



BONAIRE The REPORTER

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The Precious Diamonds - Bedazzled Flamingo
Photo Julie Morgan

Bonaire Karnaval 2026 dazzled

For most of us Bonaire Karnaval is the parades, a dazzling, vibrant, raucous and sometimes risqué display of music and dance. Participants and spectators alike lose their inhibitions and let go to become immersed in the spirit and joy of the moment.

Bonaire's Karnaval parades were held February 7 – 17, but the Karnaval organizer, Klave Foundation, has been busy since mid-January with various costume contests, royalty competitions and Tumbas (music/dance).

The parades began with the children, first in Rincon and then Kralendijk with 289 kids. They were decked out in extravagant costumes, just like their parents. Six groups who marched were called: Your Dreams in a Tiny Universe, Fruta, Butterfly, Macaw in the Fantasy World, Formula 1 Racing and Costa Sierro/Selva (mountain coast/forest). The elderly and teen-er parades were on February 13 followed by the Grand Parade in Rincon on the 14th and Kralendijk on the 15th.

In the Grand Parade Kralendijk, we saw an amazing 279 participants igniting the streets of Bonaire with many adorned in extravagant, feathered, intricately beaded head-dresses and wearing huge decorated extended backpacks or wings.

The groups and their numbers of participants were: Ban Gosa's Magical Ocean Waves – 25, Miss

Bonaire's Bonaire Beauty – 12, Peru community's Caporales/negroide/Trajes tipicos – 60, The Haitian's Nos tei Bek – 25, the Friendly Families' Fantasia di Tempu (Time Fantasy) – 40, The Precious Diamonds's The Bedazzled Flamingo – 35, Oooh La La's The Bling Empire – 45, Uni pa Gosa - 35 and Sorpresa - 2. Six of the groups donned their attire for the first pa-

rade in Rincon, then Kralendijk and again on Fat Tuesday for the evening light parade before the Burning of King Momo.

Historically the Caribbean Carnival represented a freedom for ordinary people to mock authorities, ignore social norms and defy colonial suppression. The masking offered participants a new cultural identity

even though it was temporary. The Carnival is a blend of fertility rites and Catholic traditions as the last indulgence before Lent.

The first carnivals, then called Cannes Brulees (French for sugarcane burning), began in the late 18th century on Trinidad and Tobago. The enslaved Africans set fire to the sugar cane that was for sale by their owners. They played music, sang songs, danced and performed rituals from their African roots. As an act of rebellion to take back their culture, the slaves used drums and sticks, which were later banned by their owners.

Later Cannes Brulees would be known as Canbouley. After the abolition of slavery, people continued to stage events to celebrate their freedom and remember the past. Today this celebration is known as Carnival and practiced throughout the Caribbean as a remembrance of their ancestor's pain. (ECDA -Early Caribbean Digital Archive)

Story / Photos Julie Morgan

**Karnaval photos
on page 3**



Shining Kids - Karnaval Group Fruta - Photo Julie Morgan

Pro Lagun Foundation files criminal charges against OLB



According to a report by Hans Hofstra in the *BES-Reporter.com*, the Pro Lagun Foundation filed criminal charges with the National Detective Agency against members of the crisis team of the Public Entity Bonaire (OLB) and other government officials on Wednesday, February 11. Pro Lagun lists several possible criminal offenses, including negligence in creating danger, releasing harmful substances into the air, and official misconduct. The foundation also invokes provisions from the Dutch Constitution and international human rights treaties, which establish the government's duty of care to protect citizens, particularly children, from environmental hazards.

These charges relate to the night of January 17, 2026, when another fire broke out at the landfill. After a three days evacuation, according to the foundation, the authorities sent local residents back to their homes too early without establishing that the living environment was safe. The organization declared that approximately fifty residents, including children, were allowed to return even though no measurements had been conducted on

air quality or possible toxic substances in the area. The only instruction reportedly given was to "ventilate homes properly." Pro Lagun calls this irresponsible and speaks of ignoring the precautionary principle and known health risks.

DMR (Hans Hofstra, BES-Reporter.com)

Short-term unemployment benefits coming to CN

When workers in the European Netherlands lose their jobs through no fault of their own, they become eligible for unemployment benefits for up to 12 months, even up to 24 months for some with long-term employment histories. When workers in the BES islands lose their jobs their incomes end. They are not even eligible for social assistance if their families have income and/or assets.

