

**FREE**

# BONAIRE The REPORTER

Feb. 28 - Mar. 13, 2024 Year 31, Issue 5



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The Paddletap at the end of a game  
Photo by Julie Morgan

## Pickleball is for everyone

When you first heard about Pickleball, you probably laughed and wondered, "what is it?". In short, it's a sport that is televised with a huge worldwide following and everyone can play. Even Bonaire has its own Pickleball organization. This year Pickleball will be included in the Bonaire's Sports Expo March 9, and Bonaire will hold the first International Pickleball Exchange/Competition during International Sports Week March 21 – 31.

Pickleball made its way to Bonaire via International Federation of Pickleball World Ambassador Robin Jayesuria of Malaysia. With this title his job is to further the sport's popularity and he has done just that. Jayesuria introduced the sport to the island at Jong Bonaire in 2020 and since then Pickleball has gained acceptance into Bonaire's mainstream sports.

Pickleball was created back in 1965 in Washington State with the idea of creating a sport the whole family could play together. Joel Prichard and a friend cobbled together some table tennis paddles, a wiffle ball and badminton net to create the game. The name came from wife Joan as a reference of thrown-together leftovers in "pickle boat" crew races. Pickleball evolved and in 1984 the sport had its own association USAPA (United States Amateur Pickleball Association). By 2023 it topped the 70k mark in membership. Some 35.6 million people in the United States acknowledged playing in 2023 and the sport just keeps growing. Worldwide 90+ countries play the game and 49 are members of the World Pickleball Federation (WPF) and that doesn't include Bonaire – yet.

Regarding the popularity, Pickleball coach Angel Tromp explained that Pickleball is a sport for anyone from age 5 on up. Players don't have to be in top physical shape but can play at their own level. The only equipment required is a paddle and a ball.

Locally Bonaire has 18-20 players who show up to play at Jong Bonaire, another 14-16 at the

Chinese Association and Sand Dollar has a group of owners and visitors playing. .

Tromp said, "It's easy for any age to do it but we need more courts. Along with Indebon, we are trying to stimulate the government to put it [Pickleball] in their plan as a second attraction to diving and other sports on the island. The three departments of government, Tourism Corporation

Bonaire, Indebon and the Health Department are showing interest to build some nice courts. We need a nice place to play the whole week. Players should be able to rent a place on their own when they want. We should have that availability."

The the sport is popular worldwide. Whether you like cruise ships or not, one cruise line recognized this popularity and equipped nine of their ships with Pickleball courts.

A member of the USAPA, Tromp is heading up the Pickleball training at The Sports Expo on March 9 at the Sports Hall. "Want to Be" Pickleball players will have a first-hand chance to experience the game. The expo will include different sports with booths and demos from the 20+ different Bonaire sport federations. (see Expo ad on page 12) Transportation is available from Rincon for primary and secondary school kids.

The First International Pickleball Exchange/Competition is dedicated to Bonaire Pickleball patriarch Robin Jayesuria. Invitations have been sent to Aruba, Curaçao U.S. and the Netherlands to join the competition. The free event is March 23 from 1-5 p.m. and March 24 from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. All events are doubles. (see poster on page 13 for more information)

Pickleball can be played on Tuesday and Thursday at the Chinese Association 6-8 p.m. Jong Bonaire Wednesday and Friday 6-8 p.m. ( Feb 28 is the last day until building repairs are made) and Sand Dollar, daily 8-9:30 a.m.



John Gratidge is always ready for a game Julie Morgan

Julie Morgan story / photos



## Trinidad-Tobago oil spill invades Lac

Acting Lieutenant Governor Nolly Oleano, harbour master Gunther Flanagan and Bonaire National Marine Park manager Judith Raming addressed the ramifications to Bonaire nature from the Trinidad-Tobago oil spill of February 7 in a live press conference on February 27.

Early on February 26 oil from the spill made landfall on the east coast of Bonaire. STINAPA was advised and went into action to try to clean up the oil that landed on the beach near The Windsurf Place, Sorobon Beach and Lagun.

Prior to the actual sighting, OLB, STINAPA and the harbour master office had



made preparations to respond to any oil washed ashore. A plane and drone were sent up to observe the location and size of the slick. Oil booms were put in place to protect the mangroves and other emergency services were activated.

Elly Albers of Wild Bird Rehab was notified to find any birds that may have been caught in the oil slicks washing to shore. She captured a juvenile reddish egret that didn't survive.

Accounts of dead fish have been reported but to date no turtles that normally

thrive in the Sorobon-Lac area have been found.

The Lac Sorobon area is closed to all activities other than measures to prevent damage, to control and to cleanup this threat to Bonaire's nature.

To view the press conference in Papiamentu and Dutch go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-aOYn6SiNTiM>

The Reporter will post on our Facebook page any new information received. JM



One of the oil's casualties, a juvenile reddish egret. Photo Elly Albers

## Coast Guard seizes chickens



The captain of a Coast Guard Metal Shark patrol boat follows exact protocols when they intercept a suspicious vessel and seize illegal drugs worth a million dollars. However, their procedures apparently do not cover what to do when they take pos-

session of illegal fighting cocks.

In January the Coast Guard's Maritime Operations Center (MOC) dispatched a patrol boat to conduct a routine check on a boat approaching Curaçao from Aruba. The

boat's documents said it was transporting 37 live chickens and roosters from Aruba to Curaçao. The Coast Guard counted 29 fighting cocks, however, and the boat's crew disclosed the birds were actually being delivering to their owner on Bonaire.

Fighting roosters being illegal on both islands, the Public Prosecution Service ordered the Coast Guard to take the custody of the birds. The Coast Guard, in consultation with the Public Prosecution Service, offered the captain two options. He could return to Aruba with the birds, or the Coast Guard would confiscate them.

"Not my chickens," the captain likely said. The Public Prosecution Service consulted with the owner on Bonaire, who decided he didn't want them anymore either. The Coast Guard surrendered custody to the Veterinary Service. The Veterinary Service has not announced what it decided to do with the chickens. DMR

## Bonaire Fuel Terminals picks better name

Bonaire Fuel Terminals (BFT) has changed its name to Bonaire Bon Transition (BBT) to reflect its participation in a broader range of energy activities on Bonaire. BBT was founded in 2021 by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy. It was initially tasked with the construction of a new fuel terminal at the airport. Now it participates with Global Contour and WEB as a major investor in the solar panel park near Karpata. It will soon be involved in an expansion and renewal of the wind farm near Rincon as well.

As BBT, the company will continue to upgrade the fuel storage points on Bonaire, which it says are outdated and will eventually no longer meet current safety standards. DMR

## New corona vaccine available on Bonaire

Vaccinated Bonaireans received the Pfizer vaccine, which contains mRNA. Some people had to go unvaccinated because they are allergic to mRNA. Now new corona vaccine is available from Novavax that does not contain mRNA. The Novavax vaccine is intended for unvaccinated people, not those who have already received the corona shots. People who are unsure whether the new vaccine is suitable for them should consult their GP. DMR

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**The REPORTER**  
**HAS A NEW NUMBER**  
**+599-786-4055**





(L-R) Delno Tromp, Elsmarie Beukenboom, and Izain Mercera. Photo Julie Morgan

Mangazina di Rei was overflowing with guests for the February 24 Nos Zjilea. Unsure if it was the local food, great music by Grupa Villa, Glenn and the Gang or the guest presenters Elsmarie Beukenboom and Delno Tromp speaking on Papiamentu.

Beukenboom representing the Papiamentu Academy, explained the importance of the academy's recent victory for Bonaire's local language Papiamentu. On January 22, 2024 the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) accepted the provisions of the Charter for Papiamentu on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba. The Charter protects the language and enables its use in private and public life allowing the language in education, courts, administration, media, culture, economic and social life and border cooperation.

One of the turning points for the ECRML naming Papiamentu a language and not a dialect was the example of a love letter written in Papiamentu dated 1783.

Beukenboom said, "Before 10-10-10, it was already protected as a language. It was a subject in secondary school and students took their final exams in Papiamentu."

After 10-10-10, everything was split up and Papiamentu was no longer protected. Papiamentu was taught as a foreign language in secondary school.

The change after 10-10-10 was so overwhelming the local government and people didn't see all the new mandates.

Beukenboom said, "Now there is a new language policy, a multilingual policy for

FEBRUARY'S NOS ZJILEA

## Let's Speak Papiamentu

Bonaire. We are advising the government on implementation in education. Island signs and billboards will be in Papiamentu and English."

With this new recognition of Papiamentu as a language, Nos Zjilea reintroduced the book Papiamentu Pika released in 2021. The book contains 140 spicy or pika words, poems and short stories. Contributor to the book Delno Tromp and host for Nos Zjilea Izain Mercera stood before the crowd searching the book to find words that wouldn't offend. All they could say was this is really spicy. The book was researched for seven years before publication by the Papiamentu Academy. It's for sale at local bookstores and Multishop.

mentu Academy. It's for sale at local bookstores and Multishop.

The Papiamentu challenge was presented to a randomly chosen panel of five. Each person had to answer a question in only Papiamentu. Two of the five failed in their answers after they used Dutch words along with the Papiamentu. The winners won a t-shirt.

Nos Zjilea is the best cultural event to see, feel and taste Bonaire. The event is held the last Saturday of every month at Mangazina di Rei in Rincon. Visit Mangazina di Rei on Facebook for more information.

*Photos / Story Julie Morgan*



## FOR SALE! Sabal Palm 57 Privately Situated Villa



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# Piss and Vinegar

by Gijs Borsten

## Tourist Guide to Bonaire, Part II

In our previous P&V we outlined a number of Bonaire's characteristics that are widely misunderstood or ignored by tourists. Limited by the lack of space, I haven't been able to produce a full description of all stupefactions and annoyances caused by touristic ignorance and misconceptions. So, let's proceed with a few general observations, and some advice. In a number of cases there's some overlap with previous texts. You'll understand why that is.

### Donkeys

Donkeys belong to the island. They roam freely, eat, drink and reproduce. Like mankind does, basically. On a regular basis, they cause accidents crossing roads, rightly assuming they were on the island first. One of the grounds for these accidents is the fact that they, looking for food, approach on-coming cars, because they're used to being fed by the occupants of those cars. By tourists. By you.

So, for the sake of all donkeys: if you see them, just ignore them. By stopping, and using treats to lure them into an Instagrammable position, you teach them the analogy that cars equal food, thus laying the foundation for future accidents in which the animal can be wounded or killed. You don't want that, do you? So, stop feeding them. Let them live their lives.

In that respect: don't speed. The 60kph (37mph) in force is fast enough to get you everywhere on the island in no time, so why hurry.

Oh, and if the above warning falls on deaf ears: might you, despite my caveat, decide to stop, please get off of the road. Or would you consider, down in your own country, tourists stopping their car dead in the middle of the road to take a picture of every cow or duck they encounter, a sensible act? Well, neither do we in the case of donkeys. The same goes, by the way, for flamingos.

### Flamingos

These birds show up wherever there's shallow water to be found, even in the middle of town. We know you love to let everybody at home know that you saw one in the wild, and tell them they appear in the most surprising places, but I suppose you also can imagine OUR surprise, when you suddenly stop dead right in front of us to take pictures (preferably 100 feet after a curve so we don't see you till the last moment; the fact that taxi drivers do exactly the same isn't an excuse; they're after tips, and not in the least interested in traffic safety). Don't do it. It causes accidents. There'll be more flamingos to add to your timeline elsewhere.

### Restaurants

If you enter a restaurant, you'll probably encounter a sign, saying 'Wait to be Seated'. It's a very Makamba and/or Snowflake thing to ignore those requests: 'We don't have them at home, so it doesn't apply to us,' subsequently stampeding towards the fanciest table in the house, one that is probably already booked.

If you're being taken to a different table by the Maître d', one that you don't like, don't start whining or using the ugly N-word, or other racist slurs to his back.

You're very much free to leave if you don't like what you're offered. And show some respect, will you? You could have made a reservation instead.

In restaurants, it's also very much appreciated that you put your clothes on before entering. No-one is very much interested in how athletic or how obese & hairy you are. Some general advice: don't do the things on Bonaire that you wouldn't do at home. Tastelessness – or the perception thereof – is universal.

### Waiting

Everybody coming to Bonaire has to be prepared to wait. Endlessly. The act of waiting is subject to the rule that the more important or compulsory the service you're looking for is, the longer you have to wait. I already told you about time-consuming visits to gas stations and supermarkets, but there's worse to be experienced.

In causing senseless waiting, government offices are the absolute winners. Civil Services ('Burgerzaken') has been firmly in first position for over a decade. Getting a driver's license, an ID-card or a passport? Way over two, almost three months. Immigration? About ten months. Emigration? Three months. Try to avoid them if you can (which isn't very difficult for tourists, obviously). It's almost inhumane, but they don't care.

Hospital departments mostly vary. Having a blood sample taken, or in need of prescription medicines? Sometimes you're back outside in ten minutes; sometimes it takes you two hours. You never know beforehand. Bring books and newspapers to kill the time.

BTW: The most commonly applied method by tourists to enter the hospital as rapidly as they can is through the emergency entrance, by falling off their scooters, or from elevated rocks. It's absolutely the fastest way to get in.

### Cruisaders

Visiting Bonaire during cruise season is a nerve and eye-pestering experience. You planned a quiet vacation on a little tropical island with nature in its nature (because it said so in the brochures), what you get is a kind of a carnival of overweight, tastelessly dressed, loudmouthed, shoplifting Trumpites (I call them like that because they mostly wobble around town spouting platitudes, an expression on their faces like they own the place), paying \$250 a week for a cabin on one of the Behemoth ships you find blocking the evening sun. You didn't expect that, did you?

What do you think? Will you ever be back?



*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.*

# Ask Bob

Bonaire real estate advice

Hi Bob –

**I live on Bonaire and need to sell my current house before I buy another one. Can I sell the house with a rent-back agreement, where I can rent it from the new owners for some months until I buy another place? I don't want to move twice.**

It depends on whether the buyers want to live in the house as soon as they buy it or use it as an investment. You can certainly ask and may even make this a condition of the sale. Many investors would be pleased to have an arrangement like this, since it means they receive rental income immediately upon buying the property. The important considerations are the monthly rent you are offering, the length of time you want to rent it, and the time of year. For instance, if you want to rent it back for 4 months in high season at a monthly rate, the Buyers may refuse and want to rent to



weekly vacation renters. Your real estate agent can guide you in finding the right buyer for your property. Best of luck!

Regards, Bob

*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](mailto:info@bonairehomes.com).**

**Bonaire: +599-717-7362.**

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## ISLAND NEWS continued

### Prospects look good for BOPEC revival

Stan van Liere, bankruptcy curator for the BOPEC oil terminal, reports major strides have been made toward achieving his two goals, settling fairly with BOPEC's creditors and selling the facility as business-ready operation.

The Human Environment and Transport Inspectorate and Rijkswaterstaat has lifted the loading and unloading ban from portions of the facility. The whole operation was shut down in 2019 because the owner at that time, the Venezuelan state oil group PdVSA, had neglected maintenance for years, rendering it unsafe to operate.

A team of 28 employees has been carrying out the accumulated repairs. The curator has covered the costs with proceeds from the sale of oil still stored in the tanks. A public foreclosure auction this month raised another \$21.5 million from the sale of 400,000 barrels of oil. The summary proceedings judge allowed the sale after dismissing the objections of the Alphaville company, which had filed several lawsuits against the trustee.

The auction proceeds are good news for creditors, including former employees and suppliers. A so-called verification meeting will be held in mid-April to determine the legality of claims. Payment can only be made at the end of the bankruptcy, partly depending on the liquidity at that time. "But," says Van Liere: "the prospects for creditors are good."



**Stan van Liere, bankruptcy curator BOPEC oil terminal**  
Photo <https://hbnlawtax.com>

Van Liere, reports potential purchaser have expressed serious interest. Two major barriers to a sale remain, both subject to decisions by the OLB. Soil research has determined the site is heavily contaminated and remediation would be very expensive. That liability would be a certain deterrent unless the prospective buyer was shielded from responsibility. The extant leasehold agreement expires in 2034. A purchaser would also have to promised a much extended lease. *DMR*

### Corrections to previous issue.

**"Bonaire to have richest political parties in the kingdom,"**

#### **The opening sentence should have read:**

Under recently passed legislation, every time the OLB spends a dollar the political parties will bank almost a penny.

#### **The closing paragraph was omitted:**

State Secretary for Kingdom Relations Alexandra van Huffelen said the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations is conducting an investigation. She also wants the decision reversed. She mentioned that the entire Island Council and the Executive Council will fly to the Netherlands at the end of this month to rene-

gotiate of WolBES and FinBES, the post 10-10-10 laws that committed the OLB to adopt better governance practices and more financial responsibility. The delegation hopes to convince The Hague that it has made big improvements in both and should be rewarded with more money and less government intervention. Van Huffelen said she has added the faction support issue to the conference agenda. She also pointed out that the Island Council still has "three weeks to prevent possible intervention by The Hague." *DMR*

# POLICE REPORT

## Property crime

**Feb. 23.** A black-painted rented 'Fatbike' bicycle (E-Bike) was stolen between 1:30 and 8:30 a.m. while parked in the yard of an apartment complex on Kaya Embira. The bicycle was locked with a chain lock attached to the rear wheel.

**Feb. 21.** A black Senzo Sport scooter, license plate MF-3648 was stolen between 8:15 p.m. on Tuesday, February 20 and 11:45 a.m. on Wednesday, February 21. It was parked with a chain lock on the rear wheel at the gate of an apartment complex on Kaya P.N. Antonio Neuman.

**Feb. 18.** Between 9:10 and 9:50 p.m. two black 'Fatbike' E-Bikes were stolen when parked behind an entertainment venue in Sorobon. The bicycles were locked together with two chain locks, attached to a fence.

**Feb. 14.** A scooter was reported stolen. It was parked unlocked in the yard of a house on Kaya Gloria and was taken between 2 and 6 a.m. The black Piaggio ZIP 50 scooter had a license plate MF-3971.

**Feb. 10.** The police received reports of two scooters that were stolen when parked in front of an entertainment venue on Kaya Prinses Marie: a black Kymco Agility scooter and a brown-black Sym Orbit Scooter. Both drivers were inside the entertainment venue during the theft.

**Feb. 9.** At 10:50 p.m. the central control room received a report of a home burglary on Kaya Neerlandia. The residents stated that they when they arrived home they noticed that a number of goods had been stolen: jewelry, a lamp and cash.

## Arrests

**Feb. 23.** Around 6:10 a.m., a man, 33, was arrested at Kaya Soeur Bartola for violating the BES Identification Act and for unauthorized entry into a closed public building. Security personnel stated that the building was locked and that the man somehow climbed inside. When the officers wanted to have a conversation with the suspect, he showed several characteristics of someone who was under the influence of some substance. The officers asked the suspect for his name and he did not want to cooperate and then wanted to run away. When stopped by the officers, he lunged at an officer with his left clenched fist.

**Feb. 13.** A man, 20, was arrested for assault. He was involved in a fight.

**Feb. 13.** At around 11:55 p.m. two men, both aged 18, were arrested during the Carnival farewell parade for assault. They were involved in a fight in the vicinity of the stadium.

**Feb. 13.** At approximately 6:55 p.m. a man, 66, was arrested for threatening a woman with a machete during an argument.

**Feb. 12.** A man, 39, was arrested for public drunkenness and violating the BES Compulsory Identification Act. The suspect was causing a nuisance in the garden of strangers.

**Feb. 11.** During the night a man, 25, was arrested for vandalism when the owner of a vehicle said that he destroyed its window and mirror.

**Feb. 11.** Around 10:40 p.m. the central control room received a report of a situation in which a man allegedly assaulted a woman on the Kaya Tintorero. The suspect did not respond to the police's request to cooperate and resisted arrest. The man, 22, had to be arrested with appropriate force.

**Feb. 11.** Around 7 p.m. a foot patrol arrested a man, 21, for assaulting a woman near a supermarket on Kaya Nikiboko South.

## Driving under the influence

**Feb. 24.** Around 3:30 a.m., a man, 30, was arrested on Kaya Nikiboko South for driving under the influence of alcohol. The suspect was involved in a collision with another car. His driver's license was confiscated.

**Feb. 23.** Around 7:10 p.m. a man, 66, was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. A patrol on Kaya Gloria stopped him for driving dangerously. Following the breath test he was arrested and taken to the police station for a breath analysis. The suspect's driver's license was confiscated.

**Feb. 23.** Around 11:05 a.m., a man, 46, was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. During a mediation at a home on Kaya Anna, the suspect appeared under the influence of alcohol and was clearly informed that he was not allowed to drive. The suspect then drove away and was stopped by a patrol on the Kaya Calixta. The suspect was arrested and taken to the police station for a breath test. The suspect's driver's license was confiscated.

**Feb. 22.** Around 1:15 a.m., a man, 37, was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. The suspect was banned from driving ban for one hour.

**Feb. 19.** Around 2:05 a.m. a woman, 36, was arrested for driv-

ing under the influence of alcohol on the Kaya J.N.E. Craane. Her driver's license was confiscated.

**Feb. 15.** Around 8:15 p.m. , a man, 72, was arrested on Kaya Korona for driving under the influence of alcohol. He was involved in a collision between two cars in a parking lot on Kaya Tintorero. He then wanted to continue driving but was stopped by a bystander. During a check, he was asked to take a breath test but was unable to take the breath test after three attempts and was arrested. His driver's license was confiscated. No one was injured in the collision

## Traffic accidents

**Feb. 25.** Around 7:45 p.m. on Kaminda Onima a company bus with three occupants ended up in the mondi along the road. When the patrol arrived, the driver was nowhere to be found. The other people who were on the scene did not want to say anything about the driver. One of the passengers was taken to hospital by ambulance.

**Feb. 24.** Around 9:30 a.m. a passenger car and a pick-up collided on Kaya Caribe. When the patrol arrived, the driver of the car was no longer at the scene. The driver of the pickup stated that he had stopped briefly at the bus stop and at some point he heard screeching tires followed by a loud bang. As a result of the impact, the pickup truck spun and came to a stop halfway into the yard of a home. Then the driver of the pickup saw a man running away. A little later, a person involved in the collision reported to the hospital. That person did not want to explain anything to the police. The bus stop was damaged by the collision. The road was temporarily closed so that the services could carry out their work.

**Feb. 12.** A car hit a cyclist at a roundabout that connects Kaya Nikiboko South with Kaya G.F. Betico Croes and the Kaya Kanari. The driver of the car stated that he wanted to leave the roundabout onto Kaya Nikiboko South in a northerly direction. The cyclist cycled in front of him. The driver thought that the cyclist would also take the northern direction, but when she rode along the roundabout towards Kaya Betico Croes, the driver hit her. The cyclist was taken to hospital by ambulance.

**Feb. 10.** Around 8:38 p.m. a car and a pick-up collided on Kaya Monsigneur Nieuwindt. The car first crashed into the pickup and then into a lamp post. The driver of the car then got out of his car and left the scene of the collision. While police were on scene and dealing with the victim from the pickup truck, the driver of the car arrived. The driver of the car, a 30-year-old man was subsequently arrested for driving under the influence and fined for driving without a driver's license, without a license plate and without insurance.

**Feb. 9.** Around 7:30 p.m. the central control room received a report of a collision on Kaya Nikiboko North between a car and a pick-up. The driver of the car was injured and was taken to hospital by ambulance. An investigation by the KPCN traffic department showed that the pick-up driver was driving faster than the permitted speed.

**Feb. 9.** At 12:50 p.m. a pick-up and a scooter collided on Kaya International. The driver of the scooter said she lost control and ended up on the other side of the road. The driver of the car, who was driving from the other side, collided head-on with the scooter. The driver and passenger of the scooter were both wearing helmets, but were injured and had to be taken to hospital for medical treatment.

## Traffic checks

**Feb. 24.** During a night traffic control on Kaya Grandi 14 cars and three scooters were stopped and checked. Two fines were issued for not showing a valid driver's license and for not showing proof of insurance.

**Between Feb. 19 - 26.** Several tickets were issued for traffic violations during routine traffic checks. These were for driving without: 8x a seat belt on; 8x a valid driver's license; 8x valid insurance. Tickets were also issued for: 7x for riding without a helmet; 1x for driving with a defective brake light; 2x for holding a phone while driving.

**Feb. 21.** Between 4:30 and 8 p.m. KPCN conducted planned traffic checks on Kaya Korona and on Kaya Industria. Several drivers were fined for driving without a license plate. Drivers were also cited for driving without a seat belt; for using a telephone behind the wheel; for riding without a helmet; for driving without a valid driver's license and/or valid insurance. A number of drivers who had their license plate with them were able to attach the license plate to the front bumper on the spot. One car was taken to the police station for safekeeping because the driver was driving without a license plate and could not produce a driver's license and valid insurance.

**Between Feb. 14 – 19.** Tickets were issued for traffic violations during routine traffic checks for driving without: 7x a valid driver's license; 7x valid insurance; 14x a seat belt on; 1x for a license plate. Tickets were also issued for 1x for driving with a defective brake light; 8x for riding without a helmet; and 4x for holding a phone while driving.

**Feb. 15.** During a traffic stop held at Kaya International around 12 noon, eight vehicles were stopped, including one scooter. One driver was fined for because the vehicle was not insured and the driver did not have a valid driver's license.

**Feb. 14.** A traffic control was held at Kaya Nikiboko South from 5:30 p.m. 25 vehicles were stopped for a check, and 12 drivers received a fine. The fines were for: 11x driving without a seat belt on; and 1x for holding a phone while driving. In connection with Valentine's Day, drivers driving by were surprised with a rose as an extra gift on this special day.

**Feb. 13.** A planned traffic control was held at Kaya Korona in the after-noon. A total of 16 vehicles were checked, and three drivers received a fine: 2x driving without valid insurance; 1x driving with an expired driver's license.

**Between Jan. 29 and Feb. 14.** Tickets were issued for traffic violations during routine traffic checks for driving without: 5x a license plate; 4x a seat belt on; 7x valid insurance; 5x a valid driver's license. Tickets were also issued: 2x for incorrect parking. 3x for driving in a prohibited direction; 4x for holding a phone while driving; and 8x for riding without a helmet.

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

## Fire

**Feb. 24.** Around 3:45 a.m. the central control room received a report that two cars were on fire in front of a house on Kaya Salsa. Due to the high flames of one burning car, another vehicle parked next to it also caught fire. The residents of the house next to the burning car were all evacuated. The fire brigade extinguished the fire. Around 6:30 a.m. one of the cars was reported on fire again. The fire brigade extinguished the fire again. No one was injured.

**Feb. 22.** Around 9:30 p.m. a fire was reported in a pile of garbage near a container on the grounds of a tourist accommodation on Bulevar J.A. Abraham. It was a big fire that threatened to spread. The fire of residual wood waste was extinguished by the fire brigade. The street was cordoned off by the police so that the fire brigade could carry out its work quietly.

## Public order

**Feb. 19.** Around 6:45 p.m., the central control room received a report that a person became ill while swimming at the floating pool near Parke Tului on Kaya J.N.E. Craane. Initially, ambulance personnel and police were unable to reach the person because the pier was closed for maintenance. When they managed to enter the pier, they immediately started resuscitation. Shortly afterwards, the victim was taken to hospital for further resuscitation, but to no avail. The medical examiner noted the death of a 26-year-old man with initials E.G.D.C. born on November 29, 1997 in Curaçao. KPCN calls on everyone not to swim at the floating pool while it is closed.

**Feb. 19.** Around 7:30 a.m. a lifeless body was found at a tourist accommodation on Bulevar Gobernador N. Debrot. The ambulance crew who went to the scene started CPR but to no avail. The medical examiner found a natural death of a 70-year-old man with initials B.W.C. born on June 9, 1953 in the United States.

**Feb. 11.** During the carnival parade in Playa on Sunday, the police had to arrest three catering establishments for selling drinks in glass bottles, after which they started serving them in cups. In addition, all drivers in the parade were checked for their alcohol consumption., Three drivers had an alcohol content higher than the permitted amount and were removed from the parade. Carnival organizers had been instructed prior to the event to advise drivers not to consume alcohol behind the wheel.

**Feb. 9.** During the teen parade unknown persons broke a barricade and it had to be repaired during the parade. In addition, two young people were removed from an electric scooter for driving in a closed area. Otherwise the parade went smoothly.



# RRFB Expands Capacity of Coral Nurseries



RRFB divers swim with ropes filled with coral, to install a new rope nursery at Angel City. Photo Lorenzo Mittiga

## Summary

- RRFB is expanding its network of coral nurseries and restoration sites around Bonaire and Klein Bonaire.
- RRFB employs selective propagation and breeding to strengthen coral populations, targeting coral genotypes that have demonstrated resilience to rising temperatures and stony coral tissue loss disease (SCTLD).
- This project is made possible through funding from the Dutch national government and Bonaire municipal government for the implementation of nature and environmental initiatives.

Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire (RRFB) is expanding their network of coral nurseries and restoration sites around Bonaire and Klein Bonaire, thanks to funding from the Dutch Ministry and Bonaire municipal government. After piloting a new nursery design in 2023, they've established several new nursery sites up and down the west coast, with more planned throughout 2024.

In the initial months of the project, RRFB has already increased its nursery coral capacity by over 20%, using corals from genetic strains that have shown resilience towards stony coral tissue loss disease (SCTLD) and recent bleaching events. This is part of their wider strategy to boost the genetic diversity of Bonaire's coral populations and, in doing so, strengthen the reef.

"The process of expanding our nurseries will involve both branching and non-branching corals for a total of 10 species. We're focused on propagating species that are particularly affected by SCTLD, whose populations have become a high priority for our restoration efforts."

- Francesca Viridis | Managing Director,  
Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire

## New Nursery Design

The installation of vertical ropes, a new type of coral nursery, is part of the expansion. Rope nurseries, made up of over 70 corals threaded through a single rope, are less prone to algae overgrowth and other types of bio-fouling. Parent corals are never removed from the ropes, allowing for faster restocking after fragments are out-

planted. RRFB has already installed rope nurseries at Oil Slick Leap, Lighthouse Point, and Angel City, and plans to establish more locations in 2024. Multiple tray nurseries have also been installed, which hold several species of boulder coral impacted by SCTLD.

## Selective Breeding and Genetic Diversity

Nurseries will hold 10 species of branching and non-branching corals of various genetic strains (aka "genotypes"). RRFB has carefully selected genotypes that have shown the highest performance after being outplanted and demonstrated resilience to bleaching events and SCTLD. They will continue to monitor the health of these corals before and after outplanting to inform selective breeding efforts. As the expansion continues throughout 2024, RRFB's focus remains steadfast on enhancing the genetic diversity and resilience of Bonaire's coral reefs.

*Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire*



One vertical rope structure at Angel City, holding 70 fragments of staghorn coral (*Acropora cervicornis*).

Photo Lorenzo Mittiga



During February 12 to 16, eight aspiring officers of the Dutch Caribbean Police Force (KPCN) completed the third step of their internship, this time in official police uniform.

During this third step, the aspiring police officers were allowed to put into practice what they had learned about

actions that would prevent a crime. They could also practice recording simple declarations such as simple assault, theft or vandalism.

The trainees were scheduled for different shifts at different times of the day. They observed what their fellow police officers did and were assigned tasks under the

guidance of their specially trained practice supervisors.

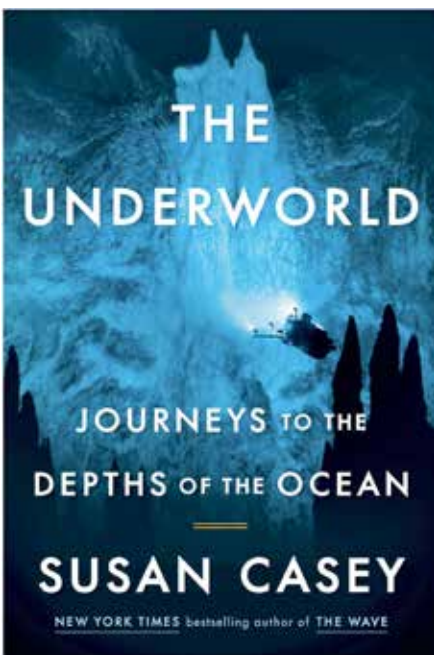
More internship periods will follow during which the public will continue to see the trainees wearing the official KPCN uniform.

*KPCN communications*



# Buckley's Books

by George Buckley



***“THE UNDERWORLD - journeys into the depths of the ocean” by Susan Casey is a deep look at the deep sea.***

A widely published journalist, Casey traveled the globe to get the story of the earliest to the most recent efforts, of the successes and failures in the quest to study the deep sea. From the 15th Century maritime historian Olaus Magnus, to William Beebe, Jacques Piccard, Ray Dalio, Victor Vescovo and over a hundred others, Casey researched the people who have been ‘pioneers of the ocean’s last frontier,’ to paraphrase Captain Don Stewart. She describes a rich diversity and history of researchers and deep sea research ‘vehicles’ including *Bathysphere, Trieste, Pisces, ROV Jason, Triton, Limiting Factor* and others. Her extensive publishing record, including the National Magazine Award, enhanced her ability to gain access to a vast array

of historical records, researchers and on-board research expeditions and experiences.

Casey was not just a reporter about the deep sea, but as with her several other ocean themed books about waves, surfing and sharks, she was an active participant in the at sea research. The last chapters are a highly detailed and personalized inside look at Victor Vescovo’s ‘Five Deeps’ expeditions to the five deepest parts of the world’s oceans of which she was a participant. An entrepreneur and mountaineer, Vescovo assembled a specialized team. They developed the technology to accomplish the record setting dives safely and successfully. They also collected valuable data and specimens via his specialized ‘landers’ launched from the deepest diving submarine on earth, *Limiting Factor*.

Susan Casey, like many others writing about the oceans today, provided a focused discussion of the issues that threaten the deep sea environments as the rush to mine them for minerals reaches fever pitch. These minerals including cobalt, manganese, copper, zinc and many others, will be harvested out of sight, out of

mind where monitoring and enforcement of regulations that are still being developed will be all but impossible. All to help fuel the insatiable demand for more batteries and more electric based technologies. These discussions are needed more than ever.

While there is no index, Casey does provide a comprehensive set of well cited and detailed Chapter notes.



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

## Loes restores Top murals



It’s been almost 20 years since artist Henk Roozendaal began the first real street art in Bonaire at Top Supermarket, formerly Cultimara. From 1993 to 2007 he brought the old walls of Cultimara to life with bigger than life portraiture of several of Bonaire’s most recognizable people: Captain Don Stewart holding a beer with his Regatta boat in the back, Diana Sint Jago shopping, Boi Antoin with his Extra newspaper, Janice Huckaby and Larry on a motorcycle, the Frans brothers windsurfing among others. The portraits have lost some of their brilliance over the years but a couple of portraits are getting a facelift.

While painting logos for the new offices of BonFiber above Top Supermarket, artist Loes Praagman of Aloha Bonaire was

commissioned to do another job by the pool company; to restore Roosendaal’s mural of the Frans brothers.

Loes said, “Of course, this is with Henk’s permission. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to restore one of the oldest and most prominent murals on the island. And of course the brothers Frans make it even more special!”

On Friday, March 1 at 3 p.m. the ‘new’ mural of the Frans will be unveiled for all to see.

Anyone interested in bringing new life to the other mural portraits can contact Loes. Visit [Aloha Bonaire](#) on Facebook to see more of Loes work.

*Photo / story Julie Morgan*

## Make Bonaire Accessible

by Ria Evers-Dokter

### You can learn a lot from a friend with disabilities.

This is what I learned while growing up first as a child, then a student, an adult, a woman, an employee, a wife, a widow ..... just growing up.

There are situations that teach you what to do or how to act, even though you have never learned by being taught.

Recently I came across a saying that stuck in my mind and it does seem to linger: is there a purpose to life if one does not get a chance to live it?

You are born within a family, some do so in a loving environment, some don’t. If you are lucky, you are healthy and grow up fast. But others might not be so lucky. I was born healthy and grew up fine. I had people and family around me who loved me and wanted what was best for me. But there was also a girl, born on the same day as I was. She was diagnosed with Down’s Syndrome. This caused a lot of pain and sadness in the family. Her health was not the best and there were always problems. In those days children with disabilities were often placed in institutions, because “it was better for them and the parents.”

I never heard from her until I returned to the island I was born. And with me on the ferry was this woman with Down’s Syndrome who looked a lot like this girl I used to know. I started chatting with her and we had a wonderful conversation. She told me that she did not live with her family. She lived in a group home and worked in a shop where they sold presents. She was the one in charge of the cash register and packaging and that she was very good at it. She was beaming

with pride while telling me all this.

While in high school I befriended a few girls from the other village. And often when we got together there was also a girl with mental retardation. We got along really fine but when things became too threatening for her, she left us and went home immediately. She always wanted to be like us, but she simply could not because of her condition. Many years later I heard that she had found a boyfriend in the group home she went to live. And later there was great news; she got married and they were very happy together. Their luck did not last very long..... she died a few years later. But she also had taught me a lot.

When you work with people you have to do so with an open mind. Everybody is special, has something to offer and brings something to the table.

One should befriend persons with disabilities and you will see, it opens your eyes and your heart. And yes...there is a purpose to life if you get the chance to live it your own way and be happy.



*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.*

**See you at the Walk-A-Thon, Sunday, March 10.**



# Reef Glimpses

by Dee Scarr

## Longevity

This week I saw my first yellowtail snapper in months, less than two weeks after writing about them being missing from my dives.

When Karen Anders heard I had written about yellowtail snappers, she started searching around online. We learned that the yellowtail population drop is not just local, but throughout the Caribbean and the southern U.S.

From an article about longevity, we learned that yellowtail snappers usually live from six to fourteen years, which means that Bonaire's high populations of the late 1900's would have passed on by now.

Information about marine animal longevity for those critters who thrive in aquaria wasn't too difficult to find, but figuring longevity for wild marine animals was pretty much impossible until (relatively) recently-developed technology. My favorite example of this is the Greenland shark (*Somniosus microcephalus*, "small-headed sleeper"). *Sharks and Whales*, published in 2002, lists the Greenland shark as living in waters down to 1800' (550m), in temperatures from 36° to 45° F (2° to 7 C°). I was surprised to discover that the Greenland shark was

listed as "Not uncommon," but I was definitely **not** surprised that it was generally "Not encountered by divers." (The temperatures and depths were my clues.)

A few years later, with the help of radiocarbon dating on the eyes of a number of Greenland sharks, scientists concluded that a Greenland shark collected dead in 2016 could have been as old as 512 years, or just a youngster of 270 years. Yikes! The Greenland shark holds the title of Longest-Lived Backboned Creature on the Planet (as far as is now known).

Also surprisingly long-lived are some whales, especially the bowhead whale. Bowheads, like Greenland sharks, live in cold water; "Greenland whale" is an alternate common name for them. Their age was first estimated after stone harpoon tips were found imbedded in the blubber of bowhead whales. Since stone harpoon tips hadn't been used for a century, the bowheads in which they had been found had recovered from being harpooned more than a century before! Bowheads were later tested by another method of determining age, and of 48 whales tested, four males were found to be from 135 to 211 years old!

It's great to read about centuries-old sharks and whales, but clearly those of us here on Bonaire prefer our diving to be more diver-friendly (for "diver-friendly" read "warm"). So, how old do our reef inhabitants get?

Most reef fish are estimated to live about six years. That estimate fits my own experiences: most of the individual flounders, eels, scorpionfish, and other fishes I've known were around for about six years; some were



Two lionfish are nestled in the bowl of the sponge. Lionfish were not in the Caribbean when this sponge began to grow. Photo Julie Morgan

already adults when we met, so that could add a year or two. Small invertebrates, such as cleaner shrimp, probably only live a year or two, while spiny lobsters are believed to live up to 15 years. Our octopuses have a lifespan of only three years...

The lifespan champions, however are sponges and corals. Two that make every longevity list are a sponge off China believed to be more than 10,000 years old, and a type of black coral considered to live more than 4,000 years. I believe, however, that the longevity lists are incomplete because both corals and sponges live unless disease or injury kills them, and how many have they actually tested? On every dive we pass corals and sponges who are likely to be more than 25 years of age and who flourish right here, not in frigid or deep waters.

So, while we enjoy the antics of the youngsters on the reef, we have another reason to be careful around sponges and corals: respecting our elders!

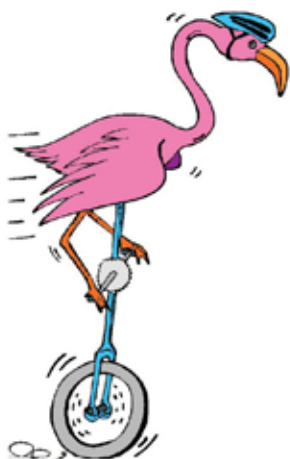


Dee has been guiding divers on Bonaire since 1982. She's written about her undersea experiences in her books *Touch the Sea*, *The Gentle Sea*, and *Coral's Reef*; in *Dive Training Magazine* from 1990 to 2000, with "Coral Glimpses" in *The Bonaire Reporter*; and now with "Reef Glimpses." through [touchthesea.com](http://touchthesea.com).



This coral head was flipped over by an anchor chain in the 1980's, before the BNMP placed mooring blocks for yachts off Playa. Many of the coral polyps on the head's original top, now in contact with the bottom, were killed. However, all the coral animals that haven't been crushed are doing just fine. Photo Dee Scarr

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# Creating Optimal Health

by Irene da Cunda Costa

## Pelvic floor dysfunction can be treated on Bonaire

In September's issue, I wrote an article about the pelvic floor, its importance and how it can be dysfunctional. Complaints that can be related to a dysfunctional pelvic floor include urinary incontinency, constipation, abdominal pain, organ prolapse, painful erection and ejaculation, painful sexual intercourse, lower back pain, hip problems and even bladder infections, diaphragm and jaw problems. These complaints can be caused by either a too loose or a too tight pelvic floor. You need a specialist to help you determine which one is your case. When I wrote the article, I didn't know that Bonaire had specialists to help identify and heal a dysfunctional pelvic floor. You can find these specialists at Bonaire Basics. I had a conversation with Annemiek Le Noble and Rosa Haverkort, who explained to me how the pelvic floor can become dysfunctional and what they can do to help heal a dysfunctional pelvic floor.

When a trauma occurs in the body, for example through an injury or surgery, the body protects itself through pain. In most cases, pain is a protective mechanism that protects us from further damage. The way pain protects us is by limiting or modifying our movements. We either move less or we move in a different

way, so we don't stretch, move or put pressure on the injured part. We do that during the healing period but sometimes the neural path created by these new movements stays long after the wound is gone. Annemiek and Rosa told me that most people, when they arrive at the practice, have already healed their injuries and what is left is the new neural pathway with a dysfunctional movement. The pain is gone, but the learning stays and that is the remaining dysfunction after the wound is healed. Tissues are ok, what is dysfunctional is the neural circuit. So, when treating pelvic floor problems, what needs to be checked is not only the muscles and the tendons but also the electricity flow, as neurons release their neurotransmitters to communicate with each other thanks to electrical changes. To do this, not only do they use the traditional set of muscular strengthening, breathing, and relaxation techniques, but also they use an innovative therapy called PDTR or Proprioceptive Deep Tendon Reflex.

What does the PDTR treatment look like? Because a dysfunctional pelvic floor can also affect the function of the diaphragm, the main muscle for breathing, the session starts with breathing exercises. Yes, we all think

we know how to breathe, but we have already shared many times in this column that this is not always the case, being alive is not equivalent to thriving. You are also taught to create or increase your awareness about the pelvic floor, where it is, how you feel it. Then, to identify your specific dysfunction, a series of muscular tests are performed, to allow the practitioner to identify blockages in the energy flow. Depending on this evaluation, a series of gentle procedures will follow. Sometimes there is also the need for some re-education on how to do certain movements or how to sit on the toilet bowl. Since optimal health is determined by many factors Annemiek and Rosa will use a holistic approach. They might also discuss stress management, movement and nutrition when needed in order to help you create your optimal health.

So, if you have any of the above-mentioned problems, talk to your family doctor or your specialist and ask them if they think this therapy might be beneficial for you.



