

**FREE**

**BONAIRE**  
**The**

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**REPORTER**



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Photo Julie Morgan

## What can you do to protect our coral reefs?

As you read this you might think, well, isn't the Bonaire National Marine Park supposed to do that? Yes, overall, that is true. But with the island approaching a population of 26,000 and record numbers of tourists visiting the island and its waters we all need to work together to protect the coral.

Back in the original *Guide to the Bonaire Marine Park* (1983) Tom van 't Hof wrote: "The overall goal of reef conservation in Bonaire was to maintain the coral reef ecosystem, as well as the sea grass and mangrove systems of the lagoon Lac with their high biological productivity and esthetic values in order to ensure continuing returns from fishing and recreation at sustainable levels. That goal can only be accomplished by active and ongoing management."

Bonaire was just beginning to be known as one of the world's top diving destinations when that book was published. Back then with the idea of those words firmly in place for the marine park and with the work of environmentalist Captain Don Stewart, Bonaire became a leader in reef ecology and the island was called a drawing board of reef conservation.

But worldwide our reefs today are threatened by trash and micro plastics, overfishing, live coral harvesting, massive bleaching, destruction from coastal development, runoff, sewage, toxic chemicals, ocean acidification, disease and of course climate change.

In March 2023, the Bonaire National Marine Park declared SCTL (Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease) had spread to Bonaire from the eastern Caribbean. Restrictions were put in place to hopefully prevent further spread and contain it. Most everyone obeyed the rules, but the disease still spread. Even the best minds in science have not been able to determine its

origin other than to say it is bacteria. Was it caused from one or more of the threats listed above?



Jeannine Toy, advisor of SCTL treatment team for the Bonaire National Marine Park applies antibiotic to curb the disease on a coral. In September 2024 STINAPA reported that of the 629 treated corals that were tracked, the positive response to treatment was 90% Photo Julie Morgan

Bonaire reefs are still alive and well with some areas in worse shape than others but many of our beautiful corals are coming back. And through the work of Reef Renewal Bonaire Foundation there are a lot of new forests of corals.

On page 6 a chart published by NOAA.gov lists 10 ways to protect Coral Reefs. As you read through the list you will see Bonaire is actively working to protect our coral reefs in many ways and individuals can protect them too.

1. Choose sustainable seafood – our local fishers make this easy with fresh local fish (read story on Piskabon pg 12)
2. Conserve Water (your WEB bill should help with that)
3. Volunteer – local cleanups are held weekly and monthly both underwater and on our coasts (recent underwater cleanups on pg 9 and listings for the next cleanups are on our event page)
4. Corals are already a gift. Don't give them as presents.
5. Long-lasting light bulbs are a bright idea.
6. If You Dive – Don't Touch (and develop good buoyancy)
7. Practice safe boating
8. Check sunscreen active ingredients (Coral Care sunscreen pg10 continued to pg 17)
9. Be a marine debris crusader
10. Don't send chemicals into our waterways

And here are a few more: Recycle and dispose of trash properly, use environmentally friendly transportation and spread the word.

Story / Photos Julie Morgan

## Bonaire's Deputy for Finance and Cft disagree on budget accuracy

In December Bonaire Deputy of Finance Clark Abraham informed the public on the Executive Council website that OLB's 2025 budget had been submitted and approved. The announcement also said the budget had been drawn up with the advice of the BES Financial Supervision Board (Cft BES) and complied with the FinBES.

On the other hand, the Financial Supervision Board has sent a letter to Governor John Soliano reporting that, according to its accountants, an "assessment of the [2025] report is not possible

... because a large number of changes still need to be processed to arrive at a representative picture of 2024."

"On the revenue side at least USD 22 million (or at least 18 percent of the budget) in changes must be processed, including USD 9 million in tax receipts. On the expenditure side, an amount of at least USD 35 million (or at least 26% of the budget) in changes still needs to be processed." The Cft also said, "Bonaire must take a major step to improve the quality of the budget documents." *DMR*

## Regulation of drinking and smoking is coming

In response to a policy proposal recently presented to the Island Council, a new regulation is being prepared that is intended to take effect during the second quarter of this year. The regulation will restrict the use of alcohol, tobacco, and vaping, especially among the young. Sale of alcoholic beverages to those under 18 will be prohibited, and the consumption of alcohol will be banned at sporting events and activities. Smoking will no longer be permitted in indoor areas where people work.

In 2017, 9% percent of Bonaireans reported they drank "heavy" and 5% said they drank "excessively." Recently 12% reported they drank "heavy" and 8% said they drank "excessively."

Of the people treated at the Medical Health Center 11% have alcohol-related complaints, and one in ten drivers pulled over during alcohol checks appears to have drunk too much.

Thirty-five percent of young people start drinking between the ages of 12 and 15, one in five has been drunk at least once. Nineteen percent of young people between 13 and 17 vape; 9 percent smoke.

The European Netherlands reports almost half the problems with excessive consumption than Bonaire does. Nina den Heyer, deputy of Society and Care, strongly supports the new regulations, especially those intended to discourage young people from drinking and smoking. *DMR*

## Bonaire to to have new 108-bed elder care center

A residential care center is being planned that will accommodate 108 elderly people. The facility will provide shared and private living spaces where seniors can grow old actively. The design and facilities will support active aging, social cohesion, privacy, and a strong connection with Bonairean culture and the natural environment.

Bonaire has an aging population and the existing capacity is already insufficient to meet the growing need for care. There is a dire shortage of nursing beds for the elderly and a shortage of trained and qualified personnel as well.

The island government has made an easily accessible site available. Seminars and work sessions with the target group and stakeholders are providing valuable insights that will be incorporated into the design.

The Ministry of Health Welfare and Sport (VWS) has contracted with Stichting Cocari II to develop the residential care center and Zorg & Welzijn Groep (ZW-Groep) is to operate it. The Cocari II Foundation aims to preserve monumental and cultural heritage on Bonaire. Zorg en Welzijn Groep (ZW-Groep) supports people with disabilities, chronic diseases and the elderly. Both organizations have a history of carrying out successful projects for VWS. *DMR*

## Windsurfing school to get erfpacht at Sorobon

The Public Entity (OLB) has announced it intends to lease a plot of domain land located in Sorobon to Frans Paradise N.V. for a windsurfing school. Paradise has been operating a windsurfing school from this location for several years.

On September 3, 2024, the Executive Council granted a nature permit for the commercial operation (teaching and rental of equipment) of a surfing school and the construction of the associated buildings in Sorobon. The OLB has decided the erfpacht does not have to be offered competitively because a nature permit has already been granted. Therefore only the current candidate is eligible.

*DMR. Photo Julie Morgan*



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# Cheers to Life

In partnership since 2001, representatives of Alcon Wines & Spirits and Freixenet finally met on Bonaire on February 18 and it was cause for celebration. Alcon's COO Conchita Arends and sales and marketing manager Charles Lont had the Freixenet bubbly chilled and ready to welcome Caribbean Freixenet Mionetto USA sales manager Umberto Marino and Joely Hall area manager Webbanks.

Marino explained that after 24 years partnership, our visit is a matter of respect. "Our high quality and success are because of them. They help us be successful on a daily basis."

Freixenet's campaign "Cheers to Life" is the perfect theme for Bonaire where both islanders and visitors constantly find things to celebrate.

Freixenet family winery is from the Penedès region of Catalonia near Barcelona, Spain and has been in operation for over a hundred years. They produce five sparkling wines and a rosé. The most popular bubbly by far is the one in the recognizable black bottle, the Cordon Negro Cava selling 55 million bottles worldwide.

Cava wines are fermented in the bottle in the perfect temperature of a cave (or cava) for 9-12 months. Cava wines

are a blend of eight to nine different grapes, with three main grapes: the Macabeo which provides the major flavor, the Xarelo and Parellada. Even though the harvests differ with the weather, year after year Freixenet maintains its taste consistency demonstrating the real art of winemaking.

Marino said, "In paying attention to the consumer's needs and lifestyle, Freixenet produces an "alcohol removed" wine with just 120 calories per bottle."

In 2018, Freixenet and Miunetto from the Veneto region in Italy merged. This resulted in their representation of the best Cava and Prosecco in the world. Mionetto uses only the Glera grape. Unlike the Cava, Prosecco is fermented in a large tank for 60 days and then bottled on demand for freshness.

Marino said, "We believe in our perfect production and believe in the brand.

Life is always a celebration. "Celebrate Life" is the soul of the brand."

On February 18 Alcon and Freixenet held a Cheers to Life tasting at Karel's Beach Bar. Marina and Hall will continue their visits of the Caribbean in Curaçao and Aruba.

*Story Julie Morgan*



Umberto Marino presents Conchita Arends a magnum of Freixenet Cava as a valued partner for 24 years. L-R: Joely Hall Area Manager, Webbanks; Conchita Arends COO of Alcon Wines; Umberto Marino Sales Manager Caribbean Freixenet Mionetto USA and Charles Lont Sales and Marketing Manager Alcon Wines. Photo Julie Morgan

## FOR SALE Kura Boneriano 20 Spacious Family Home with Pool



- Location: Lagoen area
- Lot size: 1000 m2 / 10763 sq. ft.
- 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, lots of storage spaces

- Large well maintained tropical garden
- Quiet rural neighborhood

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# POLICE REPORT

You can contact the police via 715 8000, 911 or via the anonymous tip line 9310.