That will change starting in 2027, according to an announcement from the Central Dialogue Bonaire, the consultation platform for employers, unions, and the government. The Netherlands government intends to introduce temporary and short-term unemployment benefits for workers in the Caribbean Netherlands, pending the creation in the future of a full benefits

program like the one protecting Dutch workers.

The temporary plan is considered better adapted to the Caribbean Netherlands labor market. On Bonaire, the unemployment rate is exceptionally low, around 3%, so workers can find new jobs quickly. Also, the costs of the plan will be covered by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment and it can be easily set up.

Dutch European workers are covered by an employment insurance scheme that is funded by accumulated premiums paid by both employers and employees. Such plans are complex. Creating one for the BES islands will require much research, time, and effort. *DMR*

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The OLB has signed the maintenance agreement, now on to Phase One

Phase One for maintenance of the Fisherman's Pier in Playa Pabou has begun with the signing of an agreement between Public Entity Bonaire, Streefkerk Architects & Consultants and Caribische Onerwater Werken. The project is an investment in the future of the longstanding and cultural occupation of Bonaire's

fishermen and the community of the island. The first phase will be to order the suitable material which can withstand the marine environment and provide a safe workplace for Bonaire's fishers.

Updates will be provided as the actual reconstruction begins.

Photo Julie Morgan

Island news...to page 6

Karnaval from page 1



A full weekend of festive Karnaval parades were held on Bonaire, February 13 -15.

Pictured are a Queen and Pancho in the elderly parade, two participants in the Grand parade and Miss Universe Bonaire. .

Eight different groups with 279 participants were a part of the Grand parade and an unknown number of seniors joined the elderly parade

Photos Julie Morgan

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POLICE REPORT

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Karnaval 2026

The Caribbean Netherlands Police Force (KPCN) looks back on a safe 2026 Karnaval without major incidents.

Checks on vehicles and parade drivers • All drivers checked in the parades successfully passed the breathalyzer test. • Most drivers had their documents in order. However, during the teen parade, a golf cart failed to produce the required paperwork and was therefore disqualified. In Rincon, two drivers were found to not have the correct driver's license for the vehicle they were driving and were not permitted to continue driving. • A tractor driver was fined for driving with a false license plate.

Violations. Throughout the entire period and various parades of Carnival 2026, the police recorded the following violations:

- 16 fines for opening, blocking, or parking behind barricades.
- 2 fat bikes were seized for driving in a restricted area.
- 6 vehicles were taken to the police station; these were towed away for illegal parking near barricades.
- 2 bars and restaurants were forced to close due to the sale of drinks in glass bottles.
- 1 fight, the situation was quickly brought under control.
- 1 arrest for public intoxication.
- 1 arrest for insulting a public servant on duty. In addition, various prohibited objects, stabbing weapons, and a quantity of suspected narcotics were seized.

Preventive frisking. On Sunday, February 15th, between 6 and 8 p.m. a preventive frisking was conducted at various locations along the karnaval routes in Playa. Several people and vehicles were searched during this search. During the search, various prohibited items were found and seized, including various quantities of suspected narcotics, scissors, a knife, a hammer, a machete, and a grinder.

Property crimes

Feb. 22. A black V8 fat bike was stolen while parked in a parking lot on Kaya Libertador Simon Bolivar.

Feb. 18 & 20. Two reports were filed regarding the theft of fat bike batteries. One battery was stolen while the fat bike was parked on Kaya Grandi. The other was stolen while the fat bike was parked in the bicycle rack at a tourist accommodation on Bulevar Gobernador N. Debrot.

Feb. 19. 6:20 a.m. Unknown persons gained access to a government building on Kaya Neerlandia and stole the contents of a safe.

Feb. 16. A black electric fat bike, model Ouxi V8 was stolen while parked near the outer wall of a shelter on Kaya Salsa.

Feb. 17. Three boats moored at Lac Cai were reported stolen. After a search, they were found near Punta Kalbas. The Yamaha outboard motors, as well as two fuel tanks and associated hoses, were missing from two boats.

Feb. 16. Unknown persons stole several tools from a shipping container at a house under construction on Kaya Heru.

Feb. 12 & 13. A Toyota Hilux pickup truck with license plate V-2932 was stolen while parked locked in the parking lot of a business on Kaya J.E. Nicolaas. On Friday, Feb. 13, around 4:20 p.m. the pickup truck was found in the mondi near Kaminda La Union.

Feb. 12. A yellow and black Yamaha Raptor, with license plate B-5720, was stolen while parked in front of a house on Bella Vista.

Feb. 11. A license plate B-12017 was stolen from a car parked on Kaya Nikkel.

Traffic accidents

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

Feb. 17. 4:45 p.m. A passenger car and a pickup truck collided due to a failure to yield right of way at the intersection of Kaya Internashonal and Kaya Maximiliana Rosaria.

Feb. 14. 3:40 a.m. A vehicle was reported upside down in the bushes off Kaminda Tras di Montaña. When the

police, ambulances, and firefighters arrived, the driver was outside the vehicle, but emergency services were unable to reach him immediately. Firefighters cleared the path so the victim could be removed from the bushes and transported to the hospital. Due to the priority of medical care, a breathalyzer test could not be administered.

Feb. 13. 6:30 p.m. On Kaya Para Mira a motorcycle driver fell over. Due to the priority of medical care, a breathalyzer test could not be administered to the driver. The victim was taken to the hospital by ambulance.

Feb. 11. 10:20 a.m. A cyclist was seriously injured when he fell off his fat bike on Kaya General Carlos Manuel Piar near Kaya Libertador Simon Bolivar. Several bystanders provided first aid to the victim. Paramedics requested assistance from the fire department because the victim was trapped and had to be extricated. The victim was then taken to the hospital for medical treatment.

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 Feb. 13 to Feb. 18. Police reported that eight drivers (including two scooter drivers) were arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.

One vehicle was reported crashed in the mondi off Kaya Amsterdam. When police arrived, they found the vehicle, but not the driver. After some time, several people arrived in another vehicle. One of them stated that he was the driver who crashed. After testing positive, he was taken to the police station and given a two-hour driving ban.

Police identified four other DUI drivers because they were involved in collisions – one with a lamp post, another at the Kaya Internashonal roundabout. Additionally, police stopped one driver for a check, and found a scooter driver who had fallen off her scooter.

Four drivers could not produce valid driver's licenses. Three driver's licenses were confiscated. Other drivers were banned from driving for two- and four- hours.

Traffic, Parking and Speed Control

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

Feb. 21. In the afternoon officers observed a man on a fat bike on Bulevar Gobernador N. Debrot behaving recklessly and performing stunts on a public road. Police stopped him on Kaya Leeuwarden for violating Article 3 of the Bonaire Road Traffic Ordinance 2019. The fat bike was confiscated, and the driver was fined for causing danger and obstruction on the public road.

Feb. 21. During a traffic check on Kaya Nikiboko Sùit 10 vehicles were inspected, resulting in two fines: one for driving without insurance and without a driver's license and one for driving without a valid proof of insurance. In addition, two false license plates were confiscated.

Feb. 11. During a speed check on Kaya Ir. Randolph Statius van Eps one driver was fined for driving at 105 km/h, 45 km/h over the 60 km/h speed limit. This driver was also not wearing a seatbelt. Fines were issued for both violations.

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

Public Order

Feb. 22. 3:40 a.m. Police observed a restaurant in the city center still open and selling meals to customers. Due to violating the closing time and failing to produce a permit, a report was filed for violating the BES Licensing and Catering Act.

Feb. 19. As part of the preventive searches around Karnaval, police conducted a check on Kaya Nikiboko South. Persons and vehicles were searched and a knife and various items suspected of being used for the preparation and sale of narcotics were seized.

What is preventive frisking? When the Chief Public Prosecutor authorizes the police to conduct preventive frisks, anyone in designated security risk areas can be

frisked without specific suspicion or evidence. Anyone who refuses to cooperate with a preventive frisk runs risk of arrest.

Feb. 16. 9:20 a.m. The police received a report of a person showing no signs of life in a facility on Kaminda Lagun. The detective team and the forensic investigation team conducted a preliminary investigation which determined that the death was not a natural cause. At approximately 6 p.m. a search was conducted at a residence on Kaya Bèni. A man, 30, was arrested at the police station in connection with this case on Tuesday, Feb. 17.

Customs CN findings 2025



In 2025 Customs Caribbean Netherlands recorded 35 specific findings.

Illegal money flow. Under the Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (Prevention) