



BONAIRE The REPORTER

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What is Bonaire's Maskarada?

Photo Julie Morgan

The island of Bonaire begins the start of the new year, not just with fireworks but with one of the oldest living cultural expressions in the Caribbean, the Maskarada. From January 1 to Three Kings Day, January 6, these masked players, accompanied by their band, make visits around the island dancing and performing small plays.

Like many of Bonaire's cultural traditions, we don't ask why, but instead accept them as a part of history and enjoy. But Nos Zjilea, the monthly cultural presentation at Mangazina di Rei, does ask why and does their best to provide the answers with knowledgeable guests. In the January edition of Nos Zjilea, the Maskarada once again donned their costumes and masks to make a unique and possibly final appearance until January 1, 2027.

Guest speaker Bob Harms, ethnographer and writer, who has researched and studied Afro-Creole traditions of Curaçao and Bonaire for over 30 years was on hand at Nos Zjilea to shed some light on the mystery of Bonaire's Maskarada.

The Maskarada is linked to the period around Christmas when enslaved people weren't working as it was between times of agricultural work in December and January. The enslavers would give the workers time off but illegally cancel their

weekly food rations.

With time off, the slaves organized collective labor groups called "combito's" and instead of working "for the man" they helped each other repairing, building homes,

or working at their kunukus. They would also socialize. They would play the Tambu or Bari' (drums) and dance in masks to express their own identity, solidarity and spirit.

Harms said, "The Maskarada

was a form of escape and had elements of symbolic resistance. The sharing and gathering can be understood as an act of solidarity and quiet resistance against the harsh conditions of enslaved life.

There is no specific archival documentation that definitively dates the origin of the Maskarada to the period of slavery...The tradition may have taken shape on Bonaire after the abolition of slavery when colonial ordinances restricting the gathering of formerly enslaved people and people of color were gradually relaxed."

The Maskarada probably developed around the end of the 19th century during the time people began traveling between Venezuela and Bonaire. Several regions in Venezuela had traditional masked parades during the weeks around Christmas that most likely influenced Bonaireans as they invented their own Maskarada.



Maskarada players and Bob Harms visit Mangazina di Rei. Photo Julie Morgan

Maskarada at Nos Zjilea to page 12

The Netherlands has formed a governing coalition



The new coalition: Henri Bontenbal (CDA), Dilan Yesilgöz (VVD) and Rob Jetten (D66). Photo David van Dam / de Volkskrant

The Netherlands is now being governed by the Jetten I Cabinet. Rob Jetten's party, the progressive Democrats 66 (D66), has formed a coalition with the center-right People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), and the moderate Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA). Jetten's D66 and Geert Wilders right-wing populist Party for Freedom (PVV) were tied with 26 seats each in the 150-seat Parliament. But other parties were not interested in forming a coalition with Wilders. In the 2023 election PVV won 37 seats. But Wilders had to appoint Schoof as his stand-in for prime minister in order to get other parties to work with his. The new government will likely be sworn in on February 23.

DMR

The Jetten coalition strikes new tone in supporting BES

The incoming Dutch Prime Minister, Rob Jetten, has said he is proud of what coalition plans to do for the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom, and especially for Bonaire, Statia, and Saba. The coalition recognizes that people on the BES islands should be supported according to full Dutch standards of livelihood security. A €30 million allocation is already planned as structural investment in raising the social minimum in BES, and there are plans for a special Caribbean growth fund.

The new coalition is getting off to a fast start in increasing the government's support of the islands. Legislation is already being proposed in The House of Representatives that would double of the energy allowance for this year. And the BES Housing Act has already been approved by the cabinet. The new housing act will encourage more construction and better maintenance of social housing.

Not all the news is encouraging to the islands regarding the new government however. People were hoping a member of D66 would be appointed State Secretary for Kingdom Relations in the Jetten cabinet. But VVD politician Eric van der Burg is likely to fill the position. Van der Burg made working visits to the islands previously as State Secretary for Asylum and did not leave behind a positive impression. After the negative and coercive attitude of Zsolt Szabó, people were hoping to work with a more constructive State Secretary. DMR



Heera Dijk
Member for D66



Eric van der Burg, prospective State Secretary for Kingdom Relations

The islands also have a declared friend in D66 Member of Parliament Heera Dijk. She has been educating herself about the islands and their cultures, even taking a Papiamentu course. Dijk wants to encourage financial investments in the islands and to enforce changes within the House. She says the adoption of needed measures are too often delayed by lack of communication and cooperation between multiple ministries

Judge rules Dutch not protecting Bonaire

According to a January 28 press release from Greenpeace, a Dutch judge made history when he ruled that the Netherlands breached the European Convention on Human Rights. The Court found the Dutch State in violation of multiple provisions of the Convention, citing discriminatory treatment of citizens of Bonaire and a failure by the Dutch State to both reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect people against the current impacts of climate change.

Greenpeace went to court on behalf of a small group of Bonaireans. Onnie Emerenciana, a plaintiff in the Bonaire Climate Case, said: "Finally, The Hague can no longer ignore us." Greenpeace seemed to be celebrating for the same reason. The breadth and complexity of the ruling likely assures Greenpeace will be harder to ignore too.



Onnie Emerenciana and Jackie Bernabella residents of Bonaire, Marieke Vellekoop, director of Greenpeace Netherlands Photo via Greenpeace

State Secretary for Kingdom Relations Eddie van Marum said, "The judge issued a strong ruling today regarding the differential treatment of Bonaire residents compared to residents of the European

Netherlands. The cabinet takes this ruling very seriously." Members of the legal profession seem pleased with the ruling as well. DMR

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Dee Scarr's Reef Glimpses

will return soon



Planting Today for the Island of Tomorrow

For Peter Montanus, caring for nature has always been part of who he is. Throughout his working life, he focused on environmental protection. Now that he is retired, that same commitment continues, just in a different form. Outdoors. Hands in the soil. Trees growing where there once was uniformity.

Peter volunteers with Tera Barra, an organization dedicated to restoring diversity to Bonaire's vegetation. At first glance, the island may appear green. But Peter knows that much of the landscape consists of only a few tree species. Over time, human intervention has simplified the ecosystem, making it more vulnerable.

Tera Barra works to reverse that trend. By cultivating dozens of different tree species, the organization helps enrich natural areas and gardens across this island. For Peter, this work is about restoring balance. Giving nature room to recover. And strengthening the island for the future.

Nature, he believes, is not an abstract idea. It affects how people feel. Why



naturalesabonaire.com
NTBDN
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visitors come. And how the island can sustain itself. When nature suffers, so does everything connected to it.

Working outdoors feels like a natural continuation of his life's work. Planting. Watching things grow. Seeing change

happen slowly, but surely.

Peter's story is a quiet reminder that caring for Bonaire does not end when a career does.

It simply takes a new shape.

Nos ta biba di naturalesa.



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HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY

POLICE REPORT

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

Meet KPCN's new community officer



Victoria Melaan is the new community officer for Antriol. Victoria has worked as a police officer in the Caribbean Netherlands for 17 years. Previously, she served as the community officer on Saba for three years.

Property crimes

Feb. 3. Two black OUXI V-8 fat bikes were stolen from an apartment complex on Bulevar Julio A. Abraham. The fat bikes were parked in front of the apartment complex and were stolen overnight.

Jan. 30. 2:30 a.m. A man, 28 was arrested on Kaya C.E.B. Hellmund for taking a helmet from a parked scooter without permission.

Arrests

Feb. 5. 11:30 a.m. A man, 32, was arrested on Kaminda Lagun for vandalism and threats. The suspect had destroyed property at a residence and threatened several people with death.

Feb. 3. A man, 65, was arrested for assaulting a hospital employee.

Feb. 2. A man, 18, was arrested on suspicion of threats with a weapon and assault when the suspect threatened his neighbors with a machete during a fight.

Feb. 1. A boy, 16, was arrested for attempted theft and disobeying an official order. Officers responding to a report of a suspicious situation at a tourist accommodation found three boys on fat bikes who attempted to flee when seeing the police. After a car and foot chase, one suspect was apprehended. The suspect repeatedly disobeyed an official order, after which officers were able to handcuff him. His fat bike was confiscated.

Jan. 26. Police arrested three minors on suspicion of violating the Opium Act. Police were checking out information about stolen goods in an abandoned building behind the Playa church. During a search of the building and its surroundings, three boys were found. A bag containing a laptop, a mobile phone, cigarettes, and a pencil case was found inside the building. Inside one of the cigarette packets, police found several small bags containing a substance suspected of containing narcotics. Since none of the individuals claimed possession of the substances found, the three boys, all aged 16, were arrested.

Traffic accidents

Under the policy 'botsen is blazen' ('to collide is to blow') a breath test is given drivers who have accidents.

Feb. 5. 3:20 p.m. A car rolled over on Kaminda Gurubu landing on its roof in some bushes. The driver was given a breathalyzer test, which confirmed no alcohol consumption. The driver was fined for driving without a valid license.

Feb. 2. 7:30 a.m. A car and a motorcycle collided at the intersection of Kaya Gilberto F. Croes and Kaya Italia. The motorcyclist was injured and taken to the hospital. Due to the priority of medical care, a breath test could not be administered to the motorcyclist.

Driving under the influence

Drivers who register a positive result on a breath test given at their vehicles are arrested and taken to the police station for a breath analysis. Drivers are legally required to submit to a breath test when requested to do so by a police officer.

From Jan. 31 to Feb. 5. Police reported that 12 drivers were arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. Police stopped one driver for driving with a defective left brake light. Another driver was involved in a collision in a parking lot. This driver refused to follow police instructions and did not cooperate with the breath test at the police station. Three single vehicle collisions were recorded: a car and a minibus collided with lampposts, and a car ran off a dirt road into the woods near Santa Clara. In the last case the vehicle was found in the woods with the engine running, while the driver was still behind the wheel. Another driver more conveniently crashed her car into a concrete barrier in front of the police station. Two driving licenses were confiscated. Other drivers were banned from driving for bans lasting 1-, 3- and 5 hours. Three drivers had no driving licenses and two had no insurance.

Saturday, Jan. 31 Police held a scheduled alcohol check on Kaya Libertador Simon Bolivar. Six drivers were stopped and three were arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol. Two tickets were issued for driving without a license.

Traffic, Parking and Speed Control

The speed limit is 40 km/h in built-up areas and 60 km/h outside.

Feb. 5. A planned check was conducted on a group of young people riding fat bikes. The officers checked the speed of all the fat bikes, and two of the five vehicles checked were found to be exceeding the speed limit. These two fat bikes were seized for further testing on a roller test bench.

Jan. 31. Police checked the speed of 95 vehicles on Kaya Caribe in Nort'i Saliña. No speeding tickets were issued. However, four tickets were issued for driving without a driver's license, failing to produce valid proof of insurance, not wearing a seat belt, and holding a mobile phone while driving.

At the same time, Police checked 50 vehicles on Bulevar Gobernador N. Debrot and issued 19 tickets. The tickets were issued for driving without: valid insurance 6x; a valid driver's license 5x; a seat belt 3x; a front license plate 5x.

In addition, police checked the speed of 120 vehicles on Bulevar Miguel A. Pourier in Rincon. Nine tickets were issued for exceeding the speed limit. Three drivers received warnings

for driving without a valid driver's license, driving without a front license plate, or not wearing a seat belt.

A total of 265 vehicles were checked during this operation, 32 tickets were issued, and three warnings were given.

Jan. 29. Police measured the speed of 49 vehicles on Kaya Caribe. One ticket was issued for exceeding the speed limit.

The fine for violations ranges from \$30 to \$225.

Public Safety

Feb. 5. 4 p.m. The central emergency dispatch center received a report of a person who had become unwell in the sea near Klein Bonaire. Occupants of a nearby private boat pulled the person from the water and transported him to the pier at the marina, where ambulance personnel were on hand to provide medical assistance. Resuscitation was immediately initiated upon arrival. Despite these efforts, the desired result was not achieved. The victim, a 57-year-old American tourist with the initials C.D.L., died at the scene.

Feb. 3. 12:45 noon. Police received a report of a possible homemade explosive found in a restroom at a school on Kaya Frater Odulfinus. In collaboration with the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee, police safely recovered the object. Because it could not be determined with complete certainty that it was solely fireworks, the Explosive Ordnance Disposal Service of the Ministry of Defence was called in to permanently defuse it.

Feb. 1. 10:15 a.m. Police received a report that a person had been seriously bitten by dogs on Kaya Tintore-ro. Upon arrival, officers found that the victim had sustained multiple bite wounds to both the upper and lower body after being attacked by three dogs. Officers administered first aid while waiting for an ambulance to take the victim to the hospital. After a brief investigation, the police decided to have all the dogs euthanized by a veterinarian. The dog's owner will be fined under Article 3, paragraph 1 of the Bonaire Dog Ordinance, as he had previously received a warning for letting dogs run loose.

WWD celebrated for seventh year

Bonaire's cultural heritage was celebrated with World Wetlands Day (WWD) at Wilhelmina Plaza on February 2. Eleven organizations came together to focus on how nature is ingrained in Bonaire's cultural heritage.

A good crowd joined the celebration. They traveled from booth to booth to learn more of the work being done by the individual organizations to preserve and sustain Bonaire's nature. They could test their knowledge of Bonaire's nature with a quiz, the winners receiving prizes. Guests could also enjoy the evening with a drink from the bar benefitting Animal Shelter Bonaire.

Artist Ghislaine Monte exhibited her piece *The Startled Mangrove* created to show the vulnerability of Bonaire caught between the past and the unconscious naivety of the present. On hand to perform were the Maskarada players, Plataforma Kultural, and singer Vaness Peralta. Monki Bernabela blew the conch.

Organizations taking part were: Bonberde, STCB (Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire), STINAPA, FuHiKuBo, Mangrove Maniacs, RRFB (Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire), Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation Program, Blue Defenders, Tera Barra, TCB (Tourism Corporation Bonaire and Caribbean Cetacean Society).

This was the seventh year the Mangrove Maniacs have organized the event and the fourth year it was held at Wilhelminaplein.

Julie Morgan



A Mangrove Maniac volunteer explains how a propagule (seedling or baby mangrove plant) develops in the mangrove.

Photo Julie Morgan

Letters & Opinions

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

Bonaire's - Wild or Domestic?

Bonaire has its share of untenable ills for which remedies seem virtually impossible (see "cruise boat tourism is ruining the island but people need to make money"). So when there is an ill that is easily remedied and still people find ways to thwart a solution, it is particularly maddening.

This is my feeling about the ironically named "Bonaire Donkey Protection League Foundation". Most recently, this "foundation" submitted to the Reporter a brief under the heading "Protecting nature in 2025", in which someone named AI who is opposed to the plan to get wild donkeys off the streets of Bonaire wrote about how this BDPLF plans to relocate the island's donkeys to "safe areas" in the "back country." A quick internet search will tell you that these donkeys that are removed to the back country will find ways to return to their home ranges unless there are fences because...donkeys have legs and will use them if there are no fences and sources of food, especially now that the rainy season is over! And if there are to be fences, tell me, is this not just another donkey sanctuary — one run by people who don't know what they are doing? When there is already a perfectly excellent one near Kralendijk?

Marina Melis, Ed Koopman et al. (the actual donkey professionals who have been doing the often devastating and actual wicked hard work to protect the animals on this island) came up with a solution to the island's sad donkey problem (too many animals starving, hit by cars, raiding island trash to find food, etc.) and that solution was to sterilize all male donkeys, take as many females and foals off the streets, and allow the population of donkeys to gradually decrease over the years and then there will be no more donkeys to be starved, abused and maimed/killed in car crashes. How could any of this not be the solution???

Just because some Europeans brought domestic donkeys here hundreds of years ago and now there is a unique population here in Bonaire does not mean that these donkeys are so special that they need to keep breeding and being regularly harmed in the wild and on the streets of Bonaire. I recall reading a quote from these people who are opposed to this donkey sterilization plan saying something to the effect of "people enjoy seeing Bonaire's donkeys."

But here's the thing, animals are not here on this planet for the enjoyment of humans. This is about helping the animals. It is time to let the notion of wild donkeys on Bonaire go and remember that there are hundreds and hundreds of donkeys living in the safety of the sanctuary that will keep the tourists busy and happy for many years to come.

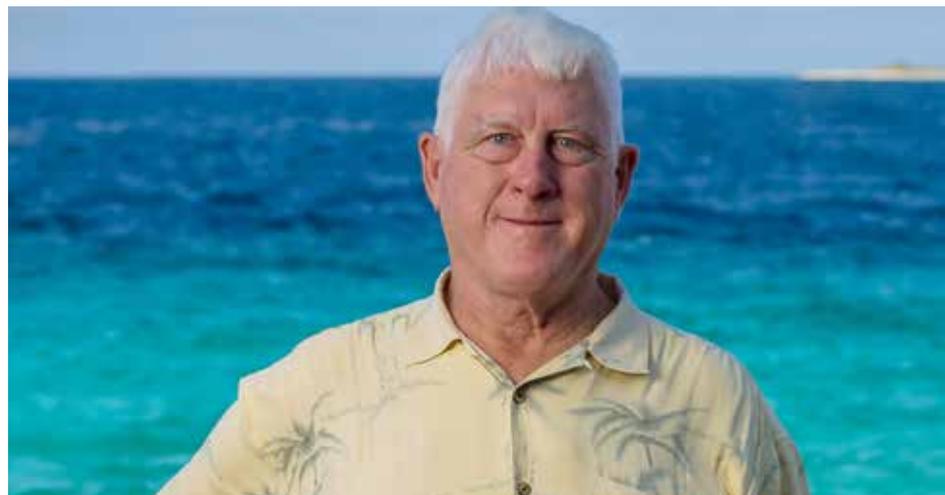
Linda McGivern



From the Donkey Sanctuary's Facebook post Feb. 2: This donkey was hit and seriously injured at the beginning of the Kaminda Gurubu road to Rincon.

Ask Bob

Bonaire real estate advice



Hi Bob –
I am buying and/or selling property on Bonaire. Can you explain what the payment process is through the notary office?

Regards, Bill

Hello Bill,

When you buy or sell a property on Bonaire, all payments go through the escrow account of the notary. The notary must follow the law, including the WTFF (financial regulations), to make the process safe and legal.

As a buyer, you need to pay the notary from your own bank account, under your own name. Payments made by another person or under a different name cannot be accepted and will be returned by the bank. Any costs caused by a wrong or returned payment are for the person who made it.

As a seller, you must have an active bank account in your own name, as stated in the purchase agreement. The notary

can only transfer the sale proceeds to the bank account of seller listed in the purchase agreement and cannot pay money to any third parties or to different accounts that are not in the seller's name.

These rules may seem strict, but they are very important and are put in place to combat illegal money laundering. They help the notary follow the law, avoid mistakes, and ensure both buyers and sellers receive the correct funds safely.

All the best, 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.
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Make Bonaire Accessible

Care-avoiders and self-care by Ria Dokter

Care-avoiders and self-care. One can hardly believe it, but this behavior exists.

There are more people that avoid healthcare than you think. I have seen and heard it. It seems so normal, and perhaps you feel like this is the easy way.

It often happens in a group of people who share the same ailments or the same diagnosis. They share experiences and give each other tips for selfcare: if you feel this or that, you should try these herbs or make and drink this tea. If you need those herbs, one can find them at these places. There are ladies who brew teas and or drinks and they are not so very expensive.

Sometimes organizations invite ladies who brew and produce concoctions, but seldom do I hear references to a doctor or specialist.

Of course, I know that in our Bonairean culture we firmly believe in this practice, but I would like to see and hear more about the common healing as well. Ideally people should be asking for treatment from a general practitioner and use the herbs on the side.

But the things that scare me the most is the people who will not see a doctor at all and only use the herbs. And some go to see a general practitioner and do not tell them about what they are practicing at home because they do not trust the doctor at all and expect to receive a diagnosis they do not agree with.

Of course there is also the language problem. Most doctors do not speak Papiamentu and a lot of patients do not speak Dutch.

Beginning dementia or cancer in pre-stages, all need specific attention and can be fatal when not attended to. Also people should not avoid oral problems as your teeth need every bit of attention. Gynecological issues should not be avoided either. Typical male AND female issues need attention. Everything that has changed in the body as we age needs to be addressed.

Best thing to do is to go see a doctor, but not by yourself. Ask a good friend you can trust or ask one of your children. Set up a list of complaints and a list of questions. Let the person accompanying you do all the talking and asking. They can explain the needs of the patient and/or ask the patient if this is the right question

or remark. Do not leave the office when there are still questions or remarks on the list.

If the patient uses herbs, teas, ointments or something else, bring them with you to the doctor's office.

Do you think you need more time with the doctor? Then ask for a double appointment. Explain to the assistant why and they will understand. And remember, talks with a social worker can also be very helpful. Ask for a reference.

Remember a visit to the doctor should not leave you stressful, but instead, satisfied and tranquil. Let the fact that you are elderly not leave you uncared-for.



Ria Dokter is living happily on Bonaire, where she 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.

Bonaire still without a government

When Salma Serberie separated from the PDB faction on January 20, the PDB-led coalition lost its majority on the Island Council, the government fell, and the positions of those serving on the Executive Council disappeared. Presently no executive body has the authority to conduct the affairs of Bonaire's Public Body. None will have that authority until the nine members of the Island Council agree on a new five-member (or more) coalition. Then the new island council can appoint a new executive council and restart the municipal government.

Nine people serve on Bonaire's Island Council. The PDB has two members and the UPB has three. The remaining four members serve as individuals: MPB, Henynson Thielman; M21, Desiree Coffee; Frakshon Cyrill Vrolijk; and Frakshon Salma Serbia. Any five of those nine could form a coalition to govern the island

Clark Abraham has been trying to restore his leadership, but MPB party leader Thielman has been a firm voice against Abraham's return. Thielman cites the strong criticism of the way Abraham's coalition governed for three years. He says, "Almost everything has stalled here on Bonaire, and even when you raise the alarm and point this out, they blame the previous island government, the civil servants, and all sorts of things. To make matters worse, they're even holding it against you. This is also one of the reasons why Salma Serberie withdrew her support from the current coalition."

Thielman further states that Bonaire must chart a new, positive course as soon as possible. "The MPB hopes that all the parties and factions can quickly come together to form a stable island government. They can start addressing the many problems facing our community, including the urgent need for social housing, price increases, pending permits, the deplorable condition of the streets, and certainly the landfill issue." *DMR*

Landfill catches attention at The Hague

On the night of Monday, February 1, another fire broke out at the Lagun Landfill, the third this year. Given the positive and supportive attitude toward BES the Jetten government is promising, we may be able to start delivering some positive stories about the landfill. The landfill already seems to be getting more attention.

A parliamentary committee has scheduled a debate on the landfill scandal on Bonaire for next week.

The Netherlands Institute for Human Rights had declared that Bonaire's polluting landfill constitutes a serious failure by the government to protect human rights in the Caribbean Netherlands. It said that "residents of Bonaire are entitled to the same protection of health and the environment as residents of the European Netherlands."

The National Ombudsman, Reinier van Zutphen, has sent a second urgent letter to the House of Representatives warning that the situation has become so serious that intervention by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management (I&W) is necessary. "Tolerating the illegal landfill is incompatible with the government's duty to protect the health and safety of citizens," he said. The ombudsman also says he is investigating whether the OLB violated its fundamental duty of care by insufficiently protecting citizens from serious health and safety risks. *DMR*

New cabinet opens door to housing funds for BES

The Jetten Cabinet has already approved the BES Housing Act. This bill aims to ensure the construction of more affordable social housing on Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba by improving access to financing for housing associations on the islands. Cabinet approval has launched the BES Housing Act into the legislative process that eventually leads proposed legislation to a debate and final vote in the House of Representatives.

Under the new law, housing associations of the islands will be able to apply for official status as approved institutions. They will then be under the supervision of the Dutch Housing Association Authority (Autoriteit Persoonsgegevens) and be allowed to participate in the Social Housing Guarantee Fund. That fund guarantees loans and facilitates financing at lower interest rates.

Director Ben Oleana has been trying to get Fundashon Cas Bonairiano approved for years. Cas Bonairiano will now have better access to money for building more social housing, to improve the maintenance of existing homes, and to invest in the livability of neighborhoods. The BES Housing Act will ultimately be specifically tailored to the local circumstances on Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba when it becomes a separate chapter in the Housing Act. *DMR*

New Dutch government doubling BES energy support

The new government at The Hague is already moving to double this year's energy support for the BES. In response to large increases in the cost of energy in the islands, Member of Parliament Sjoukje van Oosterhout (GroenLinks) has submitted an amendment to the budget of the Ministry of Climate and Green Growth for 2026. The budget already provides 4 million euros for sustainable energy production on Bonaire, Sint-Eustatius and Saba. Oosterhout's proposal would add another 4 million euros, an amount that would cushion the impact on residents of the current high costs and should contribute to a structural reduction in high electricity prices on the islands.

Oosterhout pointed out that residents of the islands pay significantly more for electricity than in the European Netherlands where cheap energy is produced by North Sea wind farms. Oosterhout also sees the increase as constructive response to the recent court ruling that the government was failing to protect the islands against the consequences of climate change. (see page 2). *DMR*

Measles infection on Bonaire confirmed

A foreign visitor who arrived from Aruba on a cargo



ship on February 1st was diagnosed with measles upon arrival in Bonaire. The person was immediately hospitalized. The Municipal Health Service (GGD) Bonaire and Fundashon Mariadal took further measures to prevent the spread of the disease. *DMR*



Wonder what really happened?

In a recent press release the Executive Council said "The DTH [Directorate of Supervision and Enforcement] has received reports that construction work is taking place on government land and has conducted an inspection based on this information." It said the area being inspected was a protected RAMSAR site at Sorobon.

The press release then went on to refute what it said were false rumors circulating online regarding the DTH action. According to the press release, the rumors incorrectly claimed DTH intended to evict The Frans Paradise from the site it used near Sorobon. The press release went on to explain at some length that DTH did not have authority to evict, and it further explained what DTH could do and did do.

According to the government announcement, "DTH visits all companies operating in the Sorobon area to: determine which activities are taking place there; verify whether these activities are carried out within the applicable legal frameworks and regulations."

The press release did not say, however, what the inspectors found when they followed up on the reports they had received. Was construction actually occurring in the RAMSAR area? Who was doing it? What were they building? Was the work being carried out in compliance with all rules and regulations? *DMR*

Prescriptions now available 24/7 via pickup machine

Bonaireans can who register with Botika Mariadal can start taking delivery of their prescriptions via a machine that operates like a vending machine. The pickup machine, which is already in service, can deliver 150 orders and can be accessed 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Registration is simply a matter of providing an email address so the Botika can notify the customer when a prescription is waiting. In the future more machines may be installed at other locations on the island. *DMR*

Kids Karnaval is just the beginning

Although Bonaire Karnaval 2026 has been underway since January with Tumba Festivals, Jump Ups and royalty selections, this past weekend marked the beginning of what many of us look forward to – the colorful parades. The first was the Children’s Parade, February 7-8, with six groups of kids first in Rincon and then Kralendijk. These kids gave it their all in feathered and sparkling costumes dancing down the streets and providing some antics along the way. On February 13, at 6 p.m., it’s the senior’s chance to show their stuff and take to the streets walking, in wheelchairs and trolleys. And later at 8 p.m. the teens will be dancing their way through Kralendijk. The Grand Parades are February 14 in Rincon and Kralendijk on the 15th. And the final farewell parade is February 17 at 8 p.m. before the Burning of King Momo at midnight and the end of Karnaval and start of Lent.

Story/Photos Julie Morgan

For more photos see our facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/TheBonaireReporter>



The Bonaire Sunfish Sailing Association (BSSA) was thrilled to offer MBO Sport students the opportunity to learn sailing, aiming to introduce them to the sport and identify future talent. The Sunfish served as the primary training vessel under the guidance of sailing coaches Marcel Toebees and Dedrie Pedersen.

Eight students—Elisienne Coffy, Gylven Janga, Swenthely Mercera, Stieviank Thode, Dimitri Semerel, Luigi Martis, Joshua Frans, and Gabriel Childs showed strong interest and successfully completed the basic boat-handling and sailing skills required for BSSA Sunfish certification.

Among them, Dimitri Semerel, Gabriel Childs, and Joshua Frans distinguished themselves through exceptional skill, commitment and motivation. They will continue their development with advanced training in the ILCA and RS Feva classes and will participate in the BSSA “Train the Trainer” program. Upon achieving CWO Level 3 or 4 certification, they will be qualified to teach sailing to Bonaire’s youth in Papiamentu, supporting the long-term growth of the sport on the island.

Thanks to a generous sponsor, these three students also received a free Funfish membership with BSSA, further supporting their sailing journey and involvement in the local sailing community.
Dedrie Pederson



Coach Dedra Pederson, Dimitri Semerel, Gabriel Childs, and Joshua Frans, Luigi Martis and instructor Tom Verbeek Photo Julie Morgan

AKSESO 's 'Grandi den Gran Forma' visit Slagbaai



In January, approximately 75 seniors from the AKSESO group 'Grandi den Gran Forma' and their companions visited Slagbaai for a morning on the initiative of STINAPA.

Photo (R): An morning spent walking with friends by the sea

Photo Below: After breakfast George 'Kultura' Thodé of STINAPA spoke on Slagbaai's history.



AKSESO and STINAPA had put together a varied program. STINAPA had arranged for the seniors to take a shortened route to the bay. Upon arrival at Slagbaai, the companions served breakfast. Then it was time for a lecture by George 'Kultura' Thodé of STINAPA on the history of Slagbaai. After the lecture, those who wanted could play dominoes, swim or walk in the area. For lunch, the guides provided a tasty barbecue. Afterwards, the elderly were given a gift, a copy of STINAPA's book "Treasures of the Caribbean."

It was a wonderful and special day for the elderly. On the way home, some participants remarked that they would like to come back again.

Akseso Bonare is committed to the community of Bonaire to provide support services, care, welfare, social work, youth health care, prevention and neighborhood development.

PHOTOS: Marcel van der Kamp.
Story by Loeki Nicolaas



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"After the lecture, those who wanted could play dominoes"

STINAPA introduces Hoorn as director



Melissa van Hoorn

The search for STINAPA Bonaire’s new director has ended with the confirmation of Belgium born Melissa van Hoorn. For the last three months she has been working quietly to learn the workings of STINAPA and the threats on Bonaire nature.

Hoorn studied environmental science at Wageningen University and graduated in environmental toxicology. In the Netherlands she was involved with water quality, climate adaptation and environmental pollution for various governments in the areas of Groningen, Drenthe, the Wadden Sea and Africa.

Most recently she was a member of the Provincial government in the Netherlands and worked in the national government ministry of agriculture and nature. She was the first contact for the BES Islands and STINAPA on nature and agriculture.

“For the last three months, I’ve had a lot of work to do, and I want to get better. I’m concerned about the status of the coral,” said Hoorn.

She explained, there are several things we are trying. Concerns on water quality, erosion and reforestation. Our priority is the stress on the marine park.

Hoorn expressed concerns about reopening Washington Slagbaai National Park saying that SCTLD treatment is still being monitored. She doesn’t think diving in the park is safe due to the distance for medical assistance in case of an accident. This will be discussed more in the next few months.

A new marine park manager has been hired, and the announcement will be in March. Hoorn is looking forward to the management team being complete.

Story / Photo Julie Morgan

Tough Times for Bonaire’s Reef due to Coral Bleaching and Coral Disease SCTLD

STINAPA remains hopeful thanks to joint efforts for coral treatment

The reef around Bonaire has had a tough time over the past two years due to coral bleaching and Stony Coral Tissue Disease, among other things. In 2019, 24% of the reef was still covered with living coral, but by 2025 this had fallen to 9%. This is evident from a recent study conducted by STINAPA on the reef in the Bonaire National Marine Park. Disease and bleaching killed many corals and some species of corals were affected more than others.

Hopeful news

Reef Renewal has succeeded in successfully reproducing corals, including rare species, with STINAPA’s help. They are also breeding corals with the goal that these will become disease resistant. These corals are being protected for the future. If polluted water and growth of tourism is managed well, it is possible to restore the reefs.

Hard work by many people

STINAPA would like to thank all biologists, rangers, volunteers, and partners for their valuable work. All these people do very important work every day. They monitor the condition of the reef and protect the coral reefs. Our reefs protect the coast and are also good for fishing. The reefs are one of the richest marine ecosystems in the Caribbean. With the right care, protection, monitoring, and action, it is possible to restore the reef and protect it for future generations.



STINAPA documents SCTLD (June 2024)

STINAPA is working hard with Reef Renewal and other nature organizations and volunteers to limit the damage. Thousands of corals infected with SCTLD have been treated with a special antibiotic paste. The treatment was successful in 80% of the treated corals.

In addition to coral disease and coral bleaching, other factors also affected the reef. These included coastal development, polluted water flowing into the sea, and the growth of tourism. As a result of all this, some coral species are now less common. Many corals are dying.



Monitoring the coral (September 2025)

Grand Opening at Arena



Dive Friends grand opening of Arena, their new sports accessories store featured a raffle for all customers that made a purchase. The lucky winners were: Daudi Cijntje winning Sketchers, Lilia Gomez a corksicle and Desiree de Jong. These smiling ladies are Arena staff: Evelien, Silvia and Antonia. Arena is open Monday - Saturday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Hato Circle. Photo Julie Morgan

Riding for the Roses 2026



And they're off... the Ninth Edition of Ride for the Roses was held February 1 from Isidel Beach Park. Some 1100 tickets were sold to ride, walk run and swim in the fight against cancer. This is the 10th anniversary of Ride

for the Roses on Bonaire and Orco Bank has been there every year as the main sponsor. Other sponsors making this event happen were KFC, Isidel Beach Park, Between 2 Buns, FWNB and Curoil. An amazing \$63,500 was

collected through the sale of tickets, sponsors and donors. These monies will go a long way to fight cancer locally. Thank you to the many volunteers and all who participated.

For more photos see our facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/TheBonaireReporter>

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Maskarada at Nos Zjilea from page 1

The Maskarada traditionally begins with a police officer, the Kabes di Maskarada or head of the Maskarada. The Kabes' name is on the official permit for the Maskarada which allows the group to perform from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. The police officer is responsible for overseeing the conduct of the group and maintaining order.

Harms said, "The police costume symbolizes authority, responsibility and accountability rather than repression."

The Maskarada masks and costumes cover the entire body, so the person is unrecognizable. The person is said to be possessed or inhabited by the spirit or costume represented.

Harms said, "This establishes a symbolic boundary between the visible human world and invisible realm of spirits, natural forces and ancestors. Participation is often regulated according to age, status or spiritual maturity." Some have said that the Maskarada are required to remove their mask at sundown, otherwise they will have bad luck. But, according to Harms, there is no tradition he is aware of within the Maskarada that requires participants to remove their mask at the end of day in order to avoid misfortune.

The Maskarada performs two little skits. One with a fisherman who lost a treasure guarded by a shark. When he returned and discovered it was gone, he cried about his loss. The second is a bull chasing story introduced by a Venezuelan from Margarita Island. Both skits are a major part of the masked parades and have been adopted in the Bonaire Maskarada. Both have been made into traditional cultural songs.

Throughout many Caribbean islands and Latin American countries, not just on Bonaire, masked parades have existed for years and continue today. The roots of the Maskarada have been traced to ancient African masquerade cultures.

If you would like to learn more about the Maskarada, Bob Harms wrote The Maskarada of Bonaire, originally published in 2007 by the National Anthropological and Archaeological Memory Mangement (NAAM) of Curaçao. It was updated in 2020 and can be found on Harm's Facebook page: Kustumber, kuminda i kreensha di origen Afrikanu na Kòrsou, Boneiru i Aruba

Story / Photos Julie Morgan

For more photos see our facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/TheBonaireReporter>

Famia Fuerte continues in 2026



Following a successful pilot year in 2025, a decision has been taken to continue the Famia Fuerte project in 2026. Famia Fuerte is a collaborative project involving Mental Health Caribbean (MHC), the Expertise Centre for Education Care (Expertisecenter Onderwijs Zorg Bonaire, EOZ), Care and Youth Caribbean Netherlands (Zorg en Jeugd Caribisch Nederland, ZJCN) and Sentro Akseeso.

The focus of the project is on developing new forms of assistance for families on Bonaire who are facing multiple and interrelated challenges. A great deal was learnt during the first pilot year about this approach and the assistance provided has produced excellent results.

The aim of Famia Fuerte is to strengthen and support families so that children can continue to live at home for as long as possible. The project also wants to help children who have been placed in care to go back to living at home in a safe and stable way. All the health professionals involved work together closely and with the family when it comes to assessing their needs. This involves drawing on expertise from areas such as mental health care, education, youth care and social work. The support is practical, flexible and provided in people's homes, including outside office hours.

The families who are participating in the Famia Fuerte project are often facing multiple issues. "At the same time, they have the strength and possibilities to take steps in the right direction," according to Jaco de Rapper, a behavioural scientist at ZJCN. We can facilitate positive change by working together to bring a sense of calm to the situation, as well as by providing perspective and practical solutions. During the first pilot year, it transpired that families are becoming easier to reach, are becoming more trusting of the support provided and are cooperating more actively.

Project leader Anouk van Wincoop considers the second pilot year to be an important next step. The organisations involved will continue to work together on the further development and strengthening of this approach.

Famia Fuerte has enabled a range of assistance to be provided on Bonaire that aligns with the daily reality that families have to deal with. The second pilot year is an opportunity to continue developing this approach so that families can count on receiving appropriate and effective support in the future as well.

RCN release

Mayors share expertise

Between January 16 and 19, Governor Soliano of Bonaire hosted a delegation from the Dutch Society of Mayors (NGB). The delegation consisted of five Dutch mayors, the Governor of St. Eustatius, and a supervisor from the NGB. During the visit, participants met with the Executive Council, the Island Council, and representatives from Bonaire's civil society.

On Sunday, January 18th, during an intensive peer review session, the mayors discussed issues from daily practice, confidentially sharing experiences. The mayors came from municipalities of varying sizes, each with its own administrative challenges, but often recognized much in common in each other's experiences. Sound advice was offered and where differences existed, they often led to surprising and valuable insights.

Governor Soliano of Bonaire said the mayoral visit underscores the value of collaboration and knowledge sharing within public administration, thus strengthening good governance.

OLB release



Taste of Bonaire, Karnaval edition



Tourism Corporation Bonaire's (TCB) Taste of Bonaire 2026 opened with a colorful Karnaval edition. All your favorite foods and drink booths were available, so you could sample the varied tastes of the island as you watched the presentations.

Charlton Thomas welcomed everyone while DJ Jewel provided festive back-

ground music. First entertainment of the evening was a Peruvian dance duo from the group "Ritmo Kolor Sabor" which drew a nice crowd and some audience participation. Local band J&C Friends took the stage to perform their own style of Bonaire music.

The royalty who will reign over Bonaire's 2026 Karnaval were presented to

the crowd. Youth Queen is Mary-Leane Winklaar; Prince of Karnaval - Rho-zjedion Liberia Marchena Pens; Pancho - G'sean Celestin Pancho; Youth Tumba King - Juliandrick Janga; Teen Queen - Andrea de Avila; Youth King - Jamil Zaragoza; Queen of Karnaval Bonaire - Naomi Melaan; Prince of Karnaval - Kendry Escobar and Pancho - Josafat Cicilia.

Other presentations were second finalist for Tumba Bonaire – Raychantaly Coffee; first finalist for Tumba Bonaire - Garrick Angela and King of Tumba – Turnick Clarendia.

The evening ended with the Haitian Kompa Band. The next Taste of Bonaire will be July 4.

Story / photo Julie Morgan

4 pieces of Danerolles (croissant dough) • 4 pieces of soft goat cheese from Aletta • 4 teaspoons of Halawa with pistachios (Canarbo) • 1/6th of an orange • Nigella seeds • 1 egg, beaten

Place a slice of soft goat cheese on the widest side of the Danerolles triangle, top with a teaspoon of Halawa, and grate some orange zest over it. Roll the filling into the dough and fold the sides over to prevent the filling from leaking out. Lightly brush the rolled-up filled Danerolles with beaten egg to create a nice, shiny crust after baking. Sprinkle with a few more Nigella seeds. Bake the Danerolles in an oven at 175 degrees Celsius (350 degrees Fahrenheit) for about 20 minutes, or until golden brown and cooked through.

Orange-honey sauce: 1 dl (3.38 oz) freshly squeezed orange juice • 2 tablespoons Bonaire honey from Tera Barra) • Pinch of Bonaire sea salt

Simmer until syrupy thick and add some nigella seeds at the end. Serve the baked, stuffed Danerolles on a plate with some of the sauce.

Danerolles filled with Halawa and Goat Cheese

by Chef Corjan Hoogerheide



Halawa with pistachios is a sweet treat from the Middle East. It is usually made with tahini (sesame paste), sugar or honey, and pistachio pieces.

You can also use it by crumbling it into cake batter or ice cream, as a filling for bonbons, or as a cheesecake base.

has a nutty, sweet, slightly caramel flavor with a firm but crumbly, soft texture that melts slightly in your mouth.

Options for the roll: **Puff pastry** contains no yeast, but is made of lots of layers with butter resulting in a very crispy and airy taste but not bready. • **Croissant dough** has yeast and lots of butter and layers. It must rise before baking but the result is airy, soft on the inside and slightly crispy on the outside. • **Danerolles dough** is essentially croissant dough, but slightly sweeter. It is often made with added egg, sugar, or flavorings. The result is softer and richer, with more of a "sweet roll" vibe.

Each issue Chef Corjan Hoogerheide shares a recipe for a personal dish created from Bonaire's fresh ingredients. Corjan works as a Sous Chef at "The Reef Bar" at Sorobon luxury beach resort Bonaire.



Events, Meetings, Sports

What's Happening

12 steps meeting: Wednesdays at Kaya Cacique, Centro di bario Nort'i Saliña, Meeting starts at 7:15 p.m. till 8:30 p.m. Info: 12stepsbonaire@gmail.com

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

Animal Shelter's 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).

Apertivo evening from 5 – 8 p.m. Fridays Rosa Cafe. Stop in for a drink & free Italian appetizers.

Beach Tennis Bonaire Free. Everyone welcome. Sportpark Rudy Boezem. Open 7 a.m.-9 p.m. <https://www.facebook.com/beachtennisbonaire/>

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

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).

Divers Drink & Dance Date Yhannis Arepas (Kaya Neerlandia, behind Budget Marine) Last Wednesday of the month. 5 - 9 p.m. <https://www.facebook.com/yhannisarepas/>

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

Fish ID course. Free. 7 p.m. at Trans World Radio (TWR) led by Carmen Toanchina. All welcome. Held last Thursday of the month. Check: <https://www.reef.org/events/month>

JEU De BOULES CLUB Bonaire. ALL WELCOME. We play **PETANQUE** (the French version). Wed. & Sun. 2.30-6 p.m. Kunuku Allee, Kaminda Lac 38. We have spare boules (balls) for newcomers. jeudeboulebonaire@gmail.com or Peter Overman, 00599 7964037

Krese Radio program focusing on the development of Bonaire over the past 70 years.- Last Tuesday of the month, 7 - 8 p.m. on Bon FM 102.7 FM. The program is in Papiamentu; A recap is provided in Dutch and English on <https://www.facebook.com/share/1HPK6YY3Gm/?mibextid=vwXlfr>

Museum Night, Terramar museum. Free access to galleries last Wednesday of the month. From 6 to 8 p.m., visitors are welcomed into a relaxed, friendly atmosphere where they can enjoy the galleries after hours and join a themed workshop (pay what you can).

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) Bonaire. GET RID OF YOUR DRUG ADDICTION Monday 19:00-20:00. Kaya Tanki Matrimonio 30. Dutch & Papiamentu. Call Wensley 700 7289 or Remco 784 1782.

Pickleball. • Chinese Assoc. Kaminda Lac, Blue Building: Tues. & Thurs 6-8 p.m. Sat. 3 to 5 p.m. • **Sports Hall Jorge Nicolaas, Kaya Amsterdam:** Sun. 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Members play free, non-members pay \$ 5.00 per person per day.

Rosicrucian Order, AMORC in Bonaire Michiel Bijkerk 796 2650, abogado.bijkerk@gmail.com

Sunfish Race Days: Barring inclement weather: BSSA Bonaire Sailing School Association Facebook.

Tennis Eddie's courts. Everyone (18+) is welcome. **Free Kid's Clinics at Sentro di Bario Nikiboko Tue & Fri 4-6 p.m. Sentro di Bario Nort'i Saliña, Mon & Thu 4-6 p.m.** Register: email info@bonairetennisassociation.com or app 599 782 4569. <https://bonairetennisassociation.com/events/> Mixed competition matches play Saturdays 4 to 10 p.m. on Eddie's courts.

 **Manta Monday at 7:30 p.m.** Presentations Nicole Pelletier of the Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation. **TWO CHANGES: Feb. 2 Find us at the World Wetlands Day Event - 6-9 p.m. & Thurs. Feb. 5, 7:30 p.m.** - Divi Dive Pure Ocean Garden. BACK TO MONDAYS, 7:30 p.m. Feb. 9- Divi Dive Pure Ocean Garden; Feb. 16 - Toucan Diving at Plaza Resort; Feb. 23 - To be confirmed; March 2 - Divi Pure Ocean Garden. Email: 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. Learn about coral reef restoration. Questions? email: info@reefrenwalbonaire.org

 **Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB).** Free presentations at Kaya Aruba 4E on 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month, 8 p.m. . <https://www.facebook.com/bonaireturtles/>

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

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. 715 5344. Anyone can become a member. Free for residents 0 to 18 years. Adults \$10 a year. Members can borrow ebooks online. www.onlinebibliotheek.nl

Marshe di Playa Local market Sat. 9-1. Kaya Industria, by Warehouse Supermarket.

Pakus di Pruga (Animal Shelter flea market) Kaya Gilberto F Croes, 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/terrarmuseumbonaire/>

SACA Art Center Free entrance. Kaya Korona 74. During the day the garden is open to the public.

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)

KARNAVAL 2026	
See schedule in our online edition	
January 17 to February 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feb. 13. Jump Up street party SAPC 8 a.m. -12 noon / Elderly Parade • Feb. 13. Teener Parade Main Karnaval Parades Feb. 14. Adult Grand Karnaval Parade in Rincon • Feb. 15. Adult Grand Karnaval Parade in Kralendijk (Playa) • Feb. 16. Children's Farewell Karnaval Parade • Feb. 17. Adult Farewell Grand Karnaval Nighttime Parade in Kralendijk with the Burning of King Momo at Midnight
Friday, Feb. 13	National Reading Day 9 - 9:30 a.m. Asking for volunteers to read in Papiamentu grades 1-4 and Dutch grades 5 - 8 for half an hour to all grades in primary schools. Email: lezenenschrijvenbonaire@gmail.com
Saturday, Feb. 13	Animal Shelter Valentine's Dog Walk. Take a dog on a date! 5 - 6 p.m. Walk with one of our shelter dogs along Kralendijk Boulevard. Registration only \$10. Call/What's App 701-4989 animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com
Last day Feb. 17	Surinamese Wedding Portraits. Terramar Museum Exhibit: Do you have a Surinamese wedding photo to add? Send a scan (.jpg/.jpeg) to surinaamse.trouwportretten@gmail.com , with names, date, location, and a brief description.
Thursday, Feb. 26	FREE REEF Fish ID course 7 p.m. TransWorld Radio. "Lookalikes: Spot the Difference." This session will focus on species that are often mistaken for one another and how to tell them apart using key identification features. It will be a fun and interactive evening where we'll learn more about fish ID and how divers can contribute as citizen scientists to the world's largest marine life database through REEF (Reef Environmental and Education Foundation).
February 26 to March 1	Amy's Fundraising Tennis Tournament ATD Doubles Open 2026 Eddy's Tennis Courts. Register by Feb. 19 \$30 amy.tennisdream@gmail.com +599 787 1877
Saturday, Feb. 28	Nos Zjilea Cultural Event 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei, Rincon. Enjoy the music, dancing, crafts, amazing food and drink.

2026 Cruise Ship Schedule			
DATE	TIME	CRUISE SHIP	PIER
Wed. February 11	0700-1800	SERENADE OF THE SEAS 2500 guests	North
	0900-2200	CARNIVAL MAGIC 2646 guests	South
Fri. February 13	0800-1700	SEABOURN OVATION 638 guests	North
Sat. February 14	0800-1800	NORWEGIAN PEARL 3130 guests	South
Wed. February 18	0800-2200	CARNIVAL HORIZON 4683 guests	South
	1400-2200	NORWEGIAN DAWN 3000 guests	South
Thurs. February 19	0500-1400	NORWEGIAN SKY 2480 guests	North
	1400-2200	NORWEGIAN DAWN 3000 guests	South
Fri. February 20	0700-1800	RENAISSANCE 1623 guests	North
Sun. February 22	0700-1900	MARELLA DISCOVERY 2072 guests	North
Mon. February 23	0500-1900	BRITANNIA 3674 guests	South
Tues. February 24	0700-2000	ROTTERDAM 2668 guests	South
	0800-1800	EXPLORA I 922 guests	North
Wed. February 25	0700-1600	SERENADE OF THE SEAS 2500 guests	North
Thurs. February 26	0500-1400	NORWEGIAN SKY 2480 guests	South
Sat. February 28	0700-1800	SILVER SPIRIT 626 guests	North
Sun. March 1	0700-2000	MARELLA DISCOVERY 2072 guests	North
Mon. March 2	0800-1800	AIDAPERLA 3286 guests	South
Tues. March 3	0630-1800	AMBIENCE 2043 guests	North
	0900-1900	MAJESTIC PRINCESS 4450 guests	South
Wed. March 4	0700-1800	SERENADE OF THE SEAS 2500 guests	North
	0800-2200	CARNIVAL HORIZON 4683 guests	South

You can help keep Bonaire clean	
Saturdays	One Hour Cleanup Power. Weekly coastal clean up every Sat. 9 – 10 a.m. Location on FB: https://www.facebook.com/OneHourCleanupPower/
Sun. March 8	Clean Coast Bonaire clean up surveys second Sunday every month. 8-10 a.m. Te Amo Beach. Donate your time. Work as a citizen scientist to collect marine litter & data. https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=clean%20coast%20bonaire
	Quarterly Clean up Dive, Dive Friends. Held January, April, July and October. Everyone is welcome. If you don't dive, you can snorkel; if you don't snorkel, you can help out on shore. https://www.divefriendsbonaire.com/eco-activities/quarterly-clean-up-dives/

Sobremesa Kas di Arte View or buy art from Bonaire's local artists. Tue-Fri 2 - 5 p.m. Sat 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Abraham Boulevard 10. **For those who love to make art themselves:**

- Every Sat 11 - 2. Open Art Studio. \$5 to use our space and materials but no guidance. 12+
- Every Wed 7 - 9 p.m. Art Club. \$20 for all materials and professional help is available! Work on your own art project (2D). 16+ Whatsapp +599 700 7115 • email: sobremesabonaire@gmail.com

Funds Available

The Caribbean Culture Fund (CCF)



CCF has launched its fourth call for proposals, inviting individual artists, collectives, cultural organisations, and creative companies to apply for funding to support projects across the Caribbean. **Applications open on January 30, 2026, and must be submitted by March 1, 2026**, via the Submittable platform, accessed through the CCF website, caribbeanculturefund.org.

This fourth call covers two themes, reflecting CCF's continued commitment to cultural expression for social engagement, inclusion, and regional connection.

CCF will award ten grants of USD 10,000 to projects that demonstrate how arts and culture can catalyse reflection, dialogue, education, and positive change. The theme encourages creatives to imagine, critique, and refocus the Caribbean through innovative artistic practices that give voice to community aspirations, challenges, and shared histories.

This call is open to applicants based in Caribbean countries and territories not covered in CCF's first three calls, and are: Anguilla, Aruba, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Caribbean Netherlands, French Guiana, Martinique, Saint Barthélemy, Saint Martin, Sint Maarten, Turks and Caicos Islands, and the United States Virgin Islands.

In addition, CCF will award four grants of USD 25,000 to projects that reflect or actively foster intra-Caribbean collaboration across linguistic and geographic boundaries. Applicants must partner with at least one collaborator based in another Caribbean country or territory, with partners meaningfully involved in both project design and implementation.

Projects engaging with the wider African Diaspora and the legacies of African and Indigenous cultures in the Caribbean are also encouraged.

Applications are welcome across all artistic genres; including visual and performing arts, music, literature and publishing, film and multimedia, photography, architecture, design, radio, television, libraries and archives, heritage, and interdisciplinary or mixed-genre practices.

Reading Promotion Scheme.

The Dutch Foundation for Literature supports projects in the field of reading promotion that supplement projects currently existing. Organizations can apply for a subsidy for a diversity of activities for young and old, from reading clubs to digital projects, and from creative writing workshops or performances. Or for projects that do not yet exist, but will stimulate reading.

Cultural institutions, organizations or legal entities that are active in the Kingdom of the Netherlands and that produce and/or implement literary-educational activities are eligible to apply. Schools, universities and local government bodies cannot apply for a subsidy under this scheme. The applicant can apply for a minimum of €25,000 and a maximum of €50,000. There are two funding rounds per year:

- **February 20, 2026** for projects due to start from July 2026 onwards

- **May 15, 2026** for projects due to start from December 2026 onwards

<https://assets.letterenfonds.prod.verveagency.com/assets/reading-promotion-english-2026.pdf>

The Appeltjes van Oranje (Orange Funds)

are awarded annually to three social organizations in the Netherlands and the Caribbean that contribute to a connected society. The winners will receive a bronze statuette and € 25,000. The prize money can be freely used within the purpose of the winning initiative.

The 2026 prize is dedicated to 'Breaking Poverty Together.' Social initiatives that focus on the sustainable prevention and reduction of poverty and debt can register until **February 22**. Find the criteria and application procedures at <https://www.oranjefonds.nl/criteria-submissions-appeltjes-van-oranje-2026>



Radio program Krese: *learning together from 70 years of Bonaire*

Krese is a new monthly radio program on Bon FM 102.7 FM, every last Tuesday of the month, from 7 – 8 p.m. The program itself is in Papiamentu; however, a recap is provided in both Dutch and English on <https://www.facebook.com/share/1HPK6YY3Gm/?mibextid=wwXlfr>

After a successful period of pilot broadcasts, the radio program Krese is now launching its official public broadcasts focusing on the development of Bonaire over the past 70 years, with the aim of drawing lessons for the future.

The program was launched in September last year by Radinka Ustasia and Jude Finies, and is rooted in a civic society approach, placing the Bonaire community at the center as co-thinker, co-creator, and co-owner of the dialogue about the island's future.

Drawing on policy documents, legislation, and lived experiences from society, Krese engages in conversations with (former) administrators, policymakers, and other key figures. What worked in the past? What did not? And which insights remain relevant today when making new choices?

The name Krese, meaning "growth," reflects the program's core philosophy. Listeners are actively invited to share perspectives, questions, and insights, fostering an open and collective dialogue about where Bonaire comes from and where it wants to go.

In addition to the radio broadcasts, a printed publication will be released at the end of the first season, featuring articles, columns, editorials, and contributions from those who have been involved in shaping the program's content.

Photography: Felicia Schütte

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: M. W. F. Sat-7 p.m. Sun-9 a.m./7 p.m.

- **Parish Luis Beltran (RINCON):** Holy Masses: Tu. W.Th. 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 in English.

United Protestant Congregation

- **(KRALENDIJK),** Plaza Wilhelmina: Sun 10 a.m. Services in Dutch

- **(RINCON)** Kaya C. D. Crestian: Sun 8 a.m. Services in Papiamentu/Dutch

Public Service Events

New requirements for rental subsidies

Effective January 1, 2026, there are new requirements for applying for the Private Rental Contribution (BPV). The BPV is the contribution that low- to middle-income households can apply to rent a home in the private sector. The rent may not exceed \$979.00 per month, excluding service charges. The new requirements apply to new applicants from January 1, 2026. The new BPV requirements apply from July 1, 2026, to people who received a BPV extension last year.

See the requirements on page 21 of our online issue: <https://bonairereporter.com>

Register by ...

STCB: Photo contest 1 of 4

A day in the life of a sea turtle. Show us the moments that capture sea turtles daily routines.

- Take or select a photo that fits the theme
- Submit your entry through our Google Form: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScHi67geCghZ6inW9jnyEb78Mmi71dklrYljjJfQQQfDdfQ/viewform?usp=header>

- **Deadline: February 15, 2026**

The winning photo will be displayed in the STCB Visitor Center and featured on our social channels. At the end of the year, all winning photos will be auctioned to support sea turtle conservation on Bonaire. *Floor van Schalkwijk, STCB*

Dutch Caribbean Research Week 2026

The call for abstracts and registration is now open.

Please submit your abstract before Sunday Feb. 15, 23:59:59 hours AST (Atlantic) / 05:00:00 hours CEST.

<https://www.dcrw.nl/abstracts>.

Registration. DCRW2026 is a free event. Please register here: <https://www.dcrw.nl/registration>.

Bridge Championship

On January 28, 2026, the 5th edition of the Open Bonairean Championship Bridge was played. Ton Nuijten and Marc Verhoeven teamed up to claim the gold and the exchange cup with a wide lead of 71.4%. For the second year, they can call themselves Bonairean Bridge Champion.



The rest of participants stayed close together, which made the race for 2nd and 3rd place particularly exciting. Eventually the team of Renée van Dongen and Anne Hoemakers secured 2nd place with 53%. The 3rd place was won with verve by the team Paul Rothweiler and Richard Dove with 51.8%.

The mini red clover for the last place went to the team Ineke Corporaal and Dineke Verbiest.

The prizes were given out this year by Joost Latiers, the man who has organized fantastic bridge lessons with a lot of effort and energy in recent years.

Full championship results:

- 1: Ton Nuijten and Marc Verhoeven 71.4%
- 2: Renée van Dongen and Anne Hoemakers 53%
- 3: Paul Rothweiler and Richard Dove 51.8%
- 4: Wout and Yvonne van Slobbe 49.4%
- 5: Breeman's purest kidney 47.6%
- 6: Joost Latiers in Artie de Vries 46.4%
- 7: Andre Verhoef and Dominiek Diephuis 45.8%
- 8: Ineke Corporaal and Dineke Verbiest 34.5%

Bridge Club release

Wanted: teachers, artists, chefs

Culinary Team Bonaire looking for New Talent

Culinary Team Bonaire, a multiple gold award-winning culinary team, has officially opened recruitment for new members who are ready to represent Bonaire and its rich Caribbean heritage on an international stage.

The team is currently seeking motivated and talented candidates for three positions: **Pastry Chef, Junior Chef, Senior chef for Beef competition.**

Training & International Experience

Training will resume in March 2026, with a minimum of two training days per month. As competition season approaches, sessions will increase to weekly training. Selected team members will also participate in an international one-week culinary trip to Barbados in November, providing invaluable exposure and competitive experience.

How to Apply: Interested candidates are invited to submit a motivation letter and CV no later than February 14 to: culinaryteam@bonaireculinair.org

Culinary Team Bonaire encourages aspiring chefs to step forward, demonstrate their passion, and take pride in representing Bonaire through cuisine.



Pastry Chef of the Year 2025 – Elise Weerstand (owner of Sweeti Bakery and Blue Lagun Café)

**Show your passion. Represent Bonaire.
Cook with purpose.**

See the requirements on page 21 of our online issue:
<https://bonairereporter.com>



Cultural educators and artists needed to teach at primary schools

The ACE Foundation's cultural education will start again in March. The goal of EKADK (Edukashon Kultural Artistiko di Kalidat) is to introduce children to as many different art forms as possible. Last year, 12 arts and cultural providers participated in the project. More providers are needed for the coming year. **The registration deadline is February 15, 2026.**

The teaching opportunity is open to anyone who wants to share their knowledge of an art form with our children. Knowledge of our own culture, as well as that of others, is very welcome. Knowledge of nature and experiencing nature is also part of the program. We are looking for storytellers, people with knowledge of (folkloric) dance, modern dance, painting/drawing, crafts, singing, playing instruments, flora and fauna, and so on. People with knowledge of cultural matters such as norms and values, ancient customs, traditional dishes, costumes, architecture, heritage, and more are also invited to apply. Anything that falls within the domain of art, culture, and nature on Bonaire is welcome.

"Develop a lesson plan or workshop that you can teach at school and present it to us. We will evaluate it and then offer it as an option for schools to choose from," says Marlies Vels, coordinator of Quality Cultural and Artistic Education.

Anyone interested in participating in EKADK can contact us by email at ekadkbonaire@gmail.com or by phone at 790-0155. This project is funded by the Fund for Cultural Participation.

Wanted: a fifth room for Hospice Kas Flamboyan



(L-R): Christiaan Oude Mulders (Roosdom-Tijhuis), Richard Duijn (care volunteer & project support 5th chamber) Ton Nuijten (initiator), Mimi Dongen (Coordinator Kas Flamboyan), Mr. Tijhuis (owner Roosdom-Tijhuis), Danny Rojer (Director Kas Flamboyan), Jeffrey Kogelman (Roosdom-Tijhuis)..

January 28th we had a positive and hopeful meeting with Mr. Tijhuis, owner of Roosdom-Tijhuis. With gratitude, we are pleased to share that real estate developer Roosdom Tijhuis Bonaire will support us in the realization of a fifth room for Hospice Kas Flamboyan Bonaire. This is a valuable contribution for which we are deeply thankful. At the same time, additional financial support is still needed to fully make this room possible.

"We are incredibly grateful that over the past eight years we have been able to welcome residents to Kas Flamboyan and provide them with love and care in the final phase of their lives," says director Danny Rojer. "We have now reached a stage where expansion has be-

come necessary. The fifth room will be created for a resident and will include a porch, overlooking our beautiful backyard. This garden was cleared and restored last year thanks to Bon Doet, Natural Green Bonaire, and many dedicated volunteers."

Would you like to contribute to a place of rest, care, and dignity? Would you be willing to help us, financially or by providing materials or goods? Every contribution, large or small, makes a difference. Together, we can make this happen.

MCB Bank: Bonaire
410.43.704 in the name of Stichting Hospice Bonaire, Bonaire C.N.



Teaching materials wanted for Children's Music Week

From April 10th to 17th, Bonaire Children's Music Week will take place with the theme "Celebration." During the week, music will be the focus for children aged 0 to 12. **Cultural providers and music teachers are invited to contribute teaching materials.** A theme song and accompanying video will be developed for Children's Music Week. For more information, please email acesbonaires@gmail.com or call +599 701 3310.

Creating Optimal Health

Heal your gut heal for optimal health

by Irene da Cunda Costa

In recent years, gut health has moved from the margins of nutritional science to the center of the wellness conversation. Once considered merely a digestive system, the gut is now recognized as a complex ecosystem that influences immunity, metabolism, mental health and overall vitality. At the heart of this shift is the gut microbiota, trillions of microorganisms living primarily in the large intestine.

This growing awareness has sparked a global trend emphasizing food, lifestyle and daily habits that support digestive balance. While modern research has accelerated this interest, the idea that gut health is foundational is not new.

The gut microbiota is made up of bacteria, fungi, viruses and other microbes that coexist with us in a dynamic relationship. These organisms help break down food, synthesize vitamins such as B vitamins and vitamin K, train the immune system and protect against pathogens. They also communicate with the brain via the gut-brain axis, influencing mood, stress response and cognitive function.

When this ecosystem becomes imbalanced, a state often called dysbiosis, it can contribute to symptoms like bloating, irregular bowel movements, food sensitivities, inflammation, skin issues and even anxiety or depression.

One of the most influential modern voices in the gut health movement is Dr. Natasha Campbell-McBride, a neurologist and nutritionist known for developing the GAPS (Gut and Psychology Syndrome) framework. Her book, the Gaps Diet was published in 2004. Her work emphasizes that many neurological, immune and mental health conditions may originate in a compromised digestive system. While some of her protocols are debated, her core message, that healing the gut can have wide-reaching effects, has resonated with many.

Long before the microbiome was scientifically understood, Weston A. Price, a dentist and researcher, documented the diets and health of traditional societies across the globe. He observed that populations consuming whole, unprocessed foods including fermented foods, animal fats, organ meats, and seasonal plants exhibited strong physical health and low rates of chronic disease. When these diets were replaced by refined and industrial foods, health declined rapidly. Though he did not speak in terms of microbes, his findings align closely with what we now know about microbiota diversity.

While diet is essential, how and when we eat matter just as much. Regularity and Circadian Rhythms are very important. The gut follows a daily rhythm influenced by light, sleep, and meal timing. Eating meals at consistent times helps regulate digestive secretions, bowel

movements, and microbial activity. Irregular eating, late-night meals and disrupted sleep can interfere with these natural rhythms, contributing to digestive discomfort and metabolic issues. Aligning meals with daylight hours, eating the largest meals earlier in the day and allowing a longer overnight fasting window supports gut motility and microbial balance.

Digestion functions best when the body is relaxed. Eating while stressed, rushed, or distracted activates the sympathetic nervous system, the “fight or flight” response, which diverts blood away from the digestive organs.

Activating the parasympathetic nervous system (“rest and digest”) before and during meals improves enzyme secretion, stomach acid production and nutrient absorption. Simple practices like taking a few deep breaths before eating, chewing slowly, sitting down and avoiding screens can significantly improve digestion.

To support and “heal” the gut, a combined approach works best:

- Eat a diverse, whole-food diet rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts, seeds, bone broth and fermented foods
- Limit ultra-processed foods, excessive sugar and artificial additives
- Introduce fermented foods and probiotics gradually
- Maintain consistent mealtimes and sleep schedules
- Manage stress through breathing, meditation, or gentle movement
- Move your body regularly, especially walking, which stimulates gut motility
- Get daily sunlight, which helps regulate circadian rhythms and indirectly supports the microbiome
- Use antibiotics judiciously, antibiotics are life-saving, but overuse can disrupt microbial balance.

Although gut health has become a popular trend, its importance is grounded in both ancestral wisdom and modern science. Rather than chasing quick fixes, supporting the gut means cultivating rhythm, nourishment and calm. When digestion is supported at both the biological and nervous-system level, the gut becomes not just a site of digestion, but a cornerstone of long-term health.



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

Chess championships held



U10: Sara Plantaz, Aimee Klinger and Kayden Espinal Mejia



U12 Nathan Gutierrez, Daniel Fernandez and Matthias Medndoza

Serapio Pop's U10 and U12 student chess championships for 2025-2026 were held the end of January after several postponements due to illness or other commitments. All winners received medals and a prize from club funds.

The U10 group completed their tournament with a surprise winner. Aimey Klinger earned the title of U10 champion over Sara Plantaz. The final ranking and numbers are:

1. Aimey Klinger 9 1/2 points champion;
2. Sara Plantaz 9 points;
3. Kayden Espinal Mejia 8 points;
4. K'ziano Silie 5 1/2 points;
5. Gillimar A. Ricardo 4 points and a half;
6. Jacobi Mendoza 4 1/2 points and
7. Tino MeijerIn.

U12 group tournament wins have been dominated for three years by Daniel Fernandez Ojeda winning all his games. Coming in second was Matthias Mendonza

who surprised Nathan Guitierrez. The final U12 rankings are:

1. Daniel Fernandez 8 points undefeated champion;
2. Matthias Mendoza 5 points;
3. Nathan Gutierrez 4 points;
4. Lisa Plantaz 3 points and
5. Elisabeth Klinger.

In the open tournament it was Christiaan Smeets who became the undefeated champion, second was Adrián Fernandez Ojeda and Clé Burgers.

Parents can register their children for learn chess at the Thursday class. Chess is not only a new hobby for your child but helps in development and study. They learn to think logically and make a plan.

To learn more contact Serapio Pop at 7969660.

Chess Club release

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Pets of the Week

Animal Shelter Bonaire, Kaminda Lagun 26A. Mon. - Fri. 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. Sat. 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Call/What's App 701-4989 animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com



Gypsy

Gypsy, our longest-staying resident. After the wonderful news that our long-

term resident Yeila has finally been adopted, her place as the shelter's longest-staying dog has now been passed on to Gypsy. Sadly, Gypsy has been waiting for a home for 2,120 days, that's five years and nine months. She arrived at the shelter when she was just two years old, which means she is now almost eight and officially a senior dog.

Despite spending most of her life in the shelter, Gypsy has never lost her gentle spirit. She is a sweet, affectionate dog who loves attention, enjoys snuggling under blankets, and still has playful moments when the mood strikes. Her unique appearance, with her pointy ears and beautiful brown brindle coat, makes her truly one of a kind.

More than anything, Gypsy wants to leave the shelter behind and go home with someone who will love her. It would

mean the world to her to spend the second half of her life in a warm, caring home where she can finally feel safe and loved.

We hope that by sharing her story, Gypsy will get the chance she so deeply deserves. Could you be the one to open your heart and your home to her?

Story / Photo: Marissa Lamers

This is Marie. She is around 4 years old, has a beautiful white coat and stunning yellow-green eyes. Like many of our animals, Marie has quite a sad story. She was roaming the streets when a loving couple took her in. Unfortunately the lady was severely allergic. So with a lot of pain in their hearts they had to bring her to us. Marie is very calm and will gently paw at you when she wants attention or a treat. Marie was brought to us in August, and we think it is about time she found her



Marie

forever home. Who would like to give this gentle soul a chance?

Story / Photo: Bo Attevelt

Animal Shelter Bonaire - Kitten season is almost here again

As kitten season approaches, we (Animal Shelter Bonaire) expect to receive a large number of kittens in the coming months. Many arrive without their mothers and need bottle-feeding, while others come in with their moms or are found in gardens and around neighborhoods. They come from all kinds of situations and places across the island.

If you are thinking about adopting a cat or kitten, now is the perfect time to visit the shelter and meet your future furry friend. By adopting, you not only give a kitten a loving home, but you also help us make space to care for more vulnerable babies in need.

Please note that we adopt kittens out from 14 weeks of age. We take this time to make sure each kitten is healthy, vaccinated, and tested for FeLV and FIV before going to their new home. So yes, we have plenty of kittens, but the very smallest ones we keep with us a little longer to give them the best possible start in life.

Thanks to our sterilization program, cats and dogs can be spayed for free. Please contact your veterinarian directly, and don't forget to mention that you want to make use of our program. We are very happy to see that so many people are already aware of it, last year 663 an-



imals were spayed through this program.

By working together, we can prevent more unwanted litters, reduce suffering, and help control the cat population on the island, because there are already more than enough cats in need of homes.

If you are unable to adopt right now, you can still support our work by spreading the word about the program or by making a donation so we can continue helping even more animals in the future.

Marissa Lamers

A Garden? Just Do It! - Compost - by Angliet, Nature Lover

Now that we've entered the dry season earlier than usual, we need to think about how we can better support plants in their struggle to survive the drought. Using compost is one way and that is why I've gathered specific information about it to share with you.

Compost is not fertilizer; it consists mainly of decomposed plant remains.

Compost increases the organic matter content and is therefore a good soil improver, beneficial for mycorrhiza (a mutual symbiotic association between a fungus and a plant) and soil structure.

Worms, woodlice, ants, beetles, termites, and other soil organisms ensure that the compost is further mixed with the soil. A layer of compost directly on roots is also very beneficial. Compost does contain fertilizer, but only in small quantities and is NOT plant food or fertilizer. But due to its positive effect on the soil, plants will still grow better with compost, as it gradually raises the pH



and the soil contains more calcium.

Tree bark prevents the soil from drying out too quickly and hinders weed growth. Depending on the trees it comes from, it has a pH between 5 and 6.

As it decomposes, the soil gradually

becomes more acidic and the pH drops. Not all plants like this and it decomposes very slowly. Composted tree bark sourced from outside of Bonaire comes from spruce and is good because it's a soft wood that rots quickly and releases nutrients.

Wood chips are a completely different product. Never mix them into the soil because decomposition requires nitrogen, which is extracted from the soil. This causes plants to suffer and turn yellow.

What is very effective on Bonaire for protecting your house are wood chips from the Neem tree. They are used to create paths around the house or through the garden. Termites, white ants and other insects find this is a forbidding plant, so they stay well away. The intrusive Neem tree can be valuable to us in several ways, including its wonderful shade and the tea from its leaves that keeps plants insect-free, as well as its medicinal value for certain ailments in people.

Rock plants or low growing plants growing on stones don't need compost. They prefer hard stone soil, sand or mixed gravel.

At Tera Bara in Barrio Tras Montagna, you can see the process and learn how compost and wood chips are made in Johan Blerk's project. This knowledge is absolutely essential for creating your garden. So DO IT!

Angliet Baidjoe grew up in the Surinam jungle, moved to the Netherlands as a teen, and trained as a teacher, then in Alternative Healing. Everywhere she has lived, she has planted a garden and grown her own food.





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Culinary Team Bonaire Opens Recruitment for New Talent



Culinary Team Bonaire, a multiple gold award-winning culinary team, has officially opened recruitment for new members who are ready to represent Bonaire and its rich Caribbean heritage on an international stage.

The team is currently seeking motivated and talented candidates for three positions: **Pastry Chef, Junior Chef, Senior chef for Beef competition.** These roles offer a unique opportunity to train, compete, and grow alongside some of the island's most dedicated culinary professionals, while showcasing Bonaire's culinary identity throughout the Caribbean.

Position Requirements

Junior Chef: Between 16 and 19 years of age; Strong passion for professional cooking; Preferably enrolled in a hospitality (horeca) education program; Written permission from a parent or legal caretaker

Pastry Chef: Multiple years of professional experience in pastry arts

Beef Chef: Multiple years of professional experience with preparing, cooking and combining beef

Requirements for All Candidates

- A strong connection to and understanding of Caribbean cuisine
- A valid passport suitable for travel to multiple Caribbean islands
- High levels of commitment, discipline, and resilience

“This program demands focus and dedication,” the organization states. “Culinary Team Bonaire is not for the weak, but for those who are driven to excel and proudly represent our island.”

Training & International Experience

Training will resume in March 2026, with a minimum of two training days per month. As competition season approaches, sessions will increase to weekly training. Selected team members will also participate in an international one-week culinary trip to Barbados in November, providing invaluable exposure and competitive experience.

How to Apply: Interested candidates are invited to submit a motivation letter and CV no later than February 14 to: culinaryteam@bonaireculinair.org

Culinary Team Bonaire encourages aspiring chefs to step forward, demonstrate their passion, and take pride in representing Bonaire through cuisine.

Show your passion.

Represent Bonaire.

Cook with purpose.

New requirements for applying for the Private Rental Contribution (BPV)

Effective January 1, 2026, there are new requirements for applying for the Private Rental Contribution (BPV). The BPV is the contribution that low- to middle-income households can apply for to rent a home in the private sector. The rent may not exceed \$979.00 per month, excluding service charges. The new requirements apply to new applicants from January 1, 2026. The new BPV requirements apply from July 1, 2026, to people who received a BPV extension last year.

New conditions

Personal contribution for all applicants

All tenants applying for the BPV (Work Placement Scheme) must pay a personal contribution. This contribution depends on the applicant's income. The applicant transfers this contribution monthly to the landlord's bank account.

Contribution for minimum wage or lower

An applicant earning a minimum wage or an income lower than the minimum wage pays a personal contribution of \$185.00. The applicant transfers the \$185.00 contribution monthly to the landlord's bank account.

Contribution for income higher than the minimum wage

For applicants earning an income higher than the minimum wage, the contribution is determined using a table.

Registered with the Civil Registry for five consecutive years

Only applicants who have been registered with the Civil Registry for at least five consecutive years and reside on Bonaire are eligible for the BPV.

This requirement of five consecutive years without interruption applies only to new applicants. Individuals who already received BPV before January 1, 2026, and do not meet this five-year requirement will retain their right to BPV until July 1, 2026.

Furthermore, this requirement does not apply to island children: individuals who were born on Bonaire or whose parent was born on the island.

Income of all household members aged 18 and over combined

To determine the income of the BPV applicant, the incomes of all household members aged 18 and over living with the applicant are combined. The total gross income of all these household members may not exceed \$4,633.00. An applicant is not entitled to BPV if their personal contribution based on their income exceeds the applicant's rent.

The following elements remain unchanged in the new BPV regulations:

- The applicant's rent may not exceed \$979.00, excluding service charges.

- The landlord receives a bonus of \$50.00 per month.
- The tenant and landlord submit the application together.

The following documents must be included with the BPV application:

- Tenant's ID
- Landlord's ID
- Proof of rent payment (at least 3 bank statements or receipts)
- Proof of all declared sources of income (e.g., employment contracts, pension statements, or letters) and receipt thereof (receipt or bank statement) from the tenant and all other residents aged 18+ at that address who have an income.
- Declaration of residence filed with the tenant's civil registry.

For more information about the BPV:

aportehurpartikular@bonairegov.com

Whatsapp (+599) 777 2299, and telephone 717 2211, BPV department.)



FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Winter 2025/2026
starting October 1st

DESTINATION	AIRLINE	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	DETAILS
NEW YORK JFK	jetBlue						✓		Last flight on January 3, 2026
MIAMI	American Airlines	✓		✓		✓	✓*		DAILY Dec. 17, 2025 - Jan. 5, 2026 *Saturdays 2 daily flights (seasonal)
ATLANTA	DELTA			✓*			✓	✓*	*Starting Dec. 20th, seasonal flights
NEW YORK NEWARK	UNITED						✓		Starting Nov. 1st
HOUSTON	UNITED							✓	Arrival on Saturdays
TORONTO	WESTJET			✓					Starting Dec. 9th - Arrivals on Tue.
AMSTERDAM	KLM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓*	✓	✓*	*Fri. & Sun. 2 daily flights - Dec. 19, 2025 - Mar. 15 2026
AMSTERDAM	TUI	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		Wed Thu Fri direct from AMS
AMSTERDAM	corendon.		✓*					✓	*Starting Oct. 14th - till Oct. 8 on Wednesdays
SANTO DOMINGO SDQ	SKYhigh Dominicana					✓			
CURACAO SINT MAARTEN	WINAIR	✓		✓		✓			Arrivals on Sun Tue Thu
CURACAO ARUBA	DIVIDIVI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
CURACAO ARUBA	ZAir	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Please note this schedule is subject to change without prior notice.



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Karnaval BONAIRE 2026

Programma Karnaval Bonaire 2026

- 29 Jan 2026 Jump Up IKC Kolegio Kristu Bon Wardador
- 30 Jan 2026 Festival di Tumba Korsou na SKAL
- 31 Jan 2026 Sertamen Reina, Prens ku Pancho Grandi
- 01 Feb 2026 Juve Morning (00.00 - 05.00)
- 01 Feb 2026 Sertamen Reina, Prens ku Pancho Hubenil
- 04 Feb 2026 Entrega di Premio Festival di Tumba / Reina, Prens i Pancho
- 06 Feb 2026 Taste of Bonaire – Carnaval Edition
- 07 Feb 2026 Marcha Hubenil Rincon
- 08 Feb 2026 Marcha Hubenil Playa
- 13 Feb 2026 Jump Up SAPC (08.00 - 12.00)
- 13 Feb 2026 Marcha di Grandinan
- 13 Feb 2026 Teener Parade
- 14 Feb 2026 Marcha Grandi Rincon
- 15 Feb 2026 Marcha Grandi Playa
- 16 Feb 2026 Marcha di Despedida Hubenil
- 17 Feb 2026 Marcha di Despedida Adulto



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MAIN DRAW RUNNER-UP



AND OTHER EXCITING PRIZES!

EVENT DETAILS

 February 26 - March 1

 Eddy's Tennis Courts

 Time: TBD
(based on match schedule)

CONTACT & REGISTRATION

 +599 787 1877

 amy.tennisdream@gmail.com

SUPPORT THE CAUSE

- Doubles Open Tournament
- Registration Fee: \$30 per person

Registration Deadline: **February 19**

SCAN TO DONATE OR REGISTER





FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Winter 2025/2026

starting October 1st

DESTINATION	AIRLINE	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	DETAILS
NEW YORK JFK	jetBlue						✓		Last flight on January 3, 2026
MIAMI	American Airlines	✓		✓		✓	✓*		DAILY Dec. 17, 2025 - Jan. 5, 2026 *Saturdays 2 daily flights (seasonal)
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CURACAO ARUBA	DIVIDIVI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
CURACAO ARUBA	ZAir	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

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