Saturday, February 8, 2025, 10 employees of the Dutch Police arrived on Bonaire to strengthen our force. Monday, February 10, they officially started their work. This group consists of seven employees for the Basic Police Care department (BPZ) and three employees for the In-

vestigation department. They will support Bonaire's police for a period of 6 to 7 months, after which they will be replaced by new employees.

In addition, four colleagues from the Royal Marechaussee (KMar) will also provide assistance to the Caribbean

Netherlands Police Force (KPCN) during this period.

In the photo: Colleagues from the Dutch Police together with their local buddy and colleagues from the KMar who provide reinforcement. Photo via KPCN

## Property crimes and arrests

**Feb. 11.** Between 1 and 3 p.m. at 1000 steps beach located on the Queen's Highway (Tourist Road) a bag with contents was taken while the owner was snorkeling. The bag contained, among other things, cash and a Guess watch.

**Feb. 10 / 11.** An apartment on Kaya Andino was searched and burgled between 3:15 p.m. on Monday and 2:05 a.m. on Tuesday. Access was gained through a bathroom window and jewelry, cash and a television were taken.

**Feb. 4 / 5.** Between 10:30 p.m. on Tuesday and 3 a.m. on Wednesday thieves used a rock to smash the windshield on the driver's side of pick-up parked at Hanchi Amboina. Various tools taken.

## Thefts continue at airport beaches and Altamira viewpoint

**Feb. 12.** While the occupants were out of their car at the Rincon viewpoint, Altamira Unjo, a pass holder, cash and a driver's license were stolen from a bag left in the car.

**Feb. 12.** While the owners were diving at Playa Pal'i Mangel (Donkey Beach), three bags with contents were stolen. The bags contained, among other things, several cards, two passports, cash, two Apple iPhones, keys and clothes.

**Feb. 10.** At Playa Pal'i Mangel (Donkey Beach) between 10:35 and 11:30 a.m. a white beach bag with contents was stolen while the owners were along the coast. The bag contained, among other things, a black Fossil wallet, several cards, a passport, cash, a green Apple iPhone 11 Pro, a black Apple iPhone 10, a black Google phone, black Ray-ban sunglasses, keys and clothes.

## Arrests

**Feb. 14.** Around 12:25 a.m. a man, 39, was arrested at Kaya Internashonal for disturbing public order after being reported several times on the same evening at different locations.

**Feb. 13.** Around 2:25 a.m. a young man, 15, was arrested after he did not respond to police orders. A patrol saw a car (vehicle 1) on Kaya Sonmontuno driving at high speed into the parking lot of a football field and stopping next to another car (vehicle 2). When the occupants saw the police, they reversed and drove away. Vehicle 2 also drove out of the parking lot at high speed and without lights. The officers followed vehicle 2 into the Amboina district. On Kaminda Tras di Montaña, the officers managed to block the vehicle after a high speed chase. The underage driver was arrested for not responding to police orders, for causing danger on the road, driving without lights and without a driver's license. The underage driver had taken his parents'

car without permission. A girl, 14, was also in the vehicle. Both were taken to the police station where the parents of both teens were informed about the situation.

**Feb. 12.** Around 6 p.m., a man, 21, was arrested at a catering establishment on Kaya J.N.E. Craane for assault and destruction.

**Feb. 12.** During an argument a man fell from the balcony of a house on Kaya Turkesa around 12:25 a.m. He was rushed to the hospital by ambulance. Around 1:05 a.m. a woman, 22, was arrested for assault and attempted manslaughter.

**Feb. 12.** Around midnight a man, 45, was arrested on Kaya Emerita for assault.

**Feb. 6.** A man, 42, was arrested at the police station for vandalism. The man is said to have vandalized a payment machine at a petrol station on Kaya Korona during the night hours of Sunday January 19.

**Feb. 3.** Around 1:05 p.m. a man, 34, was arrested on Kaya Carlos A. Nicolaas for vandalism. After an altercation with the owner of an apartment complex, the suspect cut several electricity cables.

## Violation of the BES Firearms Act

**Feb. 3.** The Special Assignments Group (GBO) and the Arrest Team made two arrests in connection with the shooting incident that took place in the evening hours of Sunday, Feb. 2. Police arrested a man, 24, during a house search in a Rincon home and items relevant to the investigation were seized. A second man, 22, was arrested at the police station a little later in connection with the same case.

## Scheduled traffic checks

**Feb. 11.** Police stopped and checked 25 vehicles (including 2 scooters) in the early evening on Kaya Nikiboko Nort. Two drivers were fined for driving without a valid driver's license.

*Fines for traffic violations vary between \$30 and \$225.*

## Traffic accidents / Driving under the influence

*According to the policy 'botsen is blazen' ('to collide is to blow') a breath test is given drivers involved in accidents.*

## Arrests for driving under the influence

**Feb. 12.** Around 6:30 p.m. a woman, 36, was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol and her driver's license was confiscated. She was involved in a collision between two vehicles on Kaya Korona. The other driver could not produce a valid driver's license and was fined.

**Feb. 10.** Around 10:05 p.m. police received a report that a car and a pick-up collided on Kaya Nikiboko Sùit and the drivers were arguing with each other. Testing showed that both drivers had consumed more than the permitted amount of alcohol. A man, 20, was fined because he did not have a driver's license. The other man, 55, had been arrested before for driving under the influence of alcohol and was given a 6-hour driving ban.

## Collisions

**Feb. 13.** Around 9:50 a.m. an accident on Bulevar Gobernador N. Debrot was reported. A car ran over a man. When the police arrived, the ambulance was already on the scene. A man had fallen when getting out of his pick-up while the vehicle was still moving, causing it to partially run over him. The victim was taken to the hospital.

**Feb. 13.** Around 7:35 a.m. a car and a fat bike collided on Kaya Nikiboko Zuid. The driver of the car stated that he wanted to turn left to enter Kaya Vibrafon. He was blinded by the sun and did not see the cyclist coming. The cyclist was injured and was treated on the spot by the ambulance personnel. The driver of the car was fined for driving without a license and insurance.

## Fire

**Feb. 9.** Around 2 p.m. a vehicle was reported on fire in the parking lot of a catering establishment on Kaya Industria. When the police and fire brigade arrived, the fire had already been extinguished. No one was injured. The fire was probably caused by a short circuit.

**Feb. 5.** Around 5:45 p.m. a fire was reported in a container on the premises of a company that produces electricity near Karpata. A patrol, two fire engines and the ambulance service were sent to the scene. When the emergency services arrived, the fire had already been extinguished by employees. The exhaust muffler of a generator overheated, causing the roof of the container to catch fire. Fortunately, the employees were able to extinguish the fire quickly and no further damage was caused. The generator itself remained completely intact. No one was injured.

## Public order

**Abandoned car.** A gold-colored Suzuki, Grand Vitara V6, without a license plate has been standing on public property at the Jossy Boekhoudt Ballpark in the Tera Kòrà neighborhood. The owner is requested by Tera Kòrà's neighborhood officer, Claudette Raphaela, to remove this vehicle as soon as possible.

# 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.

## Bonaire's role has changed from municipality to problem child

After 10-10-10 Bonaire's newly elected Executive Council accepted The Hague's proposition. That is, having become a municipality of the Netherlands, Bonaireans should learn to govern ourselves responsibly, like a municipality of the Netherlands. And, the Dutch promised, they would give us time to change and assist us through the process.

Both sides kept their promises. Under the leadership of the newly elected Executive Council, the Public Entity steadily improved government operations to everyone's benefit, and a series of Rutte coalitions poured money into our economy. In a dozen years Bonaire leap-frogged into world-class health care, improving schools, upgraded infrastructure (even roundabouts), good policing (especially at night), sustainable energy, and a productive civil service that took pride in their work.

In the meantime the traditional oligarchies that govern Curaçao, Aruba, and St Maarten dug in and sold their "sovereignty" piecemeal, reluctantly agreeing to each new reform only when they ran out of money.

Now a faction on the island is trying to revert to the old "you-send-we-spend" style of governance. And the right-wing coalition in the House of Representatives is led by people who have been longing to punish the Caribbean members of the Kingdom for governing corruptly.

Zsolt Szabó has held on to his position as National Representative and declared himself to be the right wing's avenging angel. His power over CAM is limited. But he has BES by the throat. We have only our former, less doctrinaire supporters in Parliament trying to look after our interests. *Don M. Ricks*

## KPCN reports "alarming" 2020-2024 increase in violent crime

The Dutch Caribbean Police Force (KPCN) has published the Crime Analysis (CBA) 2020-2024. It reports "alarming" increases in theft, violence, and firearm crimes, with more young offenders being involved. It also reports a lack of youth care and rehabilitation options.

### Several Insights from the CBA 2020-2024

The analysis highlights several trends and challenges that impact security in the region:

- **Traffic Crime:** Issues caused by poorly maintained roads, increasing traffic congestion, and alcohol consumption.
- **Youth Crime:** Alarming increase in theft and violence, while there is a lack of youth care and rehabilitation options.
- **Violent Crime:** Rise in domestic and nightlife-related violence, requiring additional measures.
- **Property Crime:** Declining numbers overall, but concerns about scooter thefts on Bonaire and home burglaries on Saba.

• **Drug Crime:** Persistent issue with drug exports from Bonaire and limited visibility into involved criminal networks.

• **Firearm Crime:** Alarming increase, especially in the second half of 2024, with young suspects playing a significant role.

• **Migration Crime:** Increase in human trafficking and exploitation due to political instability in the region.

• **Financial and Economic Crime:** Fraud and money laundering, especially in the real estate sector.

• **Cybercrime:** Growing reports of fraud and hacking, while law enforcement faces challenges in investigations.

• **Environmental Crime:** Illegal waste dumping and damage to coral reefs call for stricter enforcement.

For the full report and further insights, visit: <https://www.politiecn.com/en/subjects/crime-analysis-2020-2024-cn.html>

## Ask Bob

Bonaire real estate advice



Hi Bob –

I know that if I buy a house or a lot, I pay 5% transfer tax on the purchase price. If I buy a lot and build on it, do I have pay at 5% on the home I build?

Max, from San Diego, CA

That's a great question Max. You won't pay transfer tax on the cost of the new construction, but you will indirectly on ABB (sales) tax, on all of the building materials and labor used to build your house. This tax is collected on a variety of ways.

If you go to your local building supply store, you don't pay ABB when you check out, because the importers of those building materials, like doors, windows and kitchen cabinets have already been charged an import duty/tax when those materials arrived on Bonaire. The amount of ABB varies with the product or service being imported, but it is 8% for most items.

You will also pay the ABB on locally produced construction materials like construction blocks, concrete and gravel.

Your builder/contractor will charge you sales tax on the services he provides to build your house like the work from electricians, plumbers, plasterers, laborers and so on.

When you pay an invoice for a service such as gardening or plumbing, it also includes a 6% ABB tax, which the service provider pays to the tax office.

The tax is collected by the producer or service provider who is then responsible for paying that tax to the government tax office.

There are many variables in ABB tax, so for more detailed information consult the tax office and talk to your builder about costs.

Thank you for the question.  
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](mailto:info@bonairehomes.com).  
Bonaire: +599-717-7362.  
Toll free from US: 1-866-611-7362



The 'Breakfast at School' project, which is providing breakfast for 450 children four times a week, kicked off on February 12th with the first delivery of sandwiches. The sandwiches are made by inmates at JICN.

Pictured are the director of JICN, Wibo de Vries, and directors of the schools Strea Briante, Remsley Nita, and Rayo di Solo, Jubella Balentin, plus the project leader of JICN, Karel Martis, and the work supervisor, Giovanni Saragoza.

Photo via RCN

## Classified Ad

1981 Yamaha XS400 Motorcycle. Only 23,000 original miles. Over \$400 in new parts included. Newer tires, new battery this year, repair manual and more. Always garaged and meticulously cared for. Asking \$1,750 OBO. Runs flawlessly. Call Brad at 717-0161 or [bradlouth@yahoo.com](mailto:bradlouth@yahoo.com)

# Bagpipes on Bonaire

When preparing for your trip to Bonaire, don't forget to pack your... BAGPIPES?! That is exactly what professional piper Robert Burns brought for his first trip to Bonaire's teal shore. Owners and guests at Sand Dollar enjoyed the impromptu sunset concerts during his stay. His playlist included traditional jigs, haunting airs, mournful auld-style melodies and even popular requests such as Beatles tunes, "Hava Nagila" and "Happy Birthday."

Robert is a lawyer based in San Diego by day and on evenings and weekends plays professionally for events such as weddings, funerals and varied celebrations, both solo and with the Cameron Highlanders Pipe Band. He traveled to Bonaire to join his lifelong friend, Danny Waldman during his extended third visit. Danny laughingly suggested that the "price" for the trip would be a pop-up performance. Lucky for us, Robert happily accepted the challenge. Bobby and Danny grew up as neighbors in Columbus, Ohio and have been friends since age four. Though they went in different directions for college (Danny in Ohio, Robert in California), their friendship remains steadfast.

Robert was surrounded by music growing up. Both his mother and grandmother were classically-trained pianists. After his grandmother graduated from her conservatory, she utilized her expertise offering lessons to earn enough money to put Robert's great-grandfather through law school! With impressive musical DNA, Robert has mastered multiple instruments and has combined amazing talent with his Irish heritage to bring traditional music to life. He studied violin at age six. In his teens, he learned guitar inspired by the popular bands of the British Invasion. By the mid-1980s he focused on Celtic sounds and polished his guitar skills to provide the lead instrumental "voice" in sessions with other traditional Celtic musicians. In 1992, he "became addicted to the tin whistle."



Robert immersed himself in traditional Celtic music, excelling at the whistle and guitar. After he encountered an extraordinary pipe major (band leader) in 1994, he was hooked by a new musical love - bagpipes. Through the years he has been fortunate to receive formal training from some legends of piping.

Robert's bagpipe is called the Great Highland Bagpipe (also known as the Irish Warpiper). The melodic "chanter" (pipe with fingering holes to play melodies) and harmonic "drones" (single tone pipes that provide the background 'hum' unique to bagpipes) are made of seasoned African Blackwood with silver fittings to connect to the inflatable "lung" as he plays. Each drone can be fine-tuned while playing to ensure accurate pitch. His pipes are tuned to the key of A, ensuring common

pitch when playing together in a pipe band. Bagpipes use reeds like many woodwind instruments and need watchful care to maintain their unique sound.

Robert is a true artist and lifelong learner and his dedication through decades of experience have paid off. He not only plays professionally and tutors privately, but he has also earned awards and excelled in professional competitions. Robert is a published recording professional with two CDs and like his namesake the Scottish Bard, also has a book of poetry. He has written numerous articles for professional piping publications and has been a member of the American Federation of Musicians since 1996.

*Story / Photo Nancy Louth*

## 10 ways to protect CORAL REEFS

**Choose sustainable seafood.**

Learn how to make smart seafood choices at [www.FishWatch.gov](http://www.FishWatch.gov).

**CONSERVE WATER**

The less water you use, the less runoff and wastewater that eventually find their ways back into the ocean.

**Volunteer!**

Volunteer in local beach or reef cleanups. If you don't live near the coast, get involved in protecting your watershed.

**Corals are already a gift. Don't give them as presents.**

It takes corals decades or longer to create reef structures, so leave them on the reef.

**Long-lasting light bulbs - ARE A - BRIGHT IDEA**

Energy efficient light bulbs reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change is one of the leading threats to coral reef survival.

**IF YOU DIVE DON'T TOUCH.**

Coral reefs are alive. Stirred-up sediment can smother corals.

**Practice safe boating.**

Anchor in sandy areas away from coral and sea grasses so that the anchor and chain do not drag on nearby corals.

**CHECK SUNSCREEN ACTIVE INGREDIENTS.**

Seek shade between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., use Ultraviolet Protection Factor (UPF) sunwear, and choose sunscreens with chemicals that don't harm marine life. For more information, visit [oceanservice.noaa.gov/sunscreen](http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/sunscreen).

**BE A MARINE DEBRIS CRUSADER.**

In addition to picking up your own trash, carry away the trash that others have left behind.

**Don't send chemicals into our waterways.**

Nutrients from excess fertilizer increases algae growth that blocks sunlight to corals.

**CONSERVE WATER**

[oceanservice.noaa.gov](http://oceanservice.noaa.gov)

## Kiss & Ride coming to Flamingo Airport

After people drop off departing passengers at Flamingo Airport they will be able to drive on out without block stopping to feed money into the machines that collect parking fees. Paving is already underway for a new Kiss & Ride area. The zone is intended to provide an easy drop-off point for passengers and visitors, while also improving traffic flow around the airport. *DMR*

## Royal Caribbean has project for local artists

Royal Caribbean will select four local artists to create large-scale murals on its newest cruise ship under construction, the *Star of the Seas*. Those selected will receive grants ranging from \$20,000 to over \$100,000. Through its Artist Discovery Program, Royal Caribbean's is promoting emerging artists from the region.

The chosen artists will travel to Turku, Finland, where the ship is being built. They will work with Royal Caribbean's design team. The *Star of the Seas* is scheduled to go into service in August 2025.

Artists who want to compete can contact <https://www.royalcaribbeangroup.com/artist-discovery-program> *DMR*

## Chefs being trained at prison

Four detainees at JICN have begun a two-year MBO 2 chef training program at JICN. They have already earned their MBO 1 diploma in Hospitality, Food, and Food Industry while incarcerated. The training is jointly offered by JICN, SGB, and Fundashon Forma. *DMR*

## Dengue cases increasing

The number of people with dengue on Bonaire has continued to increase. More people are being treated by

their general practitioner and more positive laboratory tests are being reported.

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) warned on February 10 that more dengue (type 3) is circulating in the Caribbean and South America. During last year's outbreak type 2 dengue predominated. This year the more serious type 3 is most prevalent.

Most people infected with a dengue have mild symptoms, but several adults and children have had to be hospitalized in recent months. The Public Health Department recommends precautionary measures and early detection of symptoms. *DMR*

## Greenpeace presses Bonaire's case

Greenpeace and eight Bonaireans continue to press the Bonaire environmental protection case against the Netherlands in court. Greenpeace told the court that Netherlands could reach zero emissions by 2040 if it made a dedicated effort. However, Greenpeace says, Netherlands will meet neither its own legally established environmental goals nor its international treaty obligations.

Greenpeace further accuses Netherlands of violation of human rights treaties and the principle of equality. It says Bonaire does not receive the same environmental protection as the European Netherlands, even though the island is more vulnerable and is therefore entitled to more climate protection spending. The Hague court will consider the Climate Case Bonaire on October 7 and 8 this year. *DMR*

## Organization supports immigrants

The Union of Bonairean Immigrants Foundation (FUIB) says it "helps immigrants with different types of problems, such as residence problems, health problems (for example illegals in need of medical treatment) and other legal or non-legal problems."