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

## A Garden? Just Do It!

by Angliet, Nature Lover

### The body needs some love

After all the big celebrations of the last three months it's time to give the body some care and special attention.

One way is with detoxing. Cleaning the body gives peace of mind. Because there is a strong relationship between body and mind, the state of the one has strong impact on the other. When either one is under pressure or can not function well, it can lead to a disorder in the other one. So when one wants to do some detoxing, remember to take the whole system, body and mind into consideration.

Detoxing is done in two ways. One is to avoid consuming stuff that does not contribute to a healthy and balanced body. The other way is to feed yourself for a certain length of time with the right amount of food in balance considering your age, work and condition of your body.

Herbs can be used to get rid of bad stuff in the body and balance blood circulation, liver function, kidneys, heart rhythm and brain function. Using herbal liquids is very important. They "rinse" the body and build up minerals and vitamins which were lost or minimized because of manipulated food. A fresh wind should blow through the body with a good cleaning.

Meanwhile at least seven to eight hours sleep is necessary for the body to clean itself. Because the body is not physically active, there is energy for the inner cleaning. Eight hours of sleep is a way to calm down the mind and give peace to the total being. After a cleaning, one is full of energy and a good energetic vibration takes place between body and mind. (I found it important to give this information so to understand how important detoxing is for body and mind.)



**Part of my garden. Top (L-R) Ocra, Pepper; Bottom (L-R) Squash, String beans that are on the top of my roof to prevent them being iguana snacks.**

What is interesting is that we are here in Bonaire at the right place for this positive cleaning action. Beside the natural elements of sea, wind and sunlight there are peaceful places like the beaches or the mondi to concentrate on body and soul.

And there are a lot of herbs and plants in our nature which support in detoxing. Aloe is one of the best for cleaning. In former editions I mentioned this and one can Google all about it. Tamarind fruit is a strong blood cleaner with a high Vitamin C value and many other goodies. Teas can be made from many different plants from the gardens on Bonaire. There is yerbi hole, basil to calm the stomach, tea from soursop leaf and passion fruit leaf for a good night's rest and to calm the nerves.

Teas and baths with Corona Di Virgin can calm the skin and fight skin problems. Ginger and tumeric both grow easily in a big container and will provide your own herbal tea. I have them both in my garden and tell you what, nothing takes so little attention as these plants. Some water twice a week and they are happily growing.

Nowadays with the climate crisis, urban agriculture has become increasingly popular. You know what you are eating when you grow your own vegetables, fruits and herbs. You have no idea of the processes used for food from outside. There are so many chemicals used in that long way from soil to your mouth that I'm sometimes shaking when I read about pesticides, thinking of the unfriendly earth techniques for growing and transportation that are used for the stuff that goes into my belly. I have come to the decision that my garden should have as much of a sustained source of healthy food as possible. The most important gift I have is my body. It's my highest responsibility to take good care of that gift because I'm the only one who can do that to the fullest.

I have in my garden right now one pumpkin, some string beans, some sweet peppers, a few branches of okra, spinach, parsley, herbs and fruits. Some are in the soil and some in pots and pans. But it's enough for a few weeks and meanwhile other vegetables are growing and so I have the most valuable biological food always fresh in my kitchen.

You can have that as well. Never too late. Start today. Just do it.



*Angliet grew up in the Surinam jungle, moved to the Netherlands as a teen, where she trained as a teacher; then in Alternative Healing. She has traveled the world - north to Russia and Alaska, south to Tierra del Fuego and Africa and all points in between. Returning to the Caribbean with her young family, she taught in St Eustatius and Bonaire. Everywhere she has lived, she has planted a garden and grown her own food.*

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# Bonaire's Swimming Championships was a great success



With almost 100 participants, the first edition of the Bonaire Swimming Championships was a great success. The weather was good and the sea calm. The floating pool, equipped with starting blocks, turning points and swimming lines, worked beautifully. The board of the Aquatics Federation Bonaire looks back on a successful event.

The starting signal for the first heat sounded at 9 a.m. A total of 56 distances were swum for the ages 9-10 years, 11-12 years, 13-17 years and 18+. In the afternoon, the Special Olympics

swimmers swam three distances. In addition to all individual distances, 14 teams had registered for the 200m relay. That made for an exciting battle in the afternoon. The team consisting of Koen Verhoeven, Tim van der Giessen, Jonathan van Meerten and Arjen Divine-Dalm was the fastest with a time of 2 minutes and 75 hundredths.

Before the start, a commemoration took place for Evander Calendaria. His friends swam a lap together after which a minute of silence was observed.

Warehouse Bonaire ensured that each participant received a bottle of drink and a piece of fruit.

The results will be posted on the Aquatics Federation Bonaire website Monday after 5 p.m.;

[www.aquaticsfederationbonaire.com](http://www.aquaticsfederationbonaire.com)

Photos of the event will be posted on the Facebook page.

*Aquatics Federation Bonaire*

## Parrots and People Parrots of the Caribbean

by Mel McCombie

Our recent wind reversal and the destruction it caused to the reefs and waterfront reminded me yet again of how climate change hurts Bonaire, and this made me think about our Loras and prikichi. It turns out that we are lucky our beautiful parrots are still here. Before the arrival of Columbus in the Caribbean, there were around 25-35 species of parrot in the Caribbean, who had lived there for millennia prior to humans. Columbus described flocks of parrots so dense that “they obscured the sun.” Where are they now?

The biggest threat to parrots is an old story: it's us. Humans have long prized parrots for their beauty, their vocalizations, their feathers, and even as food. As we know from the work done on Bonaire by Sam Williams, founder of Echo, the biggest threat to our wild parrots is lost habitat, the trees and shrubs that offer nest sites, shelter, and food. It's not just here in Bonaire that this matters. As storms, particularly hurricanes, tear through Caribbean islands, parrot habitats are wiped out or degraded. They depend on forests and thick vegetation for food and protection.

Researchers bemoan the effects of Hurricanes Maria and Irma in 2017 on the Puerto Rican and Dominican Amazona parrots, whose wooded habitats were stripped and uprooted. Indeed, the Puerto Rican parrot population in 1975 was 47 individuals; Hurricane Hugo in 1989 reduced it to 22. After Maria, 13 remained alive. Puerto Rican scientists are now supervising domestic breeding in the Río Abajo aviary. But the domestically bred parrots released into the wild have fared poorly; in one release of 22 parrots with radio transmitters, 17 are known to have died. If you follow the science about climate change and increasingly powerful hurricanes, you know the change is anthropogenic (caused by humans).

The fossil record for parrots in the Caribbean and neotropical region is surprisingly robust. Though few of the fossils are entire birds, there are lots of bones from which scientists have extracted DNA and mapped parrot species. Parrots flourished in the Bahamas, Cuba, Hispaniola, the windward islands (like Dominica and Montserrat), as well as the south Caribbean. Species that are now only found on one island, like the Cuban parrot, used to live all over the Caribbean.



**Scientists at the Florida Museum of Natural History combined DNA from fossils and archaeological specimens to find out how humans altered the distribution of parrots.** Florida Museum photo by Kristen Grace.

Between 6,000 and 1,000 years ago, Caribbean parrot diversity began to constrict, resulting in “dark extinctions” (extinction of a species before it is described and named). Most of these extinct parrots were kin to our Loras, from the Amazona group.

Since the arrival of Europeans in the Caribbean, more parrots have become extinct. Today, there are 14 species. When Columbus arrived, there were between 20 and 35 species (including Amazona and Ara, or the macaw). We know that native Caribbean peoples kept, traded, and ate parrots, which certainly decreased their numbers. But the arrival of Europeans accelerated parrot extinction. When Columbus returned to Spain from his voyages, the records tell us that parades of captive Indians with parrots impressed people in Barcelona and Sevilla. The Spanish court offered coveted gifts of Caribbean parrots to heads of state. Far more destructive was the industrial farming Europeans brought to the Caribbean, clear-cutting land to plant crops like sugar cane, removing forests. Adding insult to injury, Europeans introduced non-native animals (like rats and goats) who predate on parrot nests and eat foliage.

The more I researched this topic, the sadder I became. Parrots are so profoundly threatened by human action that I felt ashamed to be a human. But just as our actions cause problems, we can also act to save what we have left. I urge you to support conservation efforts in all arenas, particularly for parrots. Visit Echo and learn. Benefit from the mind-opening work of biologists, paleontologists, and museum scientists as they help guide future conservation work. We still have time.

Much of my insight for this article came from the scholarly article, “Changes in Parrot Diversity After Human Arrival to the Caribbean” (<https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2301128120>) and other articles based on its research.



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



# What's Happening

**Animal Shelter:** Mon-Fri 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Sat. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. phone/whatsapp: 701 4989 or 717 4989. Email: [animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com](mailto:animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com)

**Arts & Crafts Market in Wilhelmina Plaza.** NEW open Friday nights as well as for the cruise ships (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](http://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 re-build.

