little island and respect our nature.

Ria Dokter

I wish prices of food comes back down to realistic levels.

Brian Niessen

My wish is that we all get to the realization that all we need is love and each other... for a better understanding and collaboration amongst the people on Bonaire.

Roderick Beaumont

I would love to see the Dutch give us our island back! I would love to see the Bonairean people prosper!

Laurie Dovale

I wish our island a peaceful connection between all the different cultures and people that live in Bonaire. Share, care and respect to our society.

Angliet Baidjoe

We keep on helping each other and providing as much as possible for all those in need. And help make their dreams possible and give them a little bit of acknowledgement of who they are so they think that their life is worth living.

Izain Mercera

I wish for Bonaire....A Healthy reef, Healthy mangroves, More electric cars, More solar power, Less pollution, Better roads...I hope Santa will listen to me.

Helma

That the trees on Klein Bonaire continue to prosper, and that our reefs can be saved.

Elsmarie Beukenboom

Safe pedestrian, cycle paths, better roads to drive (less accidents), less cruise drama, more parking possibilities, come with a normal reasonable plan to increase wages instead what government now planned for employers (this will make the prices of products dramatically increased so that Bonaire definitely will be unaffordable for all, including tourists).

Nannie van Loo

My Christmas wish for Bonaire is to have Christ's peace in all our hearts and to work and live together with respect.

Sara Matera

My Christmas wish for Bonaire is that the island leadership has the wisdom to restore and maintain the cultural heart and soul of Bonaire and that the newly-arrived learn to respect this island and its people and realize Bonaire is not "theirs."

Jane Disko

Wishing for a healthy and growing mangrove forest so we can enjoy its beauty and other benefits: like being a nursery area, protecting our coast, stocking of carbon to mention a few.

Sabine Engel

The island people of Bonaire can maintain its values and customs. We want a better Bonaire where the people can be happy with affordable homes and food, good roads and of course a good plan to combat poverty.

Geralda Dirksz

To preserve our unique biodiversity, Foundation Save Plantation Bolivia wishes to further enhance the collaboration with the government of Bonaire. The first successful collaboration step has already been taken by discontinuing the preliminary draft of ROB 2023, which allowed for building in Nature and Open Landscape. Happy Holidays!

Wilma Nijland

Optimism, joy, love, kindness, peace, gratitude, health, resilience, prosperity, serenity, harmony, empowerment, compassion, happiness and inspiration. Believe in yourself and always be yourself.

Delno Tromp

Merry Christmas with your loved ones and a Happy New Year in which peace will be acquired and prosperity in balance will be found by all.

Judith Raming

Thank you to artist Dominique Serafini for sharing his beautiful painting with our readers. Dominique is best known for his work onboard the *Calypso* with Jacques Cousteau. He and his partner, underwater photographer Cathy Salisbury, live part time on Bonaire. Next issue we will feature an interview with the couple.

Julie Morgan

Search for container port location rebooted

The former coalition government decided that Bonaire should build a container port, and that it should be located at the WEB site at Hato. At the request of the new OLB that was formed in October 2023, the Central Planning Bureau (CPB) reviewed both decisions. The CPB has raised several objections to the Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) the original decision was based upon. The prevailing opinion on Bonaire and at The Hague is that a new, more thorough, and more realistic social cost benefit analysis must be prepared, one that is supported by better Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs). Then a final decision can be made.

Minister Christianne van der Wal (Nature & Nitrogen) has sent a letter to the House of Representatives that summarizes the issues involved in a lucid and organized way. It is abstracted as follows....



Christianne van der Wal

Currently containers addressed to Bonaire are transshipped through Curaçao's container port. They arrive on Bonaire a few at a time on small vessels. That adds delays, costs, and uncertainties to the island's heavy dependence on imported goods. Therefore Bonaire should consider building its own container port.

The island has four choices. It can decide to continue with the present arrangement. Or it can build its own container port either at the WEB site at Hato, or at the site of the bankrupted Bopec, two locations where maritime traffic and ship landings already take place. Or (not likely) Bonaire can build a container port at an unknown third site yet to be discovered.

Van der Wal says the island's decision should be based on an accurate and complete assessment of the tradeoff between the social and economic benefits to the island and the inevitable damage to nature. For example, the CPB has criticized the earlier CBA for calculating the economic benefits superficially. Receiving goods at our own container port would certainly reduce import costs. But would that help reduce the cost of living on the island, or only increase profit margins for the importers?

As van der Wal points out, the CPB also criticized the earlier CBA for calculating damage to nature only in terms of monetary value. The longer term costs to the society should be considered also.

Van der Wal's conclusion: "If there are no alternatives and there are compelling reasons of public interest for the construction of the cargo port, sufficient nature compensation and mitigation measures will have to be taken based on the EIA."

DMR / Photo credit Martijn Beekman

Is Bonaire corruptly governed or not?

A recent government press release has left journalists puzzled. The release began, "The Hague – Improper use of powers by administrators and civil servants is a common phenomenon on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba." The release cited research results that disclosed "29 investigations into an alleged integrity violation, of which 26 [occurred on] Bonaire." No time frame was given.

Further on, the press release includes a letter from Minister Yeşilgöz and State Secretary Van Huffelen. The letter said, "The researchers have hardly identified any criminal offenses and/or

formal official misconduct and believe that there are no major obstacles to the criminal law approach to integrity violations in the Caribbean Netherlands."

The press release disclosed that in June, 2015, a Law Enforcement Council report on the subject of corruption in the BES Islands recommended further research be conducted. According to the release, "A follow-up investigation by the Council in 2022 found that this recommendation had not been followed." So the study was rebooted in October a year ago, "resulting in the current research report." DMR

Bonaire supports Food Bank for the holidays

At a time when people are preparing to celebrate the holidays by feasting, inflation has driven up the cost of food and more islanders are depending on help from Food Bank Bonaire to feed their families. The food bank is asking shoppers to purchase more food than they need and donate their surplus at the collection points set up in the supermarkets.

Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Service (LVV) has initiated a project, "Food production for the Food Bank," and has begun supplying the food bank with locally grown vegetables. DMR

Bonaire and St. Eustatius still waiting for lieutenant governors

Bonaire and St. Eustatius both submitted their nominations for lieutenant governor last summer. The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Affairs (BZK) has not yet approved either nomination.

The online news source Bonaire.nu reports that it queried the Ministry about the delay. The ministry's response was, "As soon as the appointment is finalized, this will be communicated from The Hague." DMR

Hospital has two bigger, better ambulances

Fundashon Mariadal is training emergency response staff how to operate two recently delivered ambulances it will put in service in January. The new ambulances are large enough to transport two patients, even three in some circumstances. DMR

EU giving STINAPA money for Washington Slagbaai water management

STINAPA will receive 120,000 euros from the European Green Overseas Program (GO) to develop a water management plan for Washington Slagbaai National Park.

The money will be used in part to hire water management experts to make plans to reduce erosion in the park and prevent flooding. During heavy rainfall uncontrolled run-off is the sea can damage coral in the marine park. A system for collecting rainwater to irrigate reforestation projects is also being considered.

The subsidy application was supervised by the International Desk, part of the governor's office. The desk, headed by former Lieutenant Governor Edison Rijna, recently announced that the European Union has selected the BES Islands for its '30 for 2030' project. The EU will intensively support 30 islands around to world as they work to achieve fully sustainable energy by 2030. The BES Islands are the only Caribbean representative included in the project. DMR

Echo Foundation announces new board

The board of Echo Foundation, protector of the parrots and restorer of dry forest habitats on Bonaire, has three new members: Rachel Domacassé, President; Rayshantaly Coffie, Secretary; and Marialucía de Palm, Treasurer.

In addition to continuing Lora rescues, forest rehabilitation, and guided nature tours at the Dos Pos Conservation Center, Echo will pilot a curriculum for Wildlife Guardians that includes afterschool programs and Summer Camps. DMR

The REPORTER

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The REPORTER

HAS A NEW NUMBER

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Real Artisan Bakery opens



(L-R) Owner Payam Elhami and Richard Willis at work. Photo Julie Morgan

If you're a bread lover, you'll be excited to hear of the new artisan bread shop right here on Bonaire. For the last year, bread lovers have frequented Onnie's Market on Saturdays to pick up specialty breads from baker Payam Elhami. He's been away from the market since September working to bring his healthy and tasty breads to even more people with Artisan Bakery Bonaire that opened December 13.

Payam, originally from Iran, moved to Bonaire in September 2022 with his girlfriend to escape the grey and rainy days of the Netherlands.

Payam said, "I had never been to Bonaire, but I knew I wanted a change. I grew up in a sunny place and I'm happy to be here. Since I've been here, I have way more energy. I love the diversity of the island, the Americans, the Dutch, Latinos. The diversity is something that has made me happy."

Payam is a data analyst, but baking has always been a hobby. He would rely on baking when things got a little rough in life. Payam learned to bake at the age of five from his mother. She was known as Aunt Betty and was famous for her cookies, cakes and bread throughout the

neighborhood. Payam plans to name a cookie after her.

"My baking intensified after she passed from cancer in 2016. It affected my life, and I came to peace with this horrible thing through baking."

While still working as a data analyst part time, he began working at a bakery in Amsterdam to fulfill his need to bake. He eventually moved on, quit the analyst job and was hired at the biggest plant based bakery in Amsterdam, Saint Jean. He learned even more about baking and became more and more serious about it. Payam developed his own system of baking and to this day Saint Jean is still using his recipes.

He was surprised so few people on Bonaire knew about artisan bread. If you are unsure, here's the definition: artisan or artisanal bread is made with higher quality ingredients; organic flour, natural leavening, no additives or preservatives and it's made by hand, and besides all that, it's healthier and tastes wonderful.

After coming to Bonaire Payam was still working as a data analyst but wanted to bake. He met Elise Arrindel-Weerstand of Sweeti Bakery and was surprised how nice and open she was.

"I worked at Sweeti Bakery with Elise a little bit and we did the Delphin's Christmas market and Kooyman market mixing up our products. People really engaged. We defined the project at On-

nie's Market and I started working there in January. I met so many people at the market and some of them are friends now," said Payam.