According to its press release, FUIB board members stop at snacks and talk to immigrants. They talk to their colleagues at work. They listen carefully to what kind of problems immigrants have. They explain the responsibilities and rights of immigrants. They refer people to FUIB to see what can be done for them.

Every Saturday the Union of Bonairean Immigrants Foundation (FUIB) has a free legal consultant from 4 pm to 6 pm at the Attorney General's Office. Bijkerk in Antriol. Address: Kaya Jose G. Hernandez 16A. *DMR*

## The Hague compliments CN detention practices for juveniles

The Law Enforcement Council has announced it is pleased with the way in which the Caribbean Netherlands Judicial Institution provides for the detention of juveniles and young adults. State Secretary Ingrid Coenradie (Justice and Security) informed the House of Representatives that all recommendations previously made by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment have been followed. *DMR*

## Government gives reason for Starlink shutdown

The Authority for Digital Infrastructure (RDI) instructed Starlink in July 2024 to cease offering satellite services on Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba, as the company did not possess the required concession. Shortly thereafter, Starlink submitted a concession application. Recently, the RDI rejected this application because the company did not meet one specified condition. It was not locally registered in the trade registry of the Chamber of Commerce. RDI says Starlink may reapply for a concession once all the conditions are met. *DMR*



## More playgrounds to be built

The Public Entity Bonaire (OLB) and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) will collaborate to construct more playgrounds. The goal is to create safe, stimulating, and accessible play areas, ensuring that every child on Bonaire can develop physically, so-

cially, and emotionally in a healthy living environment. The agreement was signed at the playground of Nieuw Amsterdam, currently under construction, by Nina den Heyer, Commissioner for Society & Care in Bonaire, Vincent Karremans, State Secretary for Youth, Prevention & Sport at VWS, and Mascha van Werven, Managing Director of Jantje Beton. Photo via RCN

# Cruyff Court opens



Secretary Karremans, Lushanty, Jean Carl and deputy den Heyer cut the ribbon to officially open Cruyff Court. Photo Julie Morgan

Anyone who knows soccer (football) is familiar with the late Johan Cruyff, one of the greatest players in history and the greatest in the Netherlands. Thanks to him and his Cruyff Foundation, Bonaire has expanded the sports opportunities for people with disabilities. February 14 was the official opening of the Cruyff Court at FKPD (Fundashon Kuido pa Personanan Desabilita).

Present at the opening were the Dutch State Secretary for Youth Prevention & Sports at the Ministry of Health, Welfare & Sport (VWS), Vincent Karremans; Commissioner for Society & Care, Bonaire, Nina den Heyer; the Managing Director of the Johan Cruyff Foundation, Niels Meijer and Louella Rooijer, Super-



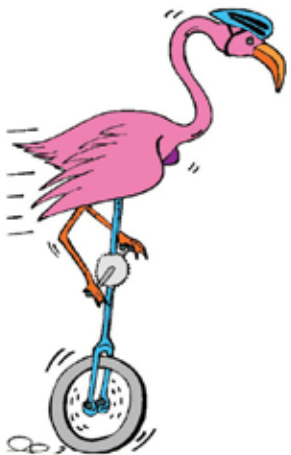
visory Board Member of FKPD.

Karremans said, "Sports and exercise are a must. We were made for it. Even for those who find it difficult at the moment, for example due to a disability. My motto is: everyone off the couch. This beautiful new Cruyff Court on Bonaire will make it easier for many people to get moving today."

The Cruyff Court was given the go ahead two years ago after the Netherlands' push to bring more sports to Bonaire.

Cruyff Court to page 9

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## Cruyff Court continued

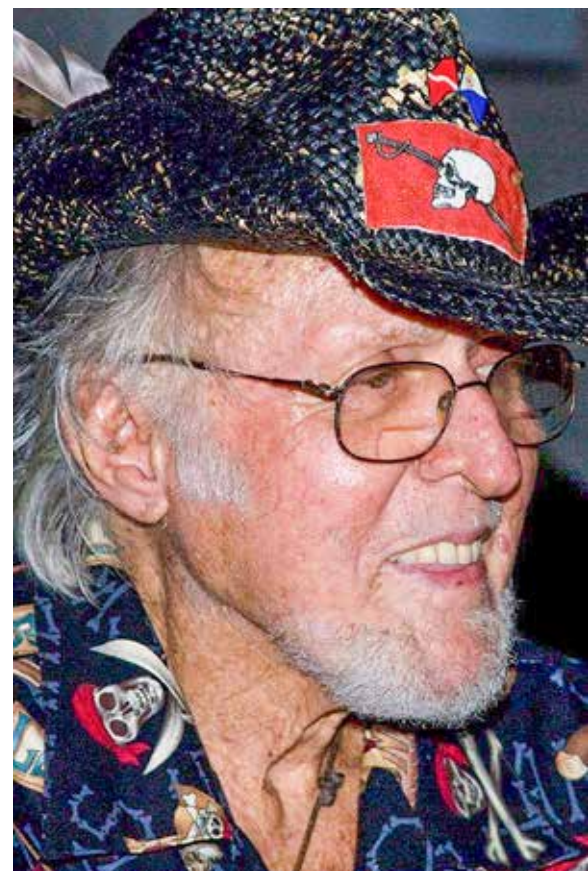
But this court is unique with a special design for mentally and physically challenged adults and children. The court has a ramp for entry, large openings and short astroturf type grass perfect for wheelchairs. It is equipped with soccer goals at each end, four small goals on the short courts for kids, basketball goals and low seating all around for spectators or players that need a timeout. The court is covered for shade and spectator seating is available on two sides. The court is open to everyone.

The Johan Cruyff foundation first began in the U.S. when Johan met a child in his neighborhood with Down Syndrome. The boy was shunned by the other children so Johan began playing with him and built the child's confidence. Through this experience Johan confirmed his idea that through sports children with and without disabilities can learn to discover their talents and gain self-confidence. This growth in turn contributes to their development within society.

The Johan Cruyff Foundation has created approximately 300 courts worldwide.

*Story / Photos Julie Morgan*

**Photos: Managing Director of the Johan Cruyff foundation, Niels Meijer, helps the kids play on the mini soccer court.**



## MARKING A BIRTHDAY 100 days of Captain Don

Captain Don Stewart, conservationist, inventor and father of organized diving on Bonaire would be celebrating his 100th birthday this year on June 25. In honor of this man who taught us all about protecting our ocean and nature and who changed the direction of Bonaire tourism, a three-month celebration will be held from May through July – 100 Days of Captain Don Stewart.

Captain Don's Habitat, the first all-diving resort on Bonaire was started by the Captain himself. The resort will feature special deals on resort stays and diving. The in-house restaurant, Rum Runners, will offer discounts and there will be great deals at Technical Diving Services, the Spa and gift shop. The celebration will include lectures, presentations, parties, raffles, music and great photo opps. The grand event on Don's birthday, June 25 will be like the old days with a free rum punch party, music and snacks.

Mark your calendar. Come celebrate to remember Captain Don Stewart. Contact Habitat Bonaire for information about resort specials.

## Protecting our coral reefs with cleanups



Bonaire's first reef clean ups of the year by Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB) on Feb. 8 and Dive Friends on Feb. 15. Divers turned out ready to work and as always exited the water with big smiles.

**STCB cleanups** concentrate particularly on fishing line as it is harmful to not only turtles but all marine life that can become entangled. The 34 divers gathered enough to fill a huge grey bucket with line, hooks, lures and weights. They also collected a bucketful of bottles, clothing and hats.

**Dive Friends first quarterly cleanup** of the year attracted 37 divers to recover trash at TeAmo Beach. Here are the results: 707 pieces of plastic, 30 pieces of glass and ceramic, 18 pieces of cloth, 52 pieces of metal, 6 pieces of wood, 1 piece of rubber, 12 pieces of paper and wood, 17 pieces of mixed materials, 5 pieces of other, 3 pieces of fiberglass from boat, 1 electrical box and 1 car mirror.

*Story / Photo Julie Morgan*



**COME TO THE KARNAVEL, SEE SCHEDULE PAGE 16.**

# A New Kind of Sunscreen Is Coming to Bonaire

Photo by Julie Morgan

(Part 1) by Bud Gillan, Researcher and Educator

#5 in my Ocean Ecology Series • buddygillan@gmail.com

## Coral...Oh My!

In 1969, Denny Hogan, a Trans World Radio expert tower rigger, stood atop a 760 ft. tower triangle that was swaying in the infamous Bonaire "breeze". Denny was a freediver and one of Bonaire's first scuba divers. Climbing towers kept Denny in great shape and he dove all over the island at places that were not yet named. From on top of the TWR towers Denny saw things we never will. He loved diving right across from the broadcast towers.

One day, on top of the tower he saw a second dark band past a broad white patch in the incredible aqua blue waters. What was that? He told me he had no idea... a valley in the sand, a trench, another reef? That day, he found out....

Crossing the dazzling white sand gap to the outside double reef, he saw the incredible mountain star corals that look like huge toadstools and told us it looked like "Alice in Wonderland". Bonaire's famous double reef structure is still today one of the world's best dives, day or night. For me, it was just love. I was accompanied by a large school of horse-eyed jacks that circled me in their "hello" formation. Leading me to a place where my love still grows but side-by-side with pain from bleaching and viruses and carelessness.

## When Did You Fall in Love with Coral?

Tell me, how did it happen to you. The intensity, the amazement, the hunger to see more? The colors and shapes and zillions of creatures and critters that are still unnamed and unseen. More that we do not know, than what we do? The nightly deepwater migrations from the inky "blackwater" brings larvae and postlarvae and repopulate the reefs with so many species and lifeforms. But tell me, how did it happen to you? How did this symbiosis of plant and animal that make coral...well coral, take your heart and breath away. When and how did this love affair start?

Don't go any further in the article.

Please think for yourselves how you fell in love with corals and reefs. Ask some others how it happened to them. The answers you will get will warm your heart and more. I don't think that love will ever leave you even as the reefs around the world struggle for survival. But go under today and see something you've never seen before. Or a new, old friend again. Maybe a crab zoea, or a clear leptocephalus of a bonefish, or a neon flashing, sea sapphires (dozens recently sighted at Playa Frans). But when did you fall in love with coral (reefs)?

## Reef Science and Why Sunscreens Matter.

There is a dark side to this story. In Part 2, we will go into the new (2024, 2025.) evidence about chemical vs mineral sunscreen. Interesting and hard working groups (like Reef Renewal, STINAPA) are at work around the tropic zones of the world trying to save and grow new corals. Yet every year tons (yes tons) of chemical sunscreens are released in the oceans. Several places (Virgin Islands, Mexico, Florida Keys, Hawaii, et al) have banned or ceased selling chemical sunscreens. Bonaire was (was) one of them. But the research is harsh.

## Florida and Bonaire Both Have Failed.

Six years ago, the WWF (think Panda) funded a science study regarding Bonaire's use of sunscreens. They ended up strongly recommending that all chemical sunscreens sales cease. It was even made into potential legislation for enforcement, but has yet to pass. Still, like Florida, the chemical sunscreens occupy 60-70% of the shelves. Oxybenzone and its chemical cousins have morphed back into prominence. Cruise ships add to this biological magnification. In football it's called "piling on". Put a little math into this and the numbers get painful when 1 oz of sunscreen per person recommendation turns into pounds and pounds per day and much worse per year.

## A New Kind of Sunscreen, to page 17



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# Piskabon has been busy

In a recent Piskabon press conference, President Ernest Martin de Lanoy announced the organization's collaboration with Bon-Lab. All fish caught and sold by Piskabon's 130 fisher members will be tested by Bon-Lab to guarantee its freshness.

De Lanoy said, "We have asked for this for many years. Fish is the highest amount of food, delivered to hotels and restaurants, 1000 kilos every day and it's local and sustainable. We need to guarantee its quality, free from bacteria, healthy, the right temperature and fresh. The fish is taken to a central location for testing by Bon-Lab and then delivered. we don't have to wait."

Piskabon has made all the fishermen aware of the testing. Fisher members can purchase coolers at a less than wholesale price for storing the fish and cheaper ice to keep it fresh.

On March 25-28 and April 1, 2, 3, Piskabon is holding a course just for fishers on business, hygiene and how to become a better fisher. The course will be taught by de Lanoy, Stinapa, the OLB and representatives from the Curaçao fisher community. Fishers attending will receive a certificate of participation.

In the last few years, Piskabon has introduced FADs (Fish Aggregating Device) with GPS location and radar reflectors over the deep waters of Bonaire



The FAD at work in the water attracting fish. Photo via Piskabon



Piskabon members assemble the FAD Photo via Piskabon

to attract pelagic fish. The FADs look a bit like a giant fishing bobber and come with a price tag of \$16,000.

In January, Deputy Angelica Cicilia was on board the boat for the deployment of the fourth FAD six miles offshore at the head of Playa Frans over a depth of almost 6000 ft (1.9k).

Cicilia said, "It was a great cooperation where many hours and long nights were put into the project. The FAD anchored will attract more fish as well as make the fishing easier. A tremendous achievement for our fishermen!"

The goal is to place more FADs at different distances from the coast making it possible for both large and small boats to fish. In 2024 Piskabon received a grant for \$50,000 to work on FADs.

But in 2024, Piskabon's budget was cut from \$150,000 to \$40,000. To resolve the issue of funding for Piskabon, the organization must send a proposal for each individual project – no more blanket funding.

For more information about Piskabon visit their Facebook page. [https://www.facebook.com/piskabon/?locale=nl\\_NL](https://www.facebook.com/piskabon/?locale=nl_NL)

Julie Morgan

## Make Bonaire Accessible

by Ria Evers-Dokter

### Valentine's Day

As a person coming from a Dutch island in the North Sea with a culture different from the Dutch culture, I was never brought up with the concept of "Valentine's Day".

We celebrated the typical Dutch festivities and Christian holidays. Ameland, the island where I was born, used to be independent and that was wild enough. Oh, and of course, we also celebrated Sinterklaas but in a very special and peculiar way.

When we love somebody, we do not talk about that. We show it in our actions. We do things for our loved ones that are useful, that "hit the spot", makes them smile and make you feel special too.

When a child was born into a family or outside the family, that child was very welcome. It was treated like the other children, but the child could get to stay over at granny's a few more times than the other kids.

When clothing had to be bought for festivities, all the children got nice clothes, but a child that was loved mostly got a dress that was just a bit more colorful than the other's clothes. And by all means.... no frilly ones.

A child who was loved was called "pop." But one could never say that a loved child was spoiled. Parents never caressed or kissed each other in front of the children.

So maybe now you understand that I am not familiar with Valentines Day.

I do not understand that you do love the kid who does not get a valentine card. That you do love a parent who does not get a card.

If you have a handicap, are you loved more? Would you get more cards than anyone? Or get nothing at all.

If you are older and you have a same sex friend, would you send each other cards?

If you are an alcoholic or a drug addict, would you get Valentine's cards?

If you look horrific because of some kind of disease, would everybody come and hug and kiss you?

It always seems to me that when you are well behaved and do as is expected from society, you get cards and even presents.

Would it not be nicer if we would celebrate an "appreciation day" instead? Then we could send everybody a card or give everybody presents and nobody should have to feel left out?

So, when you really love somebody, one could tell them that to their face and

thank that person for the things he or she does.

Do you get a card or a present to thank you for what you do or did? Or when you live in a group, the radio DJ would play a record for the whole group, so nobody would feel left out.

Let's just do that. Every now and then we just hug somebody or give them a present because he/she is really appreciated.

Happy Appreciation Day.



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.

# The Sunfish are sailing again

The 2025 Sunfish sailing season is underway with the rejuvenation of Bonaire's Sailing School Association (BSSA). The first contests for club championships held February 9 continue through June. Results will be tallied not only for the club but to select Bonaire's top sailors for the ISCA (International Sunfish Class Association) Sunfish Worlds Championship in Ecuador.

With an all-woman board of president Elisabeth Vos, treasurer Ragnhild Smeets and secretary Christel Dumee, the school has undergone some big changes refurbishing old boats and readying them to sail.

New president Elisabeth Vos said, "We had a lot of cleaning to do to get started again and now we are ready. All the boats are available for sailing students or people who

just want to go out. The fleet committee fixed 13 Sunfishes in three weeks time and there are a few more that might be saved as well. We have a lot of plans for the future and are excited about it."

Competitions were held for all classes: A - Those competing for World's • B - Advanced sailors • C - Beginners • Laser (minimum of three entries) and • Optimist kids aged 8-14. The courses differ slightly per class with A having the longest course. Three races are run back-to-back for A and B. Optimists have a different course.

Candidates for the Sunfish Worlds sail in Sunfish A. The cost to participate is \$50 for the six competition days or \$10 per day. Non-members may participate in a single day competition for the cost of the boat rental



(\$60).

The next race days, barring inclement weather are scheduled for March 9, April 20, May 4, May 25 and June 15. For more infor-

mation visit [BSSA Bonaire Sailing School Association on Facebook](#).

Photo / story Julie Morgan

## Black spaghetti with white bolognese sauce

by Chef Corjan Hoogerheide, Lekker Thuis Restaurant



### For 4 persons

200 g (7 oz) Black (sepia) spaghetti (Canarbo) • 50 g (1/3 C) onion, chopped • 1 celery stalk • 30 g (2.5 T) fennel • 50 g (1.75 oz) carrot • 50 g (1/3 C) zucchini • 1 tomato • 30 gr (1 oz) dried tomato. • 1 clove of garlic, chopped • 1/2 red chili pepper, in small pieces • 2 dl 6.7oz cream • 1 dl (7 T) vegetable stock • 1 dl (7 T) white wine • 50 g (1.76 oz) cream cheese • 200 g (7 oz) wahoo fillet, gently cooked • 8 scampi tails, crispy fried • 30 g (1/3 C) grated cheese • 2 stalks of parsley-chopped • Oil

Cut all vegetables into small cubes. Fry all vegetables in some oil. Extinguish with the white wine and boil a bit. Add the cream, vegetable stock and cream cheese and let it simmer for a while. Add the tomato.

Cook the spaghetti al dente and add it to the sauce, along with the pieces of cooked wahoo. Serve on a plate and add the fried scampi and sprinkle with grated cheese and chopped parsley.

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



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# Reef Glimpses - What's your diving style?

by Dee Scarr

sharks and (not under the same ledge) lobsters.

And then I came to Bonaire, where my diving evolution continued. As a boat divemaster, I could explore the buoyed reefs from Rappel to Klein Bonaire to Pink Beach, and when I taught diving, I learned the rewards of diving one reef, our house reef, over and over.

Those are two of the great joys of Bonaire, of course: being able to dive a single reef over and over, and being able to dive a particular reef any hour of the day or night. Both of those joys have been experienced by Ed and Bernadette de Jonge. They have visited Bonaire for years, staying at Captain Don's Habitat, and diving all over the island. One year, however, they did all their diving on Lamachaca Reef, Captain Don's Habitat's house reef. And, they made sure to be in the water every hour of the twenty-four.

One day, Bernadette decided she wanted to see a gaudy clown crab. Ellen Muller recommended that she look for crab burrows in gray ?? sponges. On her very first dive of serious looking she found a gaudy clown crab! Of course I was impressed, but not nearly as impressed as I was when I realized the creature she had found living in a burrow in the wall of the sponge. Oh yes, and it was less than 1/4" wide from side to side.

One quarter of an inch!

This year Bernadette and Ed have seen, and filmed, two octopuses in a fight to the death. Think about it: some divers might not have noticed the octopuses at all, some may not have realized there were two. Most divers, seeing two octopuses, would watch for a few moments and leave. Bernadette and Ed watched for twenty minutes, until the victor moved away with his dead opponent.

Usually, though, Bernadette and Ed de Jonge, and Mel McCombie, and Julie Morgan, and other amazing critter finders aren't looking for any specific creature, they're looking at everything. And, because each of them has superior buoyancy control skills, and each of them is very knowledgeable about the areas they dive and the creatures who live there, they see more than most divers.



The male sailfin blenny lives in a burrow. When he displays to a female, he extends almost completely out of his burrow, raises the fin for which he was named, lowers the fin, and backs back into his burrow – in less time than it took to read the description. The photographer must have quick reflexes to get an image with the dorsal fin raised. This individual may have been a little slower or more predictable than his fellows, though, because someone was able to bite a chunk out of his dorsal fin. Photo Julie Morgan

When I first began diving, in 1972, there was too much for me to take in all at once. Like many new divers, I ended up looking for big critters – and, of course, missing a lot of other creatures if they weren't specifically shown to me. Drop-offs and reef slopes are perfect for this diving style: the living reefs, habitats of hundreds of different animals, blend together but the diver can easily see a turtle, or a shark, out in the blue water. Post-dive conversations became inventories: "We saw a hammerhead shark and a barracuda and three ..."

One summer, as a relatively new diver, I worked in the Florida Keys and dived Bimini. That diving opened my focus to more than big animals. While diving over a relatively flat bottom, with an occasional coral head or other "oasis," I learned about anemones and their tenants, saw clouds of young grunts, and met a few nurse



Pikeblennies reside in rubble areas, and blend in so well they're tough to see. Once found, however, they retreat into their burrows. Portraits such as this one require the photographer to have the patience and the skill to wait motionlessly for minutes at a time, until the fish finally feels comfortable enough to emerge and look around. Photo Julie Morgan

So, what's your dive style?



Scarr's Bonaire Harbor Healing Project (BHH) is still ongoing. It began by informing users of the Old Pier about how batteries poison the water; numbers fell from more than 100 batteries removed from the bottom the year before the campaign, to fewer than 10 batteries the year after.

Information on [touchthesea.com](http://touchthesea.com) about collecting fishing line has been shared by Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire with spectacular results, especially on line-collecting dives beneath the Old Pier.

## A Garden? Just Do It!

### Chayote

by Angliet, Nature Lover

As I have said many times, gardening is a way to make new friends and to keep an ongoing friendship. I am from Surinam and for 40 years I have been friends with one of my former neighbors born in Indonesia. In the beginning we started talking about food and vegetables common in both of our countries. The way of gardening in our countries was the same and so there was always a vegetable, dish or gardening we had in our daily conversation. We liked to prepare rare cultural dishes for each other and so teaching and learning have been a part of our close friendship. Of course we had more subjects to discuss but after decades of friendship, gardening is still a main topic. Not so long ago I visited her at her home in the Netherlands and we took a walk through her garden.

The visit was awesome with herbs, flowers, tomatoes, leafy vegetables, eggplant, pumpkin and a chayote vine that was crawling all over the place full of its fruit that



look like pears. I was astonished to see all the baskets full of this produce. I have seen chayote in Warehouse but never tried to grow it. My friend gave me a full bag and I made all kind of dishes with them. The nice thing about this fruit is it can be wokked, cooked, stewed and can go fresh in salads, smoothies and as a fresh peppery chutney it's great. One can eat the whole fruit with skin, seeds, the leaves like spinach and the thick roots instead of potatoes. Because I had such a great experience with

it in making many dishes on my visit, I took some of the fruit to plant in Bonaire.

This fruit has an odd Dutch seed that simply germinates from its own fruit. It lives first from its own food while it starts growing. Then you put the growing part in a pot covering half of it by rich soil. The growing stem will grow up straight and then crawls out after a while because it's a vine. Re-plant it in a big container or straight into the garden rich soil. Let it crawl into small branched trees like guyaba or cherry. Chayote likes sun and a good amount of water.

If you want to plant it yourself, look for the fruit at Warehouse. If you see a tiny little tongue coming out of the fruit then it has a chance of rooting.

The fruits can be stored up to four months in a cool, dark place and one fruit can weight up to 700 g so plenty to feed your family and friends.

## A Garden? Chayote, to page 17

# Spoken Word performed at Zozo



**Babs Gons.** Photo Julie Morgan

The Bonaire Public Library organized the first Spoken Word performances in 2024 to stimulate creativity and self-expression in the Bonairean community. The popular performances continue this year. They give the people of Bonaire an opportunity to make their voices heard and the workshops increase participants literary skills.

The most recent Spoken Word on February 16 at Zozo Ranch was the result of a weeklong workshop with poet, coach, debater and writer of *Boka Yen / A Mouthful* (Wintertuin Curaçao), Nathania Engelhardt. Included was a one-time digital class with Babs Gons, performance poet and artistic director of the Poetry Circle and Poet of the Fatherland (2023-2025).

Engelhardt's workshop included spoken word elements and metaphors. She encouraged the participants to transfer their ideas from their head to poetry and just let the words go.

Gons advised the participants, if they felt insecure about the process to just do it anyway and find their voice. Seven participants of the workshop did let go, find their voice and spoke their words before a packed crowd. Both Engelhardt and Gons performed excerpts from their published works of poetry.

In her piece *Bunita Simia* Maidelene Martijn spoke of the pain and frustrations of today's youth. She criticized the attitude of the older generation who point fingers at the youth's problems while being responsible for creating these issues through their neglect and lack of care.

Rocio Meza's *Bai bo luga* spoke of pain and frustration about the discrimination and rejection she faces due to her background. Through her story, she questions the attitudes of those around her, highlighting the verbal violence and disregard towards her because of her different opinion and origin. She ended by saying that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity.

Daisy Abraham's work *Te eperare* expresses feelings of pain and longing, reflecting on the uncertainty of love and the absence of a loved one. She speaks of the deep emptiness her heart feels, which cannot be easily hidden. Her yearning for sincere love, full of respect and loyalty, is strong, but she acknowledges that not everyone will experience this in life.

In *Soldachi*, Meryam Manaa describes her search for a temporary and imperfect place to feel at home. It's a symbolic search for connection, but without holding on, because 'home' is in her nature to be shared.

Ovier Maduro's *Perspective* describes violent events highlighting the senselessness of violence and how innocent people can be affected. He writes it is the responsibility of the police and society and calls for an end to the cycle of violence.

In *Metamorfosis*, Zaira Martina writes:  
Feeling a little uncomfortable is normal. Like a butterfly trapped, living with clipped wings—majestic and



**Nathania Engelhardt.** Photo Julie Morgan

beautiful, yet bound, unable to shine. Who taught the butterfly that the cocoon is its rightful place? A world where oppression is tolerated until it explodes, where endless forgiveness is mistaken for peace, and where being "good" means erasing yourself.

"I'm stepping out of this skin that no longer serves me." No more limiting beliefs, no more fears holding me hostage. I am learning to trust my own power and sensitivity.

"Call me the Butterfly of Clarity. In a world of chaos, I choose to listen to my body and heart. My clarity is the flame of my passion, the key to my mission, and the force breaking chains of oppression.

For more information about the Spoken Word or other library events visit [Biblioteka Publiko Boneiru](#) on Facebook.

gg

## Creating Optimal Health

by Irene da Cunda Costa

### What is Biohacking?

The term "biohacking" as it is going to be used in this article was popularized in early 2010 by Dave Asprey, the creator of Bulletproof Coffee. Biohacking is the practice of making changes to your body, mind and biology to optimize performance, health, and well-being. It includes a wide range of techniques, from simple lifestyle changes like diet and exercise to advanced methods like genetic modifications, wearable tech and even implantable devices. Our deeper knowledge of human physiology helps us come up with more efficient ways to achieve better results. In a way biohacking is like finding effective shortcuts to achieve better results with less effort. Many of the biohacking practices that are going to be mentioned in this article, were already described in previous issues.

Biohacking aims to improve cognitive function (memory, focus, creativity), physical health (longevity, energy levels and strength), mental well-being (stress reduction, mood enhancement), sleep quality, recovery and healing (muscle repair and better immune function).

Some biohacking practices can be available to anyone, others involve some expenses and others are only available to the rich and famous.

Nutritional biohacking can be as simple as intermittent fasting which only requires a watch and the commitment to do it. You can also try a ketogenic diet, which involves specific foods and a professional nutritionist to guide you to do it correctly. The sky is the limit, and you can also start adding supplements to your diet according to your own needs, age, activity, etc.

Neurohacking aims at enhancing brain function through meditation, nootropics, or brainwave stimulation. Meditation is a zero cost activity, once you understand what it is you only need to do it. Nootropics, also known as "smart drugs" are a diverse group of medicinal substances whose action improves human thinking, learning, and memory, especially in cases where these functions are impaired. Nootropics include Panax Ginseng, Ginkgo Biloba, Ashwagandha, Rhodiola, Lion's mane mushrooms and Guarana among others.

Other biohacking practices include:

1. **Cold Exposure & Heat Therapy** – Ice baths and saunas can enhance resilience and recovery.
2. **Red Light Therapy** – Use red or near-infrared light (660nm–850nm) for 10-20 minutes daily may improve skin health, recovery, and energy.
3. **Breathing Techniques & Meditation** – Improve focus and reduce stress with breathwork (e.g., Wim Hof method).
4. **Super Slow weightlifting**, to increase muscle mass, bone density, and mitochondrial health.
5. **HIIT** (high-intensity interval training).

### 6. Tabata training.

7. **Sleep Optimization.** Sleep is when the body repairs, detoxifies, and regenerates. Poor sleep shortens lifespan. Maintain a consistent sleep schedule, block blue light at night, get morning sunlight to reset circadian rhythms and keep your bedroom cool (65°F or 18°C)

8. **Grounding (Earthing).** Walking barefoot on natural surfaces can reduce inflammation and balance circadian rhythms.

9. **Breathwork & Meditation** lowers stress and improves oxygenation

10. **Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT)** increases oxygen levels, promotes healing and may lengthen telomeres.

For more advanced biohacking, some people explore genetic editing, stem cell therapy and neural implants. These are used for tissue regeneration and anti-aging and they are quite expensive, come with more risks and also some ethical concerns.



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.

# 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** <https://www.facebook.com/beachtennisbonaire/>  
<https://beachtennisbonaire.com>

**Bridgeclub Bonaire** organizes a bridge evening Wed. 7:30 - 10:30 p.m. All levels are welcome. Info: 795-0128 (whatsapp text), [bridgeclubbonaire@gmail.com](mailto:bridgeclubbonaire@gmail.com). <https://www.facebook.com/bridgeclubbonaire>

**Comedy at Yhanni's Arepas** Saturdays 7:30 p.m. \$15 includes a welcome drink and snack. March 15, April 12, May 24, June 21

**Consultancy open to all immigrants and/or refugees** every Saturday 4 to 6 p.m. at Bijkerk's law office in Antriol. Call 796 2650 (abog. Bijkerk) or 787 2373 (FUIB - Union of Bonairean Immigrants).

**Diver Safety.** Hosted by Jason Buttenshaw who holds presentations the third Sunday of the month 6:30 p.m. at Sugar Thief, 8 Kaya Inglaterra.

**Paws and Foot Prints bi-weekly dog walking group.** Every other Wednesday 8 a.m. for an hour at Seru Largu. Signup by sending a WhatsApp message to 599-701-4989 no later than 2 p.m. the day before the walk (so we know how many dogs to bring)

**Pickleball. • Chinese Assoc. Kaminda Sorobon, Blue Building:** Tues. & Thurs 6-8 p.m. Sat. 3 to 5 p.m. \$1 per hour. • **Sports Hall Jorge Nicolaas, Kaya Amsterdam:** Sun. 10 a.m. to 12 noon. \$2 per hour. Beginners: 9 - 10 a.m. \$2 per hour.


**Rosicrucian Order, AMORC in Bonaire** Contact Michiel Bijkerk, tel: 796 2650, e-mail: abogado.bijkerk@gmail.com


**Sunfish Race Days:** Barring inclement weather: March 9, April 20, May 4, May 25 and June 15. Visit BSSA Bonaire Sailing School Association on Facebook.

**Tennis** In January and February adults will play a doubles tennis competition on Eddie's courts. Everyone (18+) is welcome to join. Register with the association: email [info@bonairetennisassociation.com](mailto:info@bonairetennisassociation.com) or app with 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 at 7:30 p.m.** Feb. 24 - Dive Friends Yellow Submarine; March 3 - Divi Flamingo; March 10 - Toucan Diving; March 17 - TBC; March 24th - Toucan Diving ß - Divi Resort. Nicole Pelletier of the Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation. Email: [nicole.pelletier@mantatrust.org](mailto:nicole.pelletier@mantatrust.org) ; [Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation facebook](https://www.facebook.com/CaribbeanIslandsMantaConservation)

 **Reef Renewal Bonaire.** Mondays 5:30 p.m. Breakfast Area – 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 presentations at Yellow Submarine, every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month, 8 p.m. See facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/bonaireturtles/>

<b>You can help keep Bonaire clean</b>	
Saturdays	<b>One Hour Cleanup Power.</b> Weekly coastal clean up every Sat., 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Location on FB: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/OneHourCleanUpPower/">https://www.facebook.com/OneHourCleanUpPower/</a>
Sunday, March 9	<b>Clean Coast Bonaire.</b> 8-10 a.m. Te Amo. Donate your time. Work as a citizen scientist to collect marine litter & data. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=clean%20coast%20bonaire">https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=clean%20coast%20bonaire</a> .
Saturday, Feb. 15	<b>Quarterly Clean up Dive, Dive Friends.</b> 9 a.m. Location TBA. Everyone is welcome. If you don't dive, you can snorkel; if you don't snorkel, you can help out on shore. <a href="https://www.divefriendsbonaire.com/eco-activities/quarterly-clean-up-dives/">https://www.divefriendsbonaire.com/eco-activities/quarterly-clean-up-dives/</a>

## Church Services

### Roman Catholic Churches Bonaire

- **Parish La Birgen di Coromoto (ANTRIOL):** Holy Masses: Mon-6:30 a.m.; Tues & Thur -7:30 p.m. Sat-6 p.m. (English) / 7:30 p.m.; Sun-7 a.m. / 10 a.m. / 6 p.m.
- **Parish San Bernardo (PLAYA):** Holy Masses: Mon,Wed,Fri, Sat-7 p.m. Sun-9 a.m. / 7 p.m.
- **Parish Luis Beltran (RINCON):** Holy Masses: Tues,Wed,Thur, Sat-7 p.m. Sun-7 a.m. / 10 a.m.

**International Bible Church of Bonaire (HATO):** Kaya Papago 104. Sun: Worship Service & Children's Church 9 a.m. Sunday School 10:45 a.m. Services are conducted in English.

### United Protestant Congregation

- **(KRALENDIJK),** Plaza Wilhelmina: Sun 10 a.m. Services in Dutch
- **(RINCON)** Kaya C. D. Crestian: Sun 8:30 a.m. Services in Papiamentu/Dutch

# 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 9am till 4pm** 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. ):** Find the market at Kaya Gilberto F Croes, located just past Caribbean Laundry. Saturdays 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Pakus raises funds for the Animal Shelter by selling recycled and affordable clothes, furniture, books, music, housewares and more.

**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 until Friday, Feb. 28	<b>Artistic Journey Exhibit - Delno Tromp &amp; Gabrielle Wilson</b> Terramar Museum, Kaya Isla Riba 3, Kralendijk
Thursday, Feb. 20	<b>Kick-off for the Bonaire Climate Table</b> 6 - 8 p.m. at Corallium Hotel & Villas Bonaire. Please confirm your attendance via <a href="https://infoklimaattafel-bonaire.com">infoklimaattafel-bonaire.com</a> See page 17.
Friday, Feb. 21	<b>International Mother Language Day Papiamentu dictation competition.</b> 7 p.m. at Plaza Resort. Register via: <a href="mailto:akademiapapiamentu@gmail.com">akademiapapiamentu@gmail.com</a> or via WhatsApp 786 1110 no later than Friday morning, February 21 at 12:00.
Feb 22 - March 8	<b>Karnaval</b> <b>Feb. 22.</b> Karnaval Youth Rincon • <b>Feb. 23.</b> Karnaval Youth Playa • <b>Feb. 28.</b> Jump Up Elderly • <b>Feb. 29.</b> Teen Parade <b>March - Main Karnaval Parades</b> <b>Mar. 1.</b> Adult Grand Karnaval Parade in Rincon • <b>Mar. 2.</b> Adult Grand Karnaval Parade in Kralendijk (Playa) • <b>Mar. 3.</b> Children's Farewell Karnaval Parade • <b>Mar. 4.</b> Adult Farewell Grand Karnaval Nighttime Parade in Kralendijk with the Burning of King Momo at Midnight • <b>Mar. 8.</b> Fiesta Closes with Awards.
Saturday, Feb. 22	<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.
March 11, 12, 15	<b>Geology class with Andre Nahr</b> \$140 <a href="mailto:geology.andrenahr@gmail.com">geology.andrenahr@gmail.com</a>
Saturday, Mar. 15	<b>An Evening of Love Songs at SACA &amp; Zara's!</b> Pianist Claudia Cassier and Tenor Bradley Howard. 7:30-9 p.m. \$30. Tickets at Artisan Bakery Bonaire and Del Mar Books. See page 17.  <b>Fernand and Friso Comedy Night</b> at Yhanni's Arepas. 7:30 p.m. \$15 includes a welcome drink and a snack.
Wednesday, Mar. 19	<b>Bonaire Animal Shelter Bonaire Charity Dinner &amp; Auction</b> 6 p.m. at BINA Restaurant, Chogogo Resort Bonaire. More details later.
<b>COMING UP</b>	
Sunday, May 4	<b>Special Olympics Bonaire Walk-a-Thon</b>
May 22 - May 25	<b>PWA World Cup for youth windsurfers on Bonaire.</b> Afterwards the young windsurfers can fly to their sister island, Aruba, to compete in the <b>Aruba Hi-Winds 2025, May 28 - June 2</b>

## 2025 Cruise Ship Schedule

DATE	TIME	CRUISE SHIP	PIER
Wed. February 19	0730-2200	CARNIVAL HORIZON 4683 guests	South
Fri. February 21	0800-2200	EMERALD PRINCESS 3577 guests	North
Sat. February 22	0530-1930	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS 2417 guests	North
Mon. February 24	0730-1800	SIRENA 824 guests	North
Tues. February 25	0630-1800	BRITANNIA 3674 guests	North
	0800-2100	EXPLORA II 922 guests	South
Wed. February 26	0700-1500	EURODAM 2731 guests	North
Sun. March 2	0600-1800	CELEBRITY ECLIPSE 3013 guests	North
Mon. March 3	0930-1800	EMERALD PRINCESS 3577 guests	North
Tues. March 4	0730-1700	CELEBRITY BEYOND 3260 guests	South
Wed. March 5	0830-2200	CARNIVAL HORIZON 4683 guests	South
	1100-2300	THE WORLD 699 guests	North
Thurs. March 6	0830-1500	CELEBRITY REFLECTION 3046 guests	South





Chayote is like a pumpkin but it is a member of the cucumber family. It's originally from South America. The Aztec and Mayans cultivated it and called it Cho-Cho and Chucha. Other names nowadays are: citroen aardappel, Klim aardappel, guatila, chouchou, shoko, mirliton, Christophine, cidra, centinarja, pipinola and habusiami. Its latin name is *Sechium edulis*.

This is a very healthy fruit / vegetable. It contains: protein, carbohydrates, sugar, omega 6 and 3, fibers, vitamin A, B1-B2-B3-B5-B6-B11 and vitamin C-D-E-K. Minerals are: Calcium, phosphorus, iron, magnesium, iodine, copper, zinc, selenium.

Health benefits: The leaves are good against blood pressure and keep the veins healthy. Very good for the belly and the stomach and it balances the bacteria in the colon system. This plant can keep you away from bad health. Needless to say: plant it now in soil that drains well that holds water well.



Angliet grew up in the Surinam jungle, moved to the Netherlands as a teen, and 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.

**Science Says There's Hope.**

But what if a sunscreen contained coral nutrients for growth and transcribing new mRNA. New research (2025) out of the University of Derby in Ireland, known for its marine science, coral expertise, and genetics acumen, has shown a potential pathway and research to helping coral grow by embedding known coral nutrients (thank you Reef Renewal) in an effective new mineral sunscreen called...Coral Care™ from Stream-2Sea. Clever name, but not so fast. This new kind of reef and climate safe sunscreen is available now at VIP Diving and Dive Friends. Part 2 will examine this science research from Ireland, et al. Coral Care™ will be here soon and thanks to S2S CEO, Autumn Blum, a reef lover if there ever was one, we can see for ourselves. "In the meanwhile Florida and Bonaire, we can do better!" to be continued next issue.

Bud Gillan; Photo Julie Morgan



**Girls just want to have fun**

And that is exactly what they did at the first ever Beads & Charms workshop for kids at Sobremesa on February 15. Held by Soul Sparkle's Celestine Hoogenvaard and Sobremesa, girls ages 6 and up had a chance to make their own sparkles and beaded jewelry.

Hoogenvaard said, "There is not a lot of art on the island, and this influences the kids to be creative and social. They choose to be here and share their creativity with each other. They really like making something of their own creation."

Check the Sobremesa Facebook calendar for the next monthly workshop. Cost is \$15 or two classes for \$25.

Story / Photo Julie Morgan

**KICK-OFF 6 P.M. THURSDAY, FEB. 20TH**

**Bonaire Climate Table**

On Feb. 20, 2025 at the Corallium Hotel & Villas Bonaire The Climate Table will bring together residents, businesses, and organizations to discuss solutions for the effects of climate change. The program includes presentations by Climate Envoy Jaime de Bourbon de Parme, meteorologist Pédzi Flores-Girigori, and youth representative Sion Janga. An interactive session will encourage participants to contribute ideas for a climate-resilient Bonaire in 2050.

The Climate Table is chaired by former interim Lieutenant Governor Nolly Oleana. The goal is to develop a widely supported climate plan with concrete measures to mitigate the impact of climate change and protect Bonaire's nature and community.

Please register via [infocklimaattafel-bonaire.com](http://infocklimaattafel-bonaire.com)

**Our apologies**

In our story on the World Wetlands Day fair held Feb. 2 (*The Bonaire Reporter*, Issue 3, Feb.5-19, 2025) we didn't mention the nature group CARIBSS who also contributed to the fair's success. In their booth at the fair, **CARIBSS (Caribbean Speleological Society)** shared valuable insights on the connection between Bonaire's caves and its wetlands, an important but often over-looked aspect of conservation.

Claudia Cassler, piano

Bradley Howard, Tenor

Tickets available at Artisan Bakery Bonaire Kaya Grandi 67 and Del Mar Books Kaya Soeur Bartola 13A

**CONCERT**

Love Songs

\$30

Saturday, 15 MARCH 2025  
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# Pets of the Week



## Meet Bonnie and Clyde.

These siblings are 7 months old. Clyde is black and white, Bonnie is a tabby.

They were brought in together after they were found wandering the streets. Clyde is very affectionate and will come for attention, but Bonnie, on the other hand, is the opposite. She does enjoy your pets and love, she just needs a little more time. Even though during the day they go their separate ways, Clyde is always around to comfort his sister.

Bonnie and Clyde really are partners in crime and can not be without each other.

So we really hope they can be adopted together.

*Photo/story: Marissa Lamers*

**Bonnie and Clyde**

## Meet Sparky.

Sparky is a little ball of energy with short legs and a big personality! Always in a good mood, he's a true people dog who loves being around humans. He gets along great with all the puppies at the shelter, showing off his playful and social side. Sparky is super eager to learn, though he could use a bit of training to help him become the best little buddy he can be. At almost 6 months old, he's ready to find his forever home and bring his fun, loving vibe with him wherever he goes!

*Bo Attevelt*

*Photo Job Junier, Kokomo media*



**Sparky**

**If you would like to meet our cats and dogs, please come to Animal Shelter Bonaire, Kamin-da 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)



## Bonaire's sky park 2025 Planet Parade

*by Graham Jones. See full article at:*

<https://www.timeanddate.com/news/astronomy/planet-parade-2025>

At a latitude of 12.2019° N Bonaireans can join others in latitudes between 3°S and 42°N and view a planet parade for a few days only this month, around February 23–26.

**Graham Jones of timeanddate.com writes that:** The start of 2025 has been a spectacular time to see the planets. Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn have been easy to spot with the naked eye, while Uranus and Neptune have been well positioned for observers with binoculars or a telescope. Many have been calling it a planet parade.

Toward the end of February, Mercury joins the parade. Orbiting close to the Sun, Mercury can be tricky to spot: it will appear in the evening twilight, close to the point on the horizon where the Sun sets.

However, in the same part of the sky, as Mercury joins the planetary lineup, Saturn leaves. The ringed planet is edging closer to the Sun, and becoming more hidden in the Sun's bright glare.

**Timeanddate.com asked their staff: How often are all the planets above the horizon at the same time, in a reasonably dark sky?**

The answer is: Not very often, and then only for a certain area of the globe. But there are a few days this month when this rare alignment of the Sun and the planets takes place.

**Timeanddate defines a dark sky**

Two conditions for a dark-sky planet parade were set. Timeanddate looked for

periods when, from some location in the world:

The Sun is 6 degrees or more below the horizon, and every planet (including Uranus and Neptune) is 6 degrees or more above the horizon.

Why do we want the Sun to be at least 6 degrees below the horizon? As we all know, the sky doesn't immediately get dark when the Sun sets. Instead, we enter a period of civil twilight, where the sky remains lit up, and only the brightest planets and stars can be seen.

Civil twilight continues until the Sun has reached a point 6 degrees below the horizon: this is the start of nautical twilight. The sky is still not completely dark—the horizon is still visible—but more planets and stars can now be seen.

And why do we want the planets to be a certain distance above the horizon? If a planet is too close to the horizon, it is difficult or impossible to see. We can't "look up" to see the planet—instead, we have to look in a more horizontal direction. This means we have to look through more of Earth's atmosphere, making the planet dimmer, or even invisible.

In addition, objects close to the horizon are often blocked by hills, buildings, and other obstacles. There are no firm rules about this: we picked 6 degrees as a convenient lower limit for the planets, but we could have chosen a different value.

## Animal Shelter Bonaire

**SAVE THE DATE! Charity Dinner & Auction**

Join us for a magical evening in support of Animal Shelter Bonaire!

**Wednesday, March 19, 2025, 6 p.m. at BINA Restaurant, Chogogo Resort Bonaire**

**An unforgettable night filled with great food, exciting auctions, and a chance to make a difference for our furry friends**  
**More details about this event coming soon so stay tuned!**



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