**Terramar Museum** Mon-Fri 9-2. Kaya J.N.E. Isla Riba 3. Admission \$10. Residents \$5. Tours \$20. Children under 12 free. +599 701 4700  
<https://www.facebook.com/terramarmuseumbonaire/>

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

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

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Open now to July 2024                                | <b>Terramar Slavery Exhibition: WE ARE</b> Mon. - Sat. 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.   |
| SACA Art Center Exhibits<br>February, March, April   | <b>SACA Art Center Antriol.</b> Kaya Korona 74.<br><a href="http://www.sacabonaire.com">http://www.sacabonaire.com</a><br><b>Artist Dillon Rannou exhibition Feb. 24 to Apr. 8.</b><br><b>Artist Adrie van de Ven exhibition Mar. 16 - Apr. 29</b>   |
| Thursday, March <b>7</b>                             | <b>Marine Park Platform #4.</b> 4 - 7 p.m. Delfins Beach Resort . Topics: 2023 Highlights • Moorings • SCTLD • 2024 Goals  |
| Saturday, March <b>9</b>                             | <b>Sports Expo</b> 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. See poster this page.<br><br><b>Stand up comedy at Sonrisa</b> 6:30 p.m. \$25 limited seating<br><a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/1140183747114199">https://www.facebook.com/groups/1140183747114199</a><br><br><b>Miss Bonaire Coronation</b> 8 - 11 p.m. At Marriott. Tickets \$100.<br>Info: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/missbonaire/">https://www.facebook.com/missbonaire/</a> |
| Sunday, March <b>10</b>                              | <b>Walk-A-Thon for Special Olympics of Bonaire.</b> Walk from White Slave Huts to Rincon. Start 5 a.m. Tickets \$20.   |
| Friday & Saturday<br>March <b>15-16</b>              | <b>BON DOET</b> Annual volunteer event on Bonaire. See the jobs that need doing and sign up at <a href="https://www.bondoet.com/nl/all-jobs">https://www.bondoet.com/nl/all-jobs</a>   |
| Saturday, March <b>23</b><br>Sunday, March <b>24</b> | <b>Pickleball exchange / competition</b><br>9 a.m. - 1 p.m. See poster page 13   |
| Saturday, March <b>30</b>                            | <b>Nos Zjilea Cultural Event</b> 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei, Rincon. Enjoy the music, dancing, crafts, amazing food and drink.   |
| Sunday & Monday<br>March <b>31</b> - April <b>1</b>  | <b>Easter Sunday &amp; Monday.</b> Public holiday. Government offices and many business are closed.  |

# 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](mailto:12stepsbonaire@gmail.com)

**Alcoholics Anonymous open meeting** Every Thursday, 7 - 8 p.m. International Bible Church Kaya Papago 104 in Hato (Behind Bon Bida Spa and Gym and Bon Bida apartments). All welcome, regardless of primary addiction or no addiction at all.

**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](mailto:bridgeclubbonaire@gmail.com). <https://www.facebook.com/bridgeclubbonaire>

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

**Pickleball.** Chinese Assoc. Tues. & Thurs 6-8 p.m.; Jong Bonaire Weds 6-8 p.m. this week only; Sand Dollar at Eddy's almost daily 8 a.m. 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.

**Tennis Lessons for kids age 6 - 12. Free.** Every Saturday. Courts at Eddy's. Email [info@bonairetennisassociation.com](mailto: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](mailto:info@echobonaire.org)



**Manta Monday** - Nicole Pelletier of the Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation. Presentations at 7:30 p.m.: **March 4.** Divi Resort; **March 11.** VIP Diving; Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation Program facebook. Email: [Caribbean.Islands@mantatrust.org](mailto:Caribbean.Islands@mantatrust.org)



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



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

## You can help keep Bonaire clean

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Saturdays              | <b>One Hour Clean up Power.</b> Weekly coastal clean up every Saturday, 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Location given on FB: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/OneHourCleanUpPower/">https://www.facebook.com/OneHourCleanUpPower/</a>   |
| Sunday, Mar. <b>10</b> | <b>Clean Coast Bonaire.</b> 8-10 a.m. Te Amo Beach. Donate your time. Work as a citizen scientist to collect marine litter & data.<br><a href="https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=clean%20coast%20bonaire">https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=clean%20coast%20bonaire</a> |

## 2024 Cruise Ship Schedule

| DATE:            | CRUISE SHIP           | TIME      | PIER  | CAPACITY |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-------|----------|
| Wed. February 28 | CARNIVAL MAGIC        | 0800-1600 | South | 3646     |
| Fri. March 1     | NORWEGIAN SKY         | 0600-1400 | North | 2480     |
|                  | CELEBRITY EQUINOX     | 0700-1700 | South | 2852     |
| Sun. March 3     | AIDAMAR               | 0800-1800 | North | 2686     |
| Mon. March 4     | AIDAPERLA             | 0830-1800 | South | 3286     |
| Tues. March 5    | ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS | 0830-2000 | South | 3840     |
| Wed. March 6     | CELEBRITY REFLECTION  | 0800-2000 | South | 3046     |
| Thurs. March 7   | WORLD VOYAGER         | 0830-1800 | North | 172      |
| Sun. March 10    | STAR PRIDE            | 0800-1800 | North | 312      |
| Tues. March 12   | SILVER DAWN           | 0800-2300 | North | 623      |
| Wed. March 13    | BRITANNIA             | 0700-1800 | South | 3674     |
| Thurs. March 14  | SEVEN SEAS SPLENDOR   | 1200-2300 | North | 754      |
| Fri. March 15    | NORWEGIAN SKY         | 0700-1800 | South | 3674     |
| Sat. March 16    | WIND SPIRIT           | 7300-1700 | North | 148      |
| Sun. March 17    | AIDAMAR               | 0730-2100 | North | 2686     |
| Mon. March 18    | AIDAPERLA             | 0830-1800 | South | 3286     |
| Tues. March 19   | CELEBRITY BEYOND      | 0800-1700 | South | 3260     |
| Wed. March 20    | RUBY PRINCESS         | 0630-2000 | North | 3575     |

**SPORT EXPO**

COME CHECK IT OUT AND DISCOVER YOUR SPORT!

DATE: 9TH OF MARCH 2024  
TIME: 09:00AM - 1:00PM  
LOCATION: STADION PLAYA, PARKE TULUI (PIER), SPORHTHAL GEORGE NICOLAAS

20+ DIFFERENT SPORTS INCLUDING DEMO'S FROM THE SPORT FEDERATIONS

SCAN ME



# 2024 Walk-A-Thon



**Special Olympics Bonaire Organization recognizes volunteers. L-R: Anne-Marie Mercera, treasurer; Rolanda Hellburg-Makaai, president; Gendrick Mercera, athlete; Willy Piar; Merida Statia; Giandro Mercera, athlete; Nina Braeken, athlete and Earon Rosaria, head coach. Photo Julie Morgan**

In less than two weeks Bonaire residents and guests will set their alarms early to participate in the 21st Annual Special Olympics Walk-A-Thon on Sunday, March 10 at 5 a.m. Participants can choose to either walk or bike the 20k or 30k route respectively from the White Slave Huts to Rincon.

The Walk-A-Thon is the biggest fundraiser to support Bonaire's Special Olympics athletes in their training and travels to compete nationally and internationally.

The day begins with bus rides from 4 – 4:30 a.m. from Bonaire Playa Stadium to the appointed start at White Slave. Bikers head out to Sorobon at 5 a.m. and walkers head toward Playa at 5:05 a.m. Everyone finishes at Pa-

sadia Kariño in Rincon (next to the big church). Along the way food and water stops manned by different organizations are available to keep everyone hydrated and energized. At the end of the trek, participants are treated to breakfast prepared by Bonaire's Lions Club. Buses provide a return trip for people and bikes to the stadium beginning at 3:30 p.m.


Tickets to the Walk-A-Thon are \$20 and that includes a Walk-A-Thon t-shirt, snacks, breakfast and bragging rights knowing you helped support the athletes and complete the 20 or 30k journey. And everyone receives a certificate.

Registration and t-shirt pickup is March 8 from 5-7 p.m. and March 9 from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the Spe-

cial Olympics office (behind the big Catholic Church in Kralendijk).

Bonaire's Special Olympics team wins big every year bringing home the gold, silver and bronze. They receive overwhelming support from the island in all their endeavors. Many of the volunteers have supported the athletes for years. Recently the organization, represented by Special Olympic winning athletes Gendrick Mercera, Giandro Mercera and Nina Braeken presented special awards to Willy Piar for 16 years and Merida Statia for 15 years.

The Walk-A-Thon is sponsored by Ennia, FWNB (Fundshon Wega di Number Bonaire and Guardian Group). . Story / photo Julie Morgan



## 1st

# International PICKLEBALL

### Exchange/Competition

*Dedicated to Michael Robin Jayesuria*

**Place:** Sporthal Jorge Nicolas, Kaya Amsterdam, Kralendijk Bonaire

**Date:** Saturday 23rd of March 2024 from 13:00 – 17:00 and Sunday 24th of March 2024 from 9:00-16:00


**NO FEES**

**DOUBLES AND MIXED DOUBLES**

Please write to WhatsApp +5997003599 or +5997850858 for questions and to confirm your participation in this event.