Artisan Bakery Bonaire will have a zero-waste concept, just like Saint Jean, to throw out as little as possible, so nothing goes in the garbage. Another thing Payam learned as Saint Jean's head baker was about new pastry and sweet breads of which he is very proud. Artisan Bakery customers can expect to see plenty of sweets around the Christmas holidays.

Artisan Bakery will offer two types of sour dough bread: country loaf and seeded loaf with oats, linseed, poppy, sesame and pumpkin seed.

Artisan Bakery to page 9



Payam's Country Loaf Sour Dough
Photo Julie Morgan

FOR SALE! Grand Windsock Resort Villas & Apartments



The modern Grand Windsock Resort features a variety of facilities. Like a swimming pool, a restaurant and a dive shop. Across the street is a beautiful beach bar, with shaded sunbeds and direct access to the Caribbean Sea. At the moment we have several villas and apartments for sale.

Contact our agent Ronaldo de Moree for more information or a showing!



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Traditions of Christmas



December 25th is approaching and cooks are planning their holiday feast. They scan the pages of cookbooks, their favorite food magazines or they tirelessly search on line for the latest dish or sweet. Some struggle to decide if this is the year for a herb encrusted standing rib roast or an orange scented roast goose instead of staying with the family favorite of brown sugar honey ham with pineapple and maraschino cherries. And, of course, some cooks will forego the expected. They will surprise everyone with a pomegranate and rosemary baked salmon or maybe an epic veggie lasagna will take center stage.

Ask anyone, they will tell you of a holiday favorite that must be served or “it just won’t be Christmas dinner.”

My father’s holiday favorites came from Czechoslovakia. When we went to grannie’s house egg noodles were always drying over the backs of the kitchen chairs. The whole house was filled with the aromas of vanilla, sugar and spices. The kolaches were almost done and the rolled poppyseed cake had already been iced. Christmas dinner was a whole roast turkey, cornbread stuffing, buttery mashed potatoes, au gratin brussels sprouts, beet salad, orange and fennel salad and more.

My mother’s family brought German foods and traditions. My grandmom, great grandma and my great aunts would be busy in the kitchen. I always knew there would be coffee cans filled with pfeffernusse, lebkuchen, spritzgebäck, walnut shortbread and spitzbuben cookies. And Christmas wasn’t Christmas without warm apple strudel, gingerbread

cookies, cakes and, of course, christstollen. Baked ham took center stage for dinner. Side dishes were endless as all the family brought their coveted casserole, salad, pickles, fresh baked breads. It was truly a feast for the kings.

Bonaire’s residents come from Africa, Asia, the Americas, the Caribbean and Europe – all corners of the world, in fact. What a bounty of choice. Some Latin favorites are the Spanish empanadas, the Colombian pan-debonos and aborrajados, the Puerto Rican pernil, the Venezuelan hallacas. Also popular is stewed goat with curry served with rice and peas and island style croquettes with curry and hints of clove. Or try the locally caught fish: mahi, snapper and maybe even lionfish. Fresh tuna will be served: grilled, seared, tartar, sashimi or ceviche. And it is almost certain that deviled eggs and potato salad will be an intricate part of the meal.

Some Dutch traditions include gourmetten - a hot plate with small pans where diners prepare small bites of meats and veggies. Game such as rabbit, venison, partridge is popular for the holiday meal along with stewed fruits. Banketstaaf kerststol, kerstkransjes and jan hagel are just a few of the popular cookies. No doubt if cocktails are served you will find bitterballen, kroketten, filet americain, beef carpaccio, egg salad, tuna salad, chicken salad. A nice cheese board is also a must.

The joyous part of this holiday season is the gathering of friends and family. Here on Bonaire we can enjoy the rich culture and tastes all the people of the island offer.

Paul Cizek

Cilantro Pesto

by Chef Corjan Hoogerheide
Lekker Thuis

1 bunch cilantro banana
(Mexican coriander)
50 G (1/4 C) cashew nuts
200 G (1 C) olive oil
2 cloves garlic
50 G (1/2 C) feta cheese
15 G (1/2 C) grated parmesan
Freshly ground pepper
Some Bonaire sea salt



Grind all the ingredients in the food processor until almost finely, leaving some pieces visible so you can see what’s in them. Serve as a spread with bread or delicious with fish, meat or vegetarian dishes

Chef Corjan Hoogerheide of Lekker Thuis shares the recipe for one of his personal dishes created from Bonaire’s fresh ingredients.

All kids deserve a Pasku Briante ‘Bright Christmas’



Sun Rental manager Ren’ee Oost and Angelo Alberto of BYOF at the Sun Rental Giving Tree

For the 24th year Bonaire Youth Outreach Foundation, BYOF, is working to bring the less fortunate children of Bonaire a Pasku Briante - Bright Christmas. But as always, this can only be done with your help. Together with Sun Rentals, a lot of gifts have already been collected, but more are needed.

Every year some 100 people from all over the island, young people, parents and others work to make Pasku Briante possible. They wrap gifts, collect donations, make deliveries and help out at the actual gift giving celebration. This year that special day is on December 23 and preparations are underway.

Angelo Alberto of BYOF said, “It’s a lot of work, but when you have that moment when they open their gift and see their face light up, It’s so worth it.”

This year Pasku Briante will pick up the invited kids by bus from various Bonaire Centro di Barios and take them to the event.

The kids, age 2-12 are nominated by the schools by age and gender and BYOF sends out the invitations. If you would like to nominate a particular child then please contact Angelo (info below).

If you would like to donate a gift please keep within these parameters: toys, hygiene products, small clothing items, school supplies and sports equipment. The age groups are 2-4, 5-8 and 9-12. Please do not gift any violent or war type

toys. Gifts should be about \$20 in price. Donations are not limited to just one gift but please keep the price at \$20 so all the kids get about the same price gift. Donations will be accepted till December 22.

On the big day, the kids will play games led by the volunteers, have snacks and drinks and enjoy a presentation of the drum band, a dance performance and singing. Everyone will join in the dancing and end the festivities by singing Feliz Navidad before receiving their gifts.

Angelo said, “We hope Santa Claus will make an appearance if he’s not too busy getting ready for Christmas. All kids deserve to have a nice Christmas.”

If you would like to donate a gift or monetary donation, contact Angelo Alberto or drop by Sun Rental. Bank information for donations directly to the account is:

Account: 01.0608.909
Bank: MCB (Bonaire) N.V.
Address: Kaya Gob. N. Debrot 64
Name: Bonaire Youth Outreach Foundation
SWIFT: MCBKBQBN

Pasku Briante still needs volunteers for the big day so if you would like help

Email Angelo: angelo.mediabonaire.com, call +599-787-3407 or send a message through the Facebook page Pasku Briante - Bright Christmas. Sun Rental is at 65 Kaya Grandi, open for your donations M-F 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Sat. 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

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.

Preserving Nature on Land for Coral's Survival

Late October 2023, a new executive council assumed leadership on Bonaire. One of its initial actions was to discontinue work on the preliminary draft Spatial Development Plan 2023 (ROB2023). The decision to halt ROB2023 was driven by concerns about the potential for unchecked housing development in Nature and Open landscapes. The executive council aims to embark on a new Spatial Development Plan once the foundational prerequisites are addressed.

Bonaire is home to a diverse array of unique and often endangered animal and plant species, enjoying protection at various levels—locally, nationally, and internationally. It is imperative that this protection is ingrained into upcoming spatial



development plans in a legally binding manner. This strategic integration is pivotal as the effective preservation of the rural ecosystem provides the bedrock for conserving marine nature, particularly the delicate coral reefs along the coast. The vulnerability of coral reefs to land-

based pollution emphasizes the critical nature of robust terrestrial protection. Without fortified safeguards on land, initiatives to protect and rejuvenate marine life are likely to yield suboptimal results.

A holistic, integrated approach that extends protection to both terrestrial and marine environments is essential for the sustainable conservation of natural diversity in and around Bonaire. Moreover, nature serves as a fundamental pillar for the local economy, stressing the urgent need to guarantee adequate protection of the environment and nature for the well-being of both current and future generations. This underscores the interconnectedness of environmental stewardship, economic resilience, and the overall prosperity of the community.

Foundation Save Plantation Biolivia

Ask Bob

Bonaire real estate advice



It's the end of the year and I have a question about taxes. I own a house on Bonaire that I rent out when I am there, do I have to pay Bonaire taxes on the rental income?

John from Jersey

John, that's a good question.

Bonaire doesn't charge any local tax or local income tax on rental income you earn from a property on Bonaire. Bonaire also doesn't charge any tax on the profit from when you sell your Bonaire house, if you sell it for more than you purchased it for.

If you are a US citizen you may need to pay taxes on your rental income. The tax rules that apply are almost the same as if you owned income or vacation property in the US. Everyone's tax situation is different, so I suggest that you contact your tax advisor about the specific tax rates and rules that may apply to your situation.

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

ISLAND NEWS in BRIEF continued

Climate Impact Atlas published for Bonaire



The Climate Adaption Services (CAS) foundation has published the first Climate Impact Atlas for Bonaire. The atlas shows the initial consequences of climate change predicted for Bonaire, such as the flood risks under different scenarios. The maps in the atlas confirm that the coastline on the south side of the island will be inundated, even under the most optimistic scenario. Local and national government, policy makers and planners, NGOs and concerned citizens can use the atlas to help create responses to the climate change crisis.

Sint Eustatius and Saba will have their own climate effect atlases too. DMR.. Photo CAS

We're going to get our pictures taken

During December and January each of the BES Islands will be thoroughly photographed from the air. The collected aerial photos will be used to create a register for each island that shows the precise locations of addresses and buildings.

Elevation maps will also be created that will help visualize infrastructure, make better permitting decisions, and provide data for research and market analysis. The three OLBs are even hoping to find lost historic structures hidden away in the bush.

The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations is funding the project. DMR (Bonaire.nu)

Rotarally a great success

On the rainiest day of the year, the Rotary Club Bonaire (RCB) organized the famous Rotarally. Not deterred by the weather forecast, 155 participants in 49 teams appeared at the start at the sports hall December 10. Ready for an adventurous ride over mostly unpaved roads.

The puzzle ride was not easy. Alternately grumbling and then laughing, the participants enjoyed the muddy ride. Especially the route to the finish, the kunuku of Edison Rijna, required an adventurous spirit from the participants.

The real diehards arrived late, so the awards ceremony came later than planned. Below are the winning teams.

The pleasant afterparty, with a tasty meal and of course ice cold beer, wine and soft drinks, provided an animated end

to an exciting day. In closing remarks, the Rally Committee thanked the participants and sponsors for their contribution to a successful event.

The Rotary Club is also indebted to Herbert de Jong, who provided the atmospheric lunch venue Rancho Acapulco and Edison Rijna who made his kunuku available for the afterparty. In particular, the RCB board would like to thank committee members André Lendering and Greory Obersi for the hard work they put into organizing this rally. Thanks also to the many club members and volunteers who actively supported this day.

With the proceeds of this event, the RCB broadly supports social causes on Bonaire.

Rotary Club Bonaire



An inspector from the Supervision and Enforcement Directorate gathers data regarding compliance with the OLB's prices for the basic basket.

POLICE REPORT

Property Crime

Dec. 14. A dark blue Toyota car, model Avensis with license plate B-9263, was stolen when it was parked in front of a house on Kaya Sirena. The car was closed but not locked and the key was in the vehicle. During the night around 12:20 p.m., residents heard knocking on their windows. When they went to investigate, they saw an unknown person trying to open the car. The moment they went outside, the suspect started the car and drove away.

Have you seen the vehicle mentioned or do you know more about this case? Then call 911 or the anonymous tip line 9310.

Dec. 10. A black Street sports bag containing, among other things, several sets of keys, a USB stick, a Samsung S-10 mobile phone, a wallet with contents, a remote control to a Toyota car and a Candyskull headset. The sports bag, which was attached to a motorcycle luggage rack, fell off while the motorcycle was moving. After a search on the same route, the bag was not found.

Dec. 8/9. A black/blue Yamaha Quad, type Raptor 700 with license plate B-12706, was stolen between Friday, around 8:45 p.m. and Saturday, 11 a.m. It was parked in front of an apartment complex on Kaya Dr. Jose G. Hernandez.

Dec. 7. Thieves broke into a home on Kaya Dr. Jose Girigorio and took, among other things, a Samsung mobile phone, a High Sence 32-inch television, an iron, two speakers, two pairs of Nike shoes and several bottles of perfume.

Between Dec. 6/7. A black mountain bike was stolen from a balcony of a house in Amboina.

Dec. 6. At a tourist accommodation on Bulevar Gobernador Nicolas Debrot, a wallet containing several cards and cash was stolen from a bag in a car when the driver briefly got out of the car.

Arrests

Using anonymous tip line 9310 produces results

Dec. 13. In the evening hours a check took place at a restaurant on Kaya Monseigneur Nieuwindt. A lady, 32, was arrested for violation of the BES Opium Act. A car was also seized for further investigation. This check was carried out following several reports about noise pollution, drug sales, drug use and gatherings that were received on the anonymous tip line 9310.

When you call 9310 you will get an answering machine on the line that will record your message. You remain completely anonymous. Your message will then be

listened to later by an employee, after which the options for taking action will be assessed.

In case of emergency or red-handed situations, always call 911 or 112. Call 911 or 112 if help is needed in immediately life-threatening situations. Also when you notice suspicious behavior or witness a crime. Or, for example, after a traffic accident, in the event of a fire or when someone breaks in. Then every second counts.

Driving under the influence

Dec. 9. Around 11:45 p.m., a man, 50, was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. When the officers were responding to a report on Kaminda di Lac, they saw a man trying to drive his vehicle through a gully. Because this did not work, the vehicle rolled backwards again. The driver was asked several times to cooperate with a breath test but refused. The suspect was arrested at that time for driving under the influence of alcohol. The suspect's car was taken into custody and his driver's license was confiscated.

Dec. 7. A scooter crashed into the car on Kaya Andres A. Emerenciana. The man, 32, driving the scooter had no driver's license, no valid insurance documents and his ID had expired. After a breath analysis test he was arrested for diving under the influence. The scooter was taken to the police station for safekeeping.

Traffic accidents

Dec. 10. Around 7 p.m. two scooters were spotted by a patrol on Kaya Monseigneur Nieuwindt. One person rode each scooter. Neither scooter had a fairing or license plate. When the drivers saw the police, one increased his speed and didn't obey police stop signs. On Kaya Huallaga, after the patrol blocked the scooter, the driver fled on foot towards Kaya Monseigneur Nieuwindt. The suspect was recognized by the patrol. The scooter he left behind and his shoes were confiscated.

Dec. 9. Around 9:05 a.m. a three-vehicle collision occurred at Kaminda Lagun. Car 1 was traveling on Kaminda Lagun towards Lagun and turned onto the road. Car 2, which was approaching from the opposite direction, swerved, but still collided with car 1. Car 2 then collided with a parked car along the road. The driver of one of the cars was injured and was checked on site by ambulance personnel. The driver of car 2 was ticketed because he could not show a valid driver's license.

Dec. 7. Around 11:25 p.m. two cars collided on Kaya Korona. All three people were involved were taken by ambulance to the hospital. No one could explain how the collision had occurred.

Traffic violations

Between Dec. 11 and 13. During routine traffic checks tickets were issued for driving without: valid insurance 2x; a valid driver's license 3x; a seat belt on 2x; a helmet 5x. Tickets were also issued for: for driving in a prohibited direction 2x; and driving with a defective headlight 2x.

Dec. 12. During a planned traffic stop on Bulevar Gobernador N. Debrot 50 vehicles were checked, of which 44 drivers were fined. The fines were for driving without: valid insurance 5x; a valid driver's license 7x; and a seat belt on 21x; and also for holding a phone while driving 11x. Later in the afternoon, a planned traffic control was also held on Kaya Industria. During this inspection, drivers were fined for driving without: valid insurance 2x; a seat belt on 4x; an a valid driver's license 1x.

Dec. 11. In the morning hours police officers together with police aspirants, conducted a planned traffic control on Kaya Internashonal. During this inspection, 75 vehicles were checked, of which 20 drivers were fined for driving without a valid driver's license 5x; valid insurance 8x;and a seat belt on 7x. One car was taken to the police station for safekeeping because the driver could not show a valid driver's license or insurance.

Between Dec. 8 and 11. During routine traffic checks tickets were issued for driving without: valid insurance (1x); a valid driver's license 3x; a seat belt on 7x; a helmet 1x. Tickets were also issued for: for driving in a prohibited direction 4x; for driving with a trailer that is not in order 1x; and for holding a phone while driving 1x.

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

Public safety

Dec. 5. Around 6:30 p.m the central control room received a report about two ladies who went hiking in the area of Dos Pos and got lost. A KPCN (police) patrol and a patrol from STINAPA couldn't find them until they saw light signals coming from the ladies in the distance. Because the area is inaccessible to vehicles, the Coast Guard helicopter was called in and the ladies were taken by helicopter. They were brought to the airport where they were received by KMar personnel. The ambulance arrived on the scene to medically check the ladies after which they could go home.

Dec. 4. The central control room received a report of a gas smell at a catering facility on Kaya Grandi. The fire brigade evacuated the building and asked the police to cordon off the Kaya Grandi for the safety of bystanders. A leak in the air conditioners that had been refilled with gas in the morning was found. The building was ventilated by keeping the windows and doors open. Two employees who felt dizzy were examined on the spot by ambulance personnel. They did not have to go to the hospital.

Make Bonaire Accessible

by Ria Evers-Dokter
Keepsakes.....

Everybody has them. Everybody wants to have things that remind them of a loved one, a favorite person, or an unforgettable day or event. And especially they want them during the holiday season.

We love opening all those boxes that contain the goodies and decorating the house and the tree with ornaments the kids made in kindergarten and the wreath that was crafted. All of these things bring memories that make the decorating so much more fun.

I fondly remember the books we used to get when Christmas was celebrated in church. All kids were seated in the middle of the church, tables decorated with white cloth and halved potatoes wrapped in red crepe paper with a white candle in it. We would drink hot chocolate and eat a big cookie in the shape of a wreath. And then, at the end of the celebration, we all got a book. Being a reader, I saved all my books, to read again and again. But the books disappeared and I have no clue where to, but I never saw them again.

I remember the kitchen utensils I bought before I immigrated to Curaçao. They also disappeared. As goes for the dining table set my husband and I bought before we moved to Bonaire.

Those trinkets and jewelry I inherited from my granny and her sister, I have no clue where they went. Certain pieces I still have and I put them in my bookcase for everybody to enjoy.

But I guess I am not the only one who loses their keepsakes. In a way it is to cry for, but on the other hand, the best keepsakes are the ones you keep in your memories, in your head. The ones that you like to go back to in your mind.

The same goes for all your beloved people in your life. One can save all the clothes and perfumes you want, but if they are not worn by the ones you love, they are worthless.

So, what I learned to do is play a Jimi Hendrix cd and remember how my husband and I danced together. Every chance I get I go to the beach and remember the wonderful morning MiVaBo spent with a group of elderly in beach wheelchairs. I get the book I wrote and read about my granny's favorite recipes and cook them. I get together

with a friend and sit and talk about the great times we had, have lunch with other friends and rekindle our precious friendships. I watch old pictures about Berlin and remember those days I used to live and work there and learn so much about disabilities. I watch the first flight leave Bonaire and remember the awesome weekend we spent in Aruba with a special group of kids of the FKPD. I see people swim and remember the very first time we went to participate in World Summer Games of Special Olympics in Connecticut.

So you see, you do not really need all those keepsakes, because you have them all neatly packed inside your memories.

I want to wish you all very happy memories and holidays.



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.

Shaping Tomorrow's Shores: The Future of Coastal Habitat Restoration

A new partnership between World Wide Fund for Nature – Netherlands (WWF-NL), the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) and Coastal Dynamics will spearhead an initiative to define future conservation and restoration projects within Dutch Caribbean coastal habitats. Centered around mangroves and seagrass beds, this ambitious feasibility study aims to craft a portfolio of forward-looking projects. The objective is to fortify these areas against escalating threats like climate change, pollution, and unsustainable coastal development, ensuring their sustained health and resilience.

The Dutch Caribbean is home to unique island ecosystems facing challenges from overdevelopment, climate change, and other environmental pressures. Coastal ecosystems represent critically important areas, particularly in regards to their biodiversity, climate resilience, and cultural heritage. The proposed feasibility study seeks to bridge gaps in expertise, resources, and collaboration across all six of the Dutch Caribbean islands (Aruba, Curacao, Bonaire, Saba, St. Maarten and St. Eustatius).

Goals

The project will conduct an in-depth feasibility study under the DCNA's Conservation and Restoration of Key Habitats Program. Key components of the study include assessing the current status of mangroves and seagrass beds, stakeholder engagement, and conducting an overall resource assessment.

Nature-Based Solutions

The study will focus on coastal area restoration, specifically targeting mangroves and seagrass beds in collaboration with Dutch Caribbean Park Organizations. The aim is to develop a nature-inclusive approach with nature-based solutions to enhance resilience and sustainability. Overall, this project has two main objectives:

- **Feasibility Study:** Assess the viability of conservation efforts, including technical, financial, and human resource requirements.
- **Knowledge Sharing & Capacity Building:** Present findings, address knowledge gaps, and build capacity among Park Organizations for effective restoration initiatives.

Forward Planning

The feasibility study's success is crucial for creating a comprehensive understanding of coastal habitat conditions, fostering collaboration, and laying the groundwork for future restoration programs. By unifying efforts, the study aims to enhance communication, knowledge sharing, and resource utilization across all six islands.

DCNA



Black Mangrove roots- Photo credit-Henkjan Kievit- SHAPE-DCNA- all rights reserved.jpg



WATER- EN
ENERGIEBEDRIJF
BONAIRE

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Announcement of Amended Terms and Conditions

Water- en Energiebedrijf Bonaire N.V. (WEB) would like to inform you that amended General Terms and Conditions will come into effect as of January 15th, 2024. This change is an essential step for us to continue to improve our service and ensure it remains in line with current standards and expectations.

Where can you find the amended terms and conditions?

The new conditions were made available - exclusively in Dutch - on our website on December 15th 2023. You can find them by navigating to <https://www.webbonaire.com/rates-and-conditions/>.

Do you have any questions or remarks?

We understand that changes can raise questions. Do not hesitate to contact us for more information or answers to your questions. You can reach us at info@webbonaire.com.

let's do it
together

THE BONAIRE REPORTER
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Bonaire welcomes Westjet service

The long awaited first flight from Canada's WestJet airline arrived non-stop from Toronto on December 12, 2023. The airport was filled with local Bonairean/ Canadians, some carrying Canada's flag to welcome to the island

their visiting friends and family (and all others too). Tourism Corporation Bonaire (TCB) and Bonaire International Airport (BIA) held a little ceremony at the airport complete with a cake and drinks to officially welcome the crew, pilot

and WestJet representative. The pilot Captain John Carson received several gifts in the welcome event. Carson was excited to return to Bonaire. He began his pilot's career in Aruba, is an avid diver, and his wife grew up on Bo-

naire. Until April 24, 2024 WestJet will operate one flight weekly, arriving every Tuesday afternoon and departing on Wednesday morning. Photo Julie Morgan

Boarding in Canada, deplaning on Bonaire



Escaping Canada's winter, frequent flyers to Bonaire Margaret and Brett arrive with their son, Daniel, who is feeling Bonaire's tropical breezes for the first time. Photo Julie Morgan

Flying with a baby can be a daunting prospect, but I was thrilled to take WestJet's inaugural direct flight from Canada to Bonaire with my husband and 5 month old son to visit my beloved grandparents.

Though this was baby's first trip to Bonaire, my husband and I have been to the island many times before and were eager to try a new route. Coming from Calgary, Alberta in western Canada, I've traveled to Bonaire via Miami, San Juan, Hous-

ton, New York, Newark and Curaçao, so I was ready to see how this flight stacked up against the rest.

But I wasn't the only one excited about this new route. Before we even boarded the WestJet flight, there was a celebratory tone at the gate. Representatives from Tourism Corporation Bonaire (TCB) and the Toronto Pearson Airport spoke about how pleased they were to be present at this first ever flight from Cana-

da to Bonaire and gave heartfelt speeches about how Canada and Bonaire finally had a direct link. Then they ceremonially snipped a ribbon coloured WestJet teal.

Everyone on the flight was ready to start their vacation. Even though the plane was mostly full, people stayed cheerful. WestJet representatives passed gifts to everyone as they boarded the plane and TCB representatives drew seat numbers for prizes of dinners, excursions and water bottles, which also boosted the mood on the plane. At our arrival we were greeted warmly by Miss Bonaire and youth in traditional dress.

For our part, we were pleased to skip a stop between Canada and Bonaire. Even though we took a red eye flight from Calgary to Toronto, and left home earlier than usual because of traveling with the baby, our door to door journey was shorter than our usual route via Houston, and much shorter than flying via New York or Curaçao.

We touched down 15 minutes early, and were happy as always to see the big waves breaking on the east side of the island and the control tower of the airport. Our son has his first flamingo stamp in his passport, the first of many.

Margaret Herriman

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Youthful chess players compete

Chess club BJSC has held its 2023 Open Championship for Bonaire.

Under 18/Open

Christiaan Smeets, who had a clean score five points in five games, won the title of Champion. Jamil Statia claimed second place (after beating the coach, Mr. Pop, in a dramatic game) and Clé Burgers surprised everybody as a rookie and got the third place.

Under 12/Open - boys

Adrián Fernandes won as Champion with a seven points in seven games. His brother Daniel Fernandes got the second place with 5 points. The third place was claimed by Matthew Wu.

Under 12/Open - girls

In this section there was a great battle between the upcoming stars Amaris Djojopawiro and Minelly Wu who both scored 3.5 points. Finally Amaris was declared champion but in January they will play another battle to see who is the best. Lisa as a rookie took the third place.

The most disciplined player was titled to Jeronimo Lont. Due to different reasons he lost chances to classify for Aruba and to reach a high position in U12. Despite these disappointment, Jeronimo is always helping at the club.

Thanks to all the pupils from the club, parents and Best Brands Bonaire. All the prizes were from the self supporting club due to the contributions of the parents.

The next club day will be on January 11. For the pupils of Liseo the club day is on Friday.

New members are welcome. After extra chess lessons we hope that more pupils will participate in the next tournaments in 2024. They are welcome.

The best wishes for the Christmas Holidays and all the best in the New Year to all the members and parents and the whole community.

Serapio Pop
President and coach of BJSC

Artisan Bakery *continued from page 3*

Payam said, "Sour dough is not the cheapest bread to make. It is a 2-3-day process."

In addition, bread lovers will find focaccia, rolls, croissant, pain au chocolat, brioche, cinnamon croissant, and many more specialty pastries.

But that's not all. There is: fresh granola, Island Preserve Company products and Bonchi Boneiru Coffee.

Looking forward to the new year, the Artisan Bakery will be baking French baguettes, Italian ciabatta, a sour dough dark oat porridge bread and customers will be able to order an American coffee, espresso or cappuccino.

Artisan Bakery refuses to use any plastic but instead the breads will be packaged in compostable paper products. Customers can also bring their own bag.

As much as Payam loves to bake, he can't do it alone. Two days a week he is assisted by Richard Willis and in January a pastry chef trained by Payam will join the team.

Artisan Bakery Bonaire is open Wednesday through Saturday, 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Visit Artisan Bakery Bonaire at Kaya Grandi 67 or contact them at artisanbakerybonaire@gmail.com

Story / Photos Julie Morgan



Parrots and People

Therapy Parrots by "Mel" McCombie

When you fly, you may see people with animals, usually dogs with harnesses advising that they are emotional support or therapy animals. Studies have demonstrated that petting a dog can lower blood pressure, calm anxieties, and help people feel more connected. Sigmund Freud kept his dog in the room with patients because he noticed it helped calm them. But have you ever seen someone with a therapy parrot? In 2016, I read a moving and eye-opening article in the New York Times titled "What Does a Parrot Know About PTSD?" (28 January 2016). It turns out, a lot. Parrots and humans who have suffered can help each other.

In Los Angeles, Serenity Park, a parrot sanctuary, partners with the Veteran's Administration hospital in Los Angeles (the largest in the U.S.) in the first program of its kind, an animal therapy program with parrots. The slightly ironically titled Serenity Park (filled with noisy parrots) takes in birds who have been abused, suffered injuries, or been abandoned. The park also welcomes veterans from the V.A. to help care for the parrots and nurse them back to health. Thousands of veterans have spent time there, helping the birds heal, and in the process, helping themselves.

One veteran said that helping the parrots at Serenity Park helped put her trauma in perspective as she worked with social, intelligent, needy parrots who had suffered a trauma themselves. Lorin Lindner, the psychologist who founded Serenity Park, notes how parrots have the

ability to connect and be close with each other and with human companions. As the Times reported, the transformations Lindner saw in both humans and parrots were pronounced and life-changing, particularly among "treatment-resistant" vets for whom other therapies were not working.

When humans are suffering, particularly from PTSD (post-traumatic stress syndrome), their lives feel like they lack purpose. Humans may cope with drugs, alcohol, or acting out. A human therapist might advise someone to create routines in their lives and focus on daily life. A companion parrot absolutely requires routine to thrive. They need to be up early, offered healthy foods, kept clean and safe, and put to bed in the early evening. And more importantly for therapeutic purposes, a companion parrot requires interaction with their companion human. In the wild, parrots have powerful pair-and-flock bonds. They are hard-wired for social interaction, and without it, they will wane and fail to thrive. Companion parrots must necessarily find that essential social interaction with their human companions. In other words, a companion parrot needs you, not just for food, but for emotional nutrition. Being needed and being able to help someone, whether that someone is a human or a parrot, is life-affirming, rewarding, and deeply significant.

I should say right here that I am not advocating for turning wild parrots into companion parrots. The parrots who are



Chris Diggins, founder of Parrots for Patriots, with Cezar
(from the website, www.parrotsforpatriots.org)

part of the therapy program in Los Angeles were abandoned by their human companions, or so injured that they cannot survive in the wild.

Parrots for Patriots takes another approach to helping veterans with PTSD by offering rescue parrots for adoption by veterans. When veteran Chris Diggins went to pick up a cockatoo whose humans no longer wanted it, he found Cezar in a small cage in a dark garage. Over the next few months of caring for Cezar, Diggins realized that his nightmares had abated, and that Cezar was thriving. In 2015, he was inspired to found Parrots for Patriots, and a parrot rescue in his hometown of Vancouver, Washington. He says he saves parrots at the rescue who then can save veterans who adopt them. I was impressed by the seriousness of their adoption process, the advice they have for human companions, and the screening they give all potential

adoptees. It's rigorous, with the welfare of the parrots front and center. There are even recipes for healthy dishes to make for parrots on the site!

So though parrots don't ask you about your mother, they have the ability to heal human psyches while humans help heal the parrots. It is just another instance of how extraordinary these glorious creatures are. As one veteran cited in the Times article put it, "God is a parrot." They see a reflection of the divine in these special creatures.

See www.parrotsforpatriots.org
<https://lockwoodarc.org/serenity-park>



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

STINAPA's meeting on December 7 on the rezoning of Lac was led by Kalli de Meyer, conservation director for STINAPA assisted by Jessica Johnson, project coordinator Lac Pa Semper and Bonaire National Marine Park manager Judith Raming. Stakeholders in the Lac area were invited to attend and voice their concerns and ideas. The current zoning plan for Lac will be changed and the deadline for any suggestions on the plan needs to be submitted to STINAPA by January 1, 2024. The final plan will be presented at the next Lac Stakeholder meeting in January. .

Lac is currently made up of six zones: Lac is currently made up of six zones: White, Green, Orange, Yellow, Blue and Red. White Zone is an undisturbed nature area with no commercial recreational or research activities allowed without prior authorization by STINAPA. Blue is windsurfing/kayaking Yellow is snorkeling/kayaking Green is guided kayaking Orange is guided snorkeling Red Zone is swimming, snorkeling and general beach recreation.

Johnson said, "After hosting four stakeholder consultations, it became clear that the old zonation did not appropriately reflect the current use of the bay."

The new zoning plan will simplify the zonation, starting with the combination of the orange, red and

yellow zones to create a new "General Recreation" zone. This new zone will be for swimming, snorkeling, kayaking, SUP (Stand Up Paddleboard), and use of the beach.

White Zone remains the same.

Blue Zone is still for windsurf-

ing/kayaking but a part of the north area with sea grass will be removed.

Green Zone allows for guided low-speed watersports: kayaks, SUP (stand up paddleboards) etc. This area could be slightly ex-

panded. Five permits are currently allowed in this space but with the larger area it could be open to more businesses which could be good or bad. This extra space needs to be reviewed by the government to see if the area needs to be capped at five. Currently, operators can only

LAC to be REZONED



New proposed zoning map under consideration for Lac.

Visit this link for more information: <https://forms.gle/LJ9vm1EPsf33UkVG6>.

enter the area for business on a schedule and more operators could cause more scheduling problems and possible harm to wildlife.

Note: there is no zoning for Foiling in the Lac area. A lot of consideration has been taken requiring safety, nature considerations and carrying capacity in the area. Discussions will be held next year. The Marine Park wants to work with the Foiling businesses to find a place that is appropriate. STINAPA maintains that foiling is not appropriate for the Lac area.

The new zoning will include physical lines and marker buoys for each area. The Lac area is internationally protected. The zonation is done by STINAPA but the government makes the policies.

The Bonaire National Marine Park rangers have a presence in the Lac area and a new boat which will be used to conduct regular patrols as well as to aid in habitat projects, such as seagrass and coral restoration. The zonation and projects in the Lac area are funded by Re-sembid.

STINAPA invites your participation and feedback in creating the new Lac zoning plan. A survey and more information can be accessed through this link:

<https://forms.gle/LJ9vm1EPsf33UkVG6>.

The new zoning plan will come into full effect in 2025.

Julie Morgan



Happy Holidays & best wishes for 2024

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Piss and Vinegar

by Gijs Borsten

Cognitive dissonance

I. Travelling around the island, you encounter the weirdest people – tourists mostly, or crusaders (you can tell the difference by their respective obesity) – riding around on the weirdest vehicles. Over the last couple of years, Bonaire has become a testing ground for a number of modes of transport that could be expected to roam the dark side of the moon, or the surface of any planet in our solar system, but not Earth.

The ‘things’ riding around the island, apparently have a common origin. They all have two wheels (of various sizes), a seat, and a set of handlebars, to name the similarities. Although I can’t find a definition that adequately characterizes them, I suppose in English they can be called ‘scooters’ (because they ‘scoot’, or can be ‘scooted’). Trying to avoid putting my fellow-Motherlandish readers on the wrong track, in Eurospeak a scooter being something like a ‘Vespa,’ I appeal to their linguistic flexibility, and, nonetheless call them ‘scooters.’

Anyway, last week, driving South past the airport on a dreary afternoon, I happened to be able to study a scooter-like means of transportation from nearby – I had to stay behind a bunch of them because of heavy oncoming traffic and their erratic swirling. They looked absolutely ridiculous. They moved at about 25kph (16mph), the wheels having the size of a wheelbarrow’s, but about a foot wide.

The riders, wearing helmets as if they were into something extremely dangerous, all looked like they were taking a dump, sitting on a kind of tube sticking out of the rear end of the device, right in front of the rear wheel. Maybe they ran on human excrements. I didn’t check.

They weren’t very fast, whatever propelled them, and I wondered where the riders would spend the night, halfway on their island tour. Apart from the congestion they caused, they looked pretty innocent. They made me think of the nickname the early Vespas had when they first came to Motherland during the fifties: ‘Raceplee,’ Racing Loo, because of the rider’s posture while operating them.

II. A couple of days later I had another encounter, with something which, at first glance, apart from the speed, looked like a bicycle, but wasn’t. The rider was a kid of about fourteen years old, overtaking me with about 60kph (38mph) without moving the pedals (which, IMHO, characterizes the use of a bicycle. Correct me if I’m wrong. Unlike the poop-scooter, it didn’t have a license plate.

Now what’s going on here? Is this something new? I was struck by a feeling of severe cognitive dissonance.

III. Back in the 2000’s, when I was riding my 1958 Solex Oto (proudly manufactured by R.S. Stokvis) down Kaya Korona, I was pulled over by a bunch of police officers, daring to leave their heavily A/C’d automobile, to lecture me on the shortcomings of my poor old front wheel driven moped, and stating that what I did was illegal, because the machine wasn’t equipped with a valid license plate.

For those who never had the opportunity to examine a Solex in detail: It had pedals that you could – and had to – use, especially while negotiating a headwind, or slight inclines, and it had a top speed of 30kph (19mph). It was – at the time - the most sluggish machine on the island.

To cut a long story short: I got away with it, waving my Motherlandish insurance papers and pointing out the tiny plate on the rear fender was still valid. They let me go, telling me (they always do) that next time they would apprehend me without a valid Bonairean license plate, I wouldn’t get away with it.

Which meant, the Solex had to be equipped with a motorcycle license (BF at the time, from BromFiets, that’s why a motorcycle in Papiamentu is still called a Brömer), a motorcycle insurance, and a receipt for road taxes paid. The whole charade for a 1958 49cc Solex, exactly the same as I had had to arrange for my then brand new 1450cc Fat Boy. Those were the days.

But, right now, things have changed.

A scooter, that runs 45kph (28mph) has to be equipped with a license plate, it has to be insured, and road taxes have to be paid. An electrically propelled scooter doing 25kph (15.5mph), has to meet the exact same criteria. That means that a couple of hundred dollars in fixed expenses have to be paid before any of the said machines can hit the road, all affecting the rental fee.

An electrically propelled thing looking like a bicycle doing 60kph (37mph), however, can be used freely, apparently without being bound to a speed limit, without the rider required to have a driver’s license, or without even an age limit being in place. Tell me: What’s the difference that makes these bicycles exempt from all of the requirements all the other two-wheelers have to meet? The pedals? They can’t be. They’re ceremonial.

But the question that concerns me most is: who’s going to be responsible in case of accidents? In Motherland, in case of a bicycle, it’s always the driver of the car. I haven’t been able to find an article in the BES-Wegenverkeerswet that equally attributes responsibility beforehand. Who’s gonna pay?

And what if a minor is riding the machine, a novice in traffic, not being aware of the impact of speed on his or her skull? Who’s going to pay for the funeral?



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.

Tourism 4th Quarter Report

End of year fourth quarter press conference on Bonaire tourism took place December 6 aboard the cruise ship Rhapsody of the Seas.

Participating were Tourism Corporation Bonaire (TCB), Openbaar Lichaam Bonaire (OLB), Bonaire International Airport (BIA), Bonaire Hotel and tourism Association (BONHATA) and the harbour office.

Clark Abraham commissioner of economy representing OLB said, “We have an interest to protect Bonaire for a long time. We need to watch out so in five years, we don’t want to say wow, Bonaire grew too much. We need to stay true to ourselves and try to find our value...Balance is important. Value is important.”

Abraham explained with the tourism master plan there was a goal to build an additional 600 rooms and now there are 1600. He queried, “Why are we not staying with our original plan?”

He stated that there should be a way to involve the local population and that should be the purpose of government. “Are we doing it for the benefit of Bonaire or for some other purpose?”, said Abraham.

Currently the government is working to ‘fix’ the tourist tax rate of \$75. He suggested the tourist tax and nature tax be combined so people pay once. The government is deliberating a taxation revision currently.

Maarten van de Scheer of BIA said, “We are connecting the island with the world.”

BIA is currently served by big airlines: American, Delta, United, TUI, KLM and now WestJet. Interisland flight service comes mostly from Divi Divi, EZAir and Winair. In the last 11 months there has been



(L-R) Clark Abraham, commissioner of economy; Miles Mercera, TCB; Kia-san Silberie, Harbour office/cruise; Veroesjka de Windt, Bonhata; Angelica Cecilia, commissioner of spatial planning and development; Maarten van der Scheer, BIA Photo Julie Morgan

a slight rise is passengers of 3.4 %, a 24.95% rise interisland and a minus in the international column of 5.8% supposedly KLM’s smaller planes and higher ticket prices. An estimated 440,000 passengers are expected to pass through BIA by the end of 2023.

VD Scheer said, “We are focusing on low season as we understand the need for the market in Bonaire.”

The airport arrival belt project was completed, a wastewater facility from planes is in operation, the Ambu-lift for people with reduced mobility is working. And an arrival canopy is under construction for arrivals.

Veroesjka de Windt of Bonhata explained accommodation numbers. Of the 1370 Bonhata member rooms only 12 resorts are reporting. Occupancy needs to be at 70%. Average occupancy rate until November 2023 was 61% down 5% in 2022 and 6% in 2019.

The average daily rate was \$210, a 9%

increase from 2019 which was \$192.

De Windt says the challenge is increased cost of doing business and we need more airlift and marketing.

Kia san Silberie of the harbour office reported from January to November 2023 Bonaire was visited by 143 cruise ships carrying 388,185 visitors. By the end of December, Bonaire will have received 175 cruise ships and an approximate 470,000 cruise visitors. At this time, a scheduled 213 ships are expected to visit Bonaire but agents are still booking.

Changes in 2024 will include the one cruise per day policy which will be officially announced.

Miles Mercera of TCB noted a target of 170k visitors per year or 14k per month.

Mercera said, “Overall our dashboard including the month of November is 155,560. We still need to welcome about 60k more

visitors by the end of December to reach our target.”

Through the airport surveys, TCB learned 50% of passengers’ purpose of visit was vacation. Their average age of 45-64.

Surveys about travelers revealed: 55% are repeat guests; those from the Netherlands stay approximately 12 days while the U.S. stay 8 days; average spending for guest from the Netherlands is \$160 per day while the US is \$301 per day. U.S. guests list their top activity as diving while it is not even in the top five for the Dutch.

People are looking for authentic local cultural activities. They want to talk to the business owner and talk to the locals.

Research shows there are different types of visitors: environmental enthusiastic doer, luxury rejector and seasoned learner or seeker.

Mercera listed TCB’s many projects and accomplishments in 2023 including Bonaire Friends, Signage project and the Innovation Project. TCB attended DEMA, the biggest trade show that Bonaire attends, and the trade show that put Bonaire on the map. He noted for the 31st year Bonaire has won best in shore diving in Scuba diving’s Reader’s Choice Awards. He then stated, our ambition is to diversify and not focus so much on diving.

Editor’s note: Strikingly absent from the words of these tourism heads was any mention of climate change or the state of our reefs. Protecting the environment should be a part of tourism planning, especially on Bonaire with a tourism slogan of ‘It’s in our Nature’jm

Reef Glimpses - Teeth

by Dee Scarr

What do you think about when you're at the dentist? When I'm at the dentist I'm mostly wishing I was a shark, with several rows of replacement teeth on a kind of conveyor belt behind each tooth in use, and no need for a dentist, ever. In fact, according to Wikipedia, some sharks lose as many as 30,000 teeth – or more -- in their lives.

What I didn't know was that sharks aren't the only undersea critters whose teeth replace themselves. It turns out that bony fish, such as barracudas and morays, also have standby teeth, but theirs only grow into place after a tooth is lost – a little like the way our permanent teeth replace our baby teeth, but without the schedule.

I learned something about teeth the day my sweet doggy came home with a dead spotted moray which was not-so-sweet but thank goodness very dried out. It was sad to see, but interesting to inspect. Naturally I began with the mouth, which had the usual scary-looking, sharp teeth. But then, just inside the moray's mouth, I saw another set of teeth!

The moray must have swallowed another moray, tailfirst!

That conclusion was completely WRONG, because I didn't yet know about the pharyngeal jaw possessed by many fishes, definitely including morays. The pharyngeal jaw is an additional jaw, with teeth, in a fish's throat. It inconspicuously helps the fish to swallow whatever it has nibbled or gobbled or sucked down. In most fish it's fixed in position.

The pharyngeal jaw of morays, however, is not fixed in place, it's attached by muscles and the moray can move it. Have you ever watched a moray eat? You'd have seen the moray sort of move its head forwards and backwards. That's its pharyngeal jaw pulling the food in, letting go, biting the food farther forward, pulling back, etc. until the food is completely swallowed. I guess if a moray did eat another moray tailfirst, there would be three jaws!

During my years of fish feeding, I was bitten by a moray only once. I had a piece of fish extended to a green moray when a nearby coney bolted for the food. I used my free hand to wave the coney away at the exact moment the moray had headed for the food, so it bit my forearm. The moray realized its mistake immediately and let go. If, instead, the pharyngeal



The barracuda has all the dentition it needs to intimidate, whether it has all its teeth or not!
Photo Julie Morgan



These grunts used to live in a broken, abandoned fish trap off Playa. When I offered them food, they accepted eagerly -- but they ate very delicately. We called them the "kissing grunts."

jaws had come into play, I'd have been in BIG trouble!

When I researched fish teeth, I found a lot of technical information (Wikipedia) and some simple information at the Florida Museum website. I decided to write about something more personal: how the teeth of various fish work, as seen by a fish-feeder.

Groupers have relatively short teeth, but lots of them. Under normal circumstances, they suck in an entire food item, such as a smaller fish or a crab, and use their teeth to hold onto the prey. On the rare occasions when a grouper bit down on my hand and pulled, it would leave shallow, parallel scrape marks. Eventually, of course, it would spit my hand out. The same is true of scorpionfish.

Sharptail eels felt the same as the groupers when they accidentally grabbed my fingers, but their mouths are smaller and their teeth are much shorter and didn't penetrate my skin. They use their teeth to grab prey (or a piece of fish from someone). If the prey (or gift) is too big for a single bite, snake eels will try different methods to deal with it. When I held onto a piece of fish that was too large for it, a snake eel would most often bite down tightly, then spin on its long axis – very cool to see -- and twist off a bite-sized

piece. Without my holding the food in position, the snake eel would sometimes deliberately bump it into something, to push the food into its mouth. At other times the snake eel would try to use its tail to push while it pulled at the food with its mouth. Sharptail eels, like many other fish, need more than just functional teeth to get their prey!

But oh, how wonderful it would be to have functional teeth for a lifetime! The next time I visit the dentist I won't be so greedy and wish to be a shark. Instead, I'll just wish to be a fish, with a single replacement tooth beneath each regular tooth.

Of course, if wishes came true, I'd have become a fish a long time ago, and my teeth would be perfect.



Dee has been guiding divers on Bonaire since 1982. She's written about her undersea experiences in her books *Touch the Sea*, *The Gentle Sea*, and *Coral's Reef*; in *Dive Training Magazine* from 1990 to 2000, with "Coral Glimpses" in *The Bonaire Reporter*; and now with "Reef Glimpses." through touchthesea.com.



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24 hours of Crossfit supports Bonaire's kids

Six Bonaire Crossfit enthusiasts engaged in a 24 hour marathon of strenuous exercise from 7 a.m. December 9 to 7 a.m. December 10. Their goal was to raise funds for Bonaire's Pasku Briante/ Bright Christmas. (see page 4) The athletes were challenged with a series of strenuous Crossfit exercises including deadlifts, barbell, pullups, planks, pushes, running, biking, rowing and box jump. The competition was held simultaneously in the Netherlands and U.S., and to stay in the competition the team had to do a total of 500 reps per hour. Donations to support the Bonaire team and the cause came from family, colleagues and friends. The team raised close to \$6000 to support Pasku Briante to give Bonaire's children the Christmas they all deserve.

Story/Photo Julie Morgan

Pictured: Ineke Knijp, Helner Hofman Kelly Mettes Jorieke Haahuis, Liselotte van Bonen and Annelike de Graaf.



COMING DECEMBER 30

Nos Zjilea - New Year's Traditions



Since the time of slavery Bonaireans have sung in the streets to tell of the past year's events. In the last moments before the New Year, the house is cleaned and then cleansed with incense to scare away the evil spirits and welcome the New Year. The table is set with a delicacies to share with family and friends.

This Saturday, December 30, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Nos Zjilea will present "New Year's Traditions." Boi Antoin will recall events that occurred in 2023. The renowned singer Rignald "Yonchi" Dortalina will sing his bari song of those events. Panfilo Mercera will explain how to prepare dishes he learned from his grandparents. One specialty is "piska den pekele", a much-loved end-of-year delight that guests will be able to sample.

Housecleaning doesn't just involve mopping and sweeping. Cleansing the house with incense chases away negativity to welcome the New Year and all the good things it brings. Edson Frans will tell us how to prepare our homes to start the year with great positivity.

And of course, the cultural market offers fresh local products, natural juices, herbal teas, delicacies and art. The kitchen opens at 10 a.m. with soups, local Creole dishes, delicious grill and seafood.

Guests will enjoy live musical performances of the "Yom Gaiteros" and the local band "Watapana." Two local comedians Marco "Dudui" Marchena and Maximi "Boeboei" Chirino will perform their stand-up routine.

'Nos Zjilea' is the monthly cultural event of Bonaire, at Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei in Rincon. Entrance is free. For more information, please visit Mangazina di Rei's Facebook fan page,

www.facebook.com/mangazinadirei.

Izain Mercera

Photo: Dancers Monique & Donny Winklaar

Photo credit Julie Morgan

May the star of hope shine
brightly in your heart this holiday
season and guide you to a year
filled with love and joy.

Merry Christmas
and
A BLESSED 2024.



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Follow The Money: Bonaire goes after merchants disrespecting rules

Illegal construction on Bonaire's coast endangers the unique coral. Two Dutch entrepreneurs, Jeroen van Stralen and Willem Schellevis, built artificial beaches without the mandatory authorization. The local government, under former Lieutenant-Governor Edison Rijna, ignored the offences, and let the merchants have their way.

Now, it seems they will no longer get away with their violations. The advisory board, investigating the case, recommends the government of the OLB take action in Ocean Oasis' case.

The refusal of a nature permit for the illegally established beach is the result of a year's long legal fight between Van Stralen and the OLB. If the OLB adopts the recommendation, Van Stralen has to remove the illegally deposited sand.