Bring your flag with you.

Hope to see you all soon on the 23rd and 24th of March for our first Friendly Pickleball Competition. Everyone is more than welcome.




## Habitat repairs baby dock



Back on October 26, 2022, wild rogue waves slammed into the shoreline at Captain Don's Habitat. The waves washed away most of 'baby dock' wiping out the platform and stairs. For the last couple of years Habitat has tried to obtain permits to rebuild the dock. The government maintained that the dive resort

would be building a new dock, not a repair, and different permits were required. The issue was finally resolved late last month, and work began last week. Due date for baby dock was determined to be eight days from start time. Photo Julie Morgan



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Available online at [STINAPAbonaire.org](https://stinapabonaire.org)



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**MANGROVE MANIACS**  
LAC RESTORATION PROJECT





**Hello people,**  
My name is Maartje. I'm a sweet girl of about 4 months old. I love to cuddle and play with humans and other doggies. I'm good with children of all ages and I will play very gently with the young ones. When I was only four weeks old I was found abandoned in the Mundi all by myself. I'm glad I was picked up and brought to the animal shelter. I'm ready to meet my new family - see you soon.

*Photo/story Sanne Attevelt*

**If you would like to meet our cats and dogs, please come to Animal Shelter Bonaire, Kaminda Lagun 26A. Open Monday - Friday 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday 11 a.m.-2 p.m. You can also call 701-4989 or 717-4989 to make an appointment, via whatsapp, facebook messenger, or email [animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com](mailto:animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com)**

**Our pet cat of the week is Pino.**

Pino is a male one year old cat. He was born in Rincon and has been with us at the Shelter since he was a small kitten.

When you come to meet him at Animal Shelter Bonaire, sit down and he will come over and sit in your lap just as you can see in the picture. His purring is calming and soon you and he will be napping together.

Pino has a beautiful orange/ginger coat with striping on his body, legs and tail. He is sterilized, tested negative for feline leukemia and FIV. Pino is looking for a forever home.

*Photo/story: Amy Bowen*



## Animal Shelter News

**Time to think about your pets' vacation plans**



Although March is just beginning, it is not too early to think about how to care for your pets while you are on holiday this summer.

Animal Shelter Bonaire offers boarding facilities for cats and dogs, but our space is limited and fills up quickly during the summer vacation period. If you already have travel plans, it's time to reserve space for your furry friends now as some reservations are already on the books.

Each boarding animal must be fully vaccinated before entering the Animal Shelter's Boarding Kennels. Proof of vaccinations is mandatory in order to protect your pet, as well as the other animals living in the facility.

We require all dogs and cats to be treated for ticks and fleas with a product such

as Frontline prior to arrival, otherwise they will be treated upon arrival at owner's cost.

Email the Animal Shelter at [animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com](mailto:animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com) to reserve your furry friend's space for the summer vacation.

### Boarding Rates

#### Daily Dog Boarding Rates:

One dog – \$10. /day  
Two dogs in one kennel – \$15. /day  
Three dogs (maximum) in one kennel – \$20. /day

#### Daily Cat Boarding Rates:

One cat – \$8. /day  
Two cats in one kennel \$11. /day

*Jane Disco*



## Bonaire's sky park

by Vigdis Hocken and Konstantin Bikos

See full article at: <https://www.timeanddate.com/date/leapyear.html>

### What Is a Leap Year?

We use leap years to keep our calendar in sync with the seasons. Leap years are years where an extra day is added to the end of the shortest month, February. This so-called intercalary day, February 29, is commonly referred to as leap day.

Leap years have 366 days instead of the usual 365 days and occur almost every four years.

#### Leap Year Rules:

In our modern-day Gregorian calendar, three criteria must be taken into account to identify leap years:

The year must be evenly divisible by 4; unless...

The year is also evenly divisible by 400. Then it is a leap year. According to these rules, the years 2000 and 2400 are leap years, while 1800, 1900, 2100, 2200, 2300, and 2500 are not leap years.

#### Why Do We Have Leap Years?

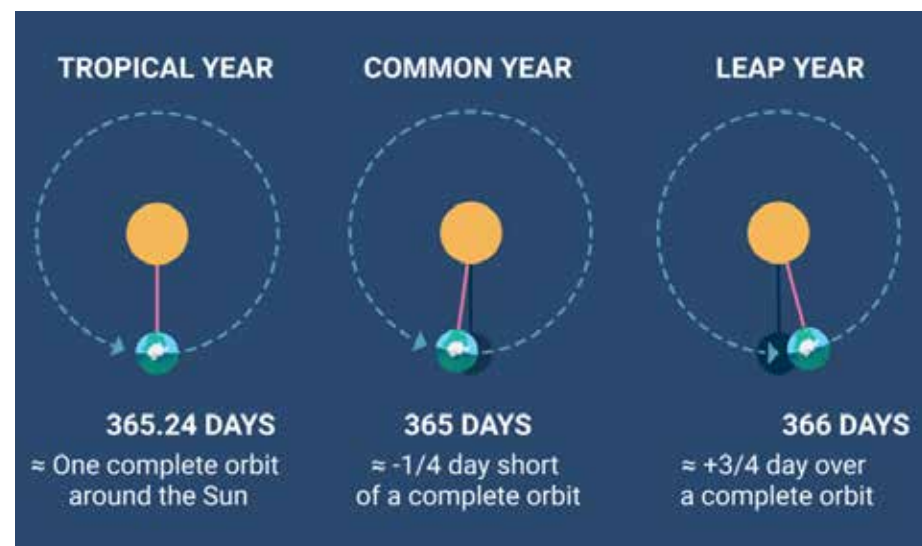
Leap days keep our calendar in alignment with Earth's revolutions around the Sun. It takes Earth approximately

365.242189 days, or 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 45 seconds, to circle once around the Sun. This is called a tropical year, and it starts on the March equinox.

However, the Gregorian calendar has only 365 days in a year. If we didn't add a leap day on February 29 almost every four years, each calendar year would begin about 6 hours earlier in relation to Earth's revolution around the Sun (see illustration).

As a consequence, our time reckoning would slowly drift apart from the tropical year and get increasingly out of sync with the seasons. With a deviation of approximately 6 hours per year, the seasons would shift by about 24 calendar days within 100 years. Allow this to happen for a while, and Northern Hemisphere dwellers will be celebrating Christmas in the middle of summer in a matter of a few centuries.

Leap days fix that error by giving Earth the additional time it needs to complete a full circle around the Sun.







## nationale ombudsman

From February 28 to March 2, a team from the National Ombudsman will return to Bonaire to hold walk-in sessions. Residents are welcome to drop by free of charge to ask a question or make a complaint about any government or official body. Complaints or questions for the Ombudsman for Children are also welcome.

Anyone who has a question or complaint about organisations such as the Public Entity, the Dutch Tax and Customs Administration, the police and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment is welcome to drop by during opening hours. You can ask your question or make your complaint in Dutch, Papiamentu, Spanish or English.

### The dates, times and locations:

- Wed. Feb. 28, 9 - 11.30 a.m. Jong Bonaire
- Thurs. Feb. 29, 2.30 - 4.30 a.m. Cocari, Rincon
- Sat. Mar. 2, 9 - 11.30 a.m. Jong Bonaire

There are other ways to submit your query or complaint. To contact the National Ombudsman:

- call +31 70 356 35 63 (working days until 11 a.m.)
- send a WhatsApp message to +31800 33 55 555
- use the complaint form on our website: <https://www.nationaleombudsman.nl/klacht-indienen/uw-klacht>

To contact the Ombudsman for Children:

- call +31 70 8506 995 (on working days until 11 a.m.)
- send a WhatsApp message to +31 6 27 24 52 79
- send an email to [ombudswerk@kinderombudsman.nl](mailto:ombudswerk@kinderombudsman.nl)

Something new is cooking at Eddy's



People have been waiting for years, and now it has finally happened – Eddy's Bar and Restaurant is now open for lunch. And the choices will be just what you want. Nothing too heavy or exotic but salads, soups, sandwiches and, of course, Eddy's famous Latin/Caribbean inspired dishes. To make the decision easy, Eddy's will offer daily 'take-out' specials for diners who are on the go or don't have the time for a sit-down meal. If you want to com-

bine lunch with work, business lunches are available with two and three course specials.

Opening times are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 11.30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For now, limited bar service is available for lunch. You will have to visit Eddy's for dinner to enjoy their broad range of specialty drinks and libations.

Dinner is served Monday through Friday from 5:30 – 10 p.m. with Live Music on two

different nights from 7 p.m. to closing. Solo performer TAFKAH sings all your favorites on Tuesday and jazz guitarist and singer Yanga Music entertains on Fridays.

Eddy's spacious restaurant with indoor and outdoor patio style seating is available to host corporate and private parties. Visit [EddysBonaire.com](http://EddysBonaire.com) for reservations or call +599-717-6731 or email [esc@egcatering.com](mailto:esc@egcatering.com).

Photo / Story Julie Morgan



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