Whether Van Stralen really has to remove the beach is up to the OLB, recently under a new government, that stated it would work hard 'in order to correct irregularities from the past.'

Until now, the OLB, led by L-G Edison Rijna, long-time failed to enforce existing legislation. It was mainly the nature protectors of STINAPA, that acted against hostile merchants. STINAPA is custodian of Bonaire's Underwater Park and its unique coral reefs. The foundation has a say in the issuance of nature permits for matters that are potentially hazardous to the coral.

STINAPA has objected for years against the unlicensed beach that Van Stralen built, and opposes the retroactive licensing of the project. The deposited sand is known to be hazardous to the coral. The required retaining wall for keeping the sand away from the reef, was too low, and built too close to the sea. According to local legislation the beach couldn't have been licensed in the first place.

Van Stralen insisted he had permission to build the beach, a construction plan from 2001, legitimizing the development. When FTM interrogated him, he couldn't present the permit that should come with the plan. Be-

sides, a separate nature permit had to be issued for the construction of the beach.

After permission was denied in 2021, Van Stralen lodged an objection.

Subsequently, the OLB established an advisory board that recently issued an advice. During the years it took them to write their report, the illegal beach was lying there, without the local government acting against it.

Apart from the 2001 building plan, Van Stralen used other arguments to legitimize his beach, but the advisory board didn't accept those either. Among others, he claimed not to have built a new beach, but simply having moved the sand from an adjacent beach. Pictures supplied by STINAPA, show 'piles of sand', that were spread in a later stage. 'The beach, like it is now, had a different appearance before and during the construction.'

Apart from that, he claimed to have received an assurance from government officials he had permission to build the retaining wall. Even if that would have been true, the officials involved didn't have the mandate to authorize the wall.

Further North, in 2021, Hans Schellevis also built a beach at his Chogogo Resort. It washed into the sea after a couple of rainstorms in late 2022, smothering the coral. He didn't have a permit either. Urged by STINAPA, OLB enforcers imposed a penalty payment of \$1,2m.

Schellevis admittedly started building his beach without the proper authorization, but FTM revealed last year that he had received oral permission from Rijna, who had promised the merchant a permit for his beach, although it didn't comply to STINAPA rules. Rijna, after the FTM publication, had to step down for two weeks, an investigation into his integrity was to be started.

The OLB, however, didn't act, whereupon the Public Attorney, by the end of 2022, started a criminal investigation. The current situation is unclear.

Researchers of Wageningen University found in October 2022, that the sand posed a danger to the coral, washing through the retaining wall. Nevertheless, Schellevis knew to buy time: he convinced Bonaire's court additional research was required. This research will take place later this year.

If the findings are similar to the previous research, Schellevis has to adapt the retaining wall, and replace the foundation underneath, to mitigate the dangers threatening the coral.

No news on the investigation into the integrity of L-G Rijna has materialized yet. Even the Dutch government hasn't acted. Only after the disclosure of FTM last year, the 'Inspectie Leefomgeving en Transport' (ILT) was instructed to assess the building rules on Bonaire.

Their findings were far from friendly: 'Building plans are implemented without authorization, and sometimes on forbidden locations.' Builders get away with those offences because of a culture of fear within the local government: 'Employees of the OLB are instructed to issue permits. During inspections, they are intimidated by their supervisors or Deputies to refrain from enforcing measures.'

Recently, the old government fell. The new coalition shows willingness to protect the environment against merchants ignoring the rules. Because of uncovered structural problems, the government cancelled all mandates to issue permits and laid the authority in the hands of the Island Secretary. The Director in charge of licensing was fired.

An advice of ILT was, to take licensing away from local administrators, and move it to The Hague. The Bonaire government, however, isn't an advocate of giving away local responsibilities. It wants to 'professionalize and demerge' the department, to establish, together with Saba and Statia, a proper environmental authority.

www.ftm.nl

Translation/paraphrase Gijs Borsten

Creating optimal health

by Irene da Cunda Costa

This time of the year....

It comes this time every year. We either audit the past year or make a lot of propositions for the coming one.

I am going to join the tide and audit the columns I have written in the past year. I've related a lot of information about different ways to create wellbeing for ourselves and the ones around us. Optimal health is not only the absence of disease but also the feeling of wellbeing, both emotionally and mentally.

I suggested a lot of ideas in this column, but that doesn't mean we need to do all of them. We wouldn't have the time. The good news is that they are just a menu from which we can pick the ones we like. We can also treat them as "tapas" like in Spanish restaurants, where they serve many small samples of food, so we can try a lot without becoming too full. Depending on your needs, preferences or possibilities, you can always find ways to improve your life, become a better version of yourself and promote wellbeing around you.

If you often find yourself trapped by endless and useless rumination, you may be interested in rereading the articles on irrational beliefs or thinking vs reasoning or pain is inevitable, but suffering is optional. If you have the tendency of feeling a victim of circumstances, you

will benefit from the articles about Epictetus or even go deeper into Stoicism.

If you think you would benefit from improving your respiratory function and taking care of your airways, I wrote articles about breathwork, the Buteyko method and the connection between breathing and stress. If you experience anxiety problems, I wrote an article about how to calm down using different breathing techniques. On a different approach, but connected to breathing, I wrote about the benefits of singing, the importance of nasal breathing, olfactory function, scents and their properties.

The practice of mindfulness should not take extra time from your daily activities. Once you grasp what mindfulness is you only need to bring your awareness to whatever you are doing at that moment; like mindful eating, or being mindful of your body posture, of your emotions or ego traps.

If you think you need to introduce more movement in your life, you can always go to a gym or practice sports. But there are other ways to do this, like dancing, gardening or even cleaning. Remember the study of Ellen Langer and the chambermaids stating that the mindset made the difference in the health benefits. And don't forget that Bonaire is a giant spa available to everybody: sunbathing, ocean immersions, Seru Largu walking, many other walking trails, all these with the added benefit of being in close contact with nature. No other spa can offer all that.

Yoga is also available in many places on the island. If you think yoga is for you, you can find the practice that

suits you by trying different instructors until you find the one who fills your needs.

Art and creativity are also ways to create wellbeing. You can explore mandala painting, dancing, singing and other forms of art.

Diet is not only what we eat, but also when we eat and how we eat. Having this in mind I wrote about restrictive eating, also called intermittent fasting and about mindful eating.

And last, but not least, the importance of your focus and your attitude. You can create your own blue zone, with all the wellness you need to live a fulfilled life right here on Bonaire if you focus on the right things and cultivate a positive attitude. Reality perception is subject to our filters. We know this from the stoics, so choosing a filter that favors realistic optimism will promote wellbeing, no matter what. In the end, we are all heading in the same direction, to the same destination and at the same speed, although some will make it sooner than others. The important thing is how we get there and what happens on the way.



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

What's Happening

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

Arts & Crafts Market in Wilhelmina Plaza. Weekly schedule can be found at: <https://www.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/terrarmuseumbonaire/>

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

Washington Slagbaai Park: Open Tues. - Sun.. 8-5 (entry to 2:30 p.m.) \$40 (Free with Nature tag)

Open now July 2023 - July 2024	Terramar Slavery Exhibition: WE ARE Monday - Saturday 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Friday, December 22	Christmas Shopping Night - 6 - 9 p.m. Evening shopping in downtown Bonaire. Festival di Bario - 6 - 11 p.m. Wihelmina Park. See page 17
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. See page 17.
Sunday, December 31	Oliebollen fun race - The last mountain bike race of the year is the FREE De Freewieler Oliebollen fun ride 3:30 p.m. See page 17. New Year's Eve - The Island celebrates with pagara (fireworks). Some hotels throw special parties.
2024 Monday, January 1,	New Year's Day - Public Holiday. Most government offices and businesses are closed. Maskarada - 10 a.m. to noon (approximately). Outside SKAL
Open now Dec. 16, 2023 - Jan. 7, 2024	Renske Herder Exhibition "Poco Poco" At Sobremesa, Kas di Arte, Abraham Boulevard. See Below
Saturday, January 20	Pop-Up Artist – Gabrielle Wilson at MoltenWolf Glass – In the store 9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Saturday, January 27	Annual Parrot Roost Count from 6 - 8 a.m. Volunteers are always welcome to help count Bonaire's parrots. 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, January 28	Ride for the Roses January 28. Ride, Walk, Swim or Sail to support the fight against cancer. See page 6.
Monday, January 31	Open Bonaire Bridge Championship 2024. Participants can register via the email address bridgeclubbonaire@gmail.com .

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, Jan. 14	Clean Coast Bonaire. 4-6 p.m. Boka Onima. Donate your time. Work as a citizen scientist to collect marine litter & data. https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=clean%20coast%20bonaire
Sunday, Jan. 21	STCB fishing line cleanup. North pier.



Renske Herder is a multidisciplinary artist and designer. She works in the fields of textile design, collage, graphic art and painting.

Poco poco, which best translates to 'take it easy' is an expo full of beautiful colors, women (and some men) caught in contemplative, tranquil moments. Renske's graphic roots are clearly visible as almost every canvas explores the combination of realistic figures with abstract textile and quilting patterns.

www.renskeherder.nl

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 Inglaterra.

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

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

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

Shopping Night. 6-9 p.m. The streets come alive 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: 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 20	<i>RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS</i>	0800-1800	North	2417
	<i>INSIGNIA</i>	1300-2200	North	702
Sat. December 21	<i>MARELLA DISCOVERY</i>	0630-1300	North	2074
Sat. December 22	<i>NIEUW STATENDAM</i>	0730-2000	South	3152
Sat. December 23	<i>STAR PRIDE</i>	0830-1800	North	312
Mon. December 25	<i>AIDAPERLA</i>	0830-1800	South	3286
Tues. December 26	<i>RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS</i>	0800-1800	North	2417
	<i>CARNIVAL HORIZON</i>	0900-2300	South	4683
Wed. December 27	<i>AIDADIVA</i>	0600-1800	North	2500
Thurs. December 28	<i>STAR PRIDE</i>	1330-2200	North	312
Fri. December 29	<i>CELEBRITY BEYOND</i>	0700-2200	South	3260
2024				
Tues. January 2	<i>GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS</i>	0700-1800	North	2440
Wed. January 3	<i>RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS</i>	0800-1800	North	2417
	<i>ENCHANTED PRINCESS</i>	1200-2000	South	3660
Thurs. January 4	<i>NORWEGIAN VIVA</i>	0600-1300	South	3300
Sun. January 7	<i>MARELLA DISCOVERY</i>	0830-1900	North	2074
Mon. January 8	<i>NORWEGIAN PEARL</i>	0600-1400	North	3130
	<i>AIDAPERLA</i>	0830-1800	South	3286
Tues. January 9	<i>RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS</i>	0830-1800	North	2417
	<i>CARNIVAL HORIZON</i>	0900-2300	South	4683



Photo Julie Morgan

Elisabeth Vos' Tennisschool Vos ended 2023 with a parent and child doubles tournament and award ceremony on December 16. At the end-of-year ceremony Vos handed out training diplomas and awards. The young players, age 4 -12, joined forces with their parents in the doubles tournament to create 21 teams. Winners of four different playing strengths were: Red Ball - Sharen Chen, Orange Ball - Francisco Zavala Crespo, Green Ball - Suen Chen and Yellow Ball - Chris Wu. Participating students have trained with Vos for six months to three years. In addition to teaching in her own school Vos coaches for the Bonaire Tennis Association.

Photo: Elisabeth Vos, Rudra Khushalani, Sharlina Felida, Yanli Chen, Jesper Chen, Nelson Haiyan, Kees Grotewal, Enson Haiyan, Marie Louise BalbordaRyan Chen, Jayden Xu, Elvis Liang, Sharen Chen, Francisco Zavala Crespo, Xianae Leitoe, Alena and Alexa Serberie, Anthony Halman

Closing out 2023 with the Oliebollen Funrace

The last mountain bike race of 2023 on Bonaire is the famous **FREE** De Freewieler Oliebollen fun ride sponsored by Xtreme Sports Bonaire. It starts at 3:30 p.m. from Te Amo.

The Fun route is 25 km
The Elite route is 40 km

At the end of the ride delicious olibollen and appelflappen and refreshing drinks await the bikers! Sign up early at de Freewieler or 30 minutes before at TeAmo. Helmets required.

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Photo Julie Morgan

Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB) held its final fishing line cleanup for 2023 on December 10. A total of 33 divers recovered enough discarded fishing line around the north pier to fill a large washtub. In addition to the line, divers found 30 aluminum cans, nine hats and even a pair of binoculars. Fishing line is especially detrimental to turtles as they can become entangled or ingest the line causing congestion and death. The next STCB cleanup will be January 21 at the north pier. Visit STCB on Facebook for more information. JM



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tandprothetischepraktijkBONAIRE

The fireworks season is about to begin. It is one of the busiest times at Animal Shelter Bonaire with intake of many dogs and cats found wandering and scared. While humans delight in the dazzling displays, many animals are lost, seriously injured, even killed, during this time of year so here are some tips to keep your pets safe.

- Walk your dogs during daylight hours to avoid times when fireworks are likely
- **KEEP YOUR PETS INSIDE WHEN FIREWORKS ARE BEING SET OFF**
- Close windows and curtains to muffle the sound of fireworks
- Put on some music or tv to mask the firework sounds
- Prepare a quiet space or hiding place for your pet where it can feel safe and comfortable – perhaps under a bed with some of your old clothes. They may like to hide there when the fireworks start.
- Ensure your pet is wearing some form of easily readable identification – even in the house. They should have at least a collar and tag with a phone number. Best solution is to have them microchipped.

Shelter News

Time to prepare for “Fireworks Season”

- Let your pet pace around, whine, meow and hide in a corner if they want to. Do not try to coax them out – it is just trying to find safety, and should not be disturbed.
- Stay calm, act normally and give lots of praise for calm behavior. It's OK to cuddle and stroke your pet if it helps them relax, but if they prefer to hide under your bed, then let them do this instead
- Avoid leaving your pet alone during such potentially upsetting events. If you do have to leave the house, do not get angry with your pet if you find they have been destructive or toileted after being left on its own. Shouting at a frightened pet will



- only make them more stressed.
- Pets are likely to drink more when they are worried, so fill their water bowl up to the brim. BEST TIP: Include Florence Ditlow's Pet Stress Remedy in their water bowl. Available at Animal Shelter Bonaire, DA Drogist or Just 4 Pet. The Remedy should be started now and continued through the fireworks season. Add just a few drops every time you fill their water bowls, or put a few drops on one paw each day.
- Seek veterinary advice if you feel your pet needs a prescription calming medicine. **DO NOT GIVE YOUR PET ANYTHING THAT IS NOT PRESCRIBED BY A VETERINARIAN EXCEPT FOR RESCUE REMEDY.**
- Never take your dog to a fireworks display.
- Do not throw or set off fireworks when your pet or other pets are in the vicinity. Dogs that may not be afraid of the noise of fireworks may likely chase what you throw or be curious. This is how many dogs on the island have been seriously injured or killed.

Jane Disko



Danger

My name is Danger alias Snowflake. I'm a healthy boy of about 3 years old.

Your first impression of me might scare you away. My whole life I have been misunderstood, and that's why I give mixed signals. I bark a lot because I'm actually very happy to see you and can't wait to cuddle and play with you.

It will take a little time before I trust

you, but when I do, I will be the most loyal friend you ever had.

And then you will discover that I love belly rubs and rope pulling.

What I really like is to be washed and groomed. I just love the attention.

I'm looking for a stable person who has experience with dogs. I need my person to be my guide in life, the true meaning of love.

With kids I'm good but I will be at my best when they are a little older and not afraid of dogs.

I know in Bonaire we don't have snow, but I could be your very own White Christmas after all.

Come and meet me, but please remember that I will bark at our first meeting. If you don't give up and aren't scared away, I will be the best boy you could ever wish for. *Sanne Attevelt*

This time I want to introduce you to Odette.

We don't know exactly how old Odette is but she falls into the senior or mature category. Most of the time people are looking for a kitten or young cat but there are a lot of reasons to adopt an older cat.

The personality of an older cat is already known and this makes it easier to match you with the right cat.

Older cats are generally less demanding than youngsters and need less supervision.

A senior cat is unlikely to leap up on your shelves and knock your ornaments off, or climb up your curtains.

And last but by no means least, mature cats are so grateful to have found a loving home again, they will repay your love tenfold!

We estimate that Odette is 6-7 years old. She tested negative for FIV/L, has had all her vaccinations and she is ster-



Odette

ilized.

Odette is very talkative and loves to be cuddled. When you cuddle her she will curl up. She's a sweetheart and deserves a good home. Are you the person that's going to give her the home and love she deserves? *Monique Degenaar*

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



A Garden? Just Do It!

by Angliet, Nature Lover

Christmas

Here it is, the most popular time of the year. The Christmas season is full of joy and happiness, with dear family and friends, gifts, holiday music, great dinners and cool things to check off the bucket list. The year is behind us, full of memories with some ups and downs we will never forget.

The inspiration.

I've wondered a while what I should write in this holiday edition. I was looking for ideas and then in mid-November a friend and I were passing the Piedra Pretu seashore and there was a beautiful creative Christmas tree made from driftwood on the beach. Simple as it is, it had a huge impact on me and inspired me to take its beautiful simplicity into my Christmas story.

Christmas is the story of a baby born in the most simple way who would become the most well-known human in the world. The contrast between His extremely poor beginnings on Earth and his later Greatness couldn't be bigger. To me, this is one of the messages of Christmas: one can be well known and popular yet still be simple, kind, caring as well as offering friendship.

Different cultures celebrate this Christian event as one of the highlights of their religion. Expressing happiness and all that a good life means, we convey in different ways during the Christmas season through the dinners, relaxing, our relationships, sharing, caring, and more.

When I saw the Christmas tree there on the beach, simple but great in its presence, it fit my idea of Christmas.

The food and wine

While writing, I'm thinking of all the cozy things about the season like delicious cuisines from the Bonaire kitchens of my dear neighbors. Through the years I have been spoiled with the typical seasonal dish called Ayaka. It's so yummy that I always feel that I can eat a bunch of it but after



two I'm already full. Then there is Keshi yena, bolo pretu and bolo di kashupete, arepa di pompuna, (with pumpkin from the kunuku) kabritu stoba, Arros bruha, sopa di juana, funchi ku piska and way more. (If you feel hungry, look for your Caribbean friends). Don't forget the typical local beverages awa Lamunchi, Ponche crema and Pina colada. Homemade is the best and even better when the ingredients come from here. On the internet one can find all the recipes to try.

In Surinam many families serve the cultural Surinamese pom on their tables. The basic ingredient is the tuber of the Xanthosoma sagittifolium, which grows in many parts of South America. In Suriname we call the tubers pom tayer. We mix it with other ingredients and meat to make the delicious oven dish pom. In many supermarkets one can buy the grated pom frozen in plastic.

Also on my mind is the popular Dutch "oliebollen" - a kind of doughnut that has found its way into our Bonairean society. This time of year one can enjoy them in many shops as a seasonal treat.

Last but not least you can make your own homemade wine called Jamun. The popular Caribbean wine is made from the Jamun fruit that grows here on Bonaire. The fruit is reddish - purple and has an attractive red color. When made into wine it is light and fruity in taste. It's good as an appetizer, served with dinner and can be used for cooking.

One can find the Jamun tree growing in some yards on the island. The huge tree produces a lot of the sweet-sour berries a few times a year. They can be frozen until needed for Christmas. Look for wine information on Google if you want to make your own.

Jamin has a lot of health benefits. The wine is good for the immune system and helps one sleep very well. It's full of minerals and antioxidants. In Asia it is used as a treatment for diabetes because of its ability to control sugar levels.

And in the coming years, why not have a Jamun tree in your garden? It grows fast on Bonaire, provides a lot of shade and a home for birds. And you will always have your own delicious, homemade wine to give as a gift to family and friends for a true Bonaire Christmas.

I want to give my warmest Happy Season Greetings to all of you: owner, writers, friends and readers of *The Reporter*.



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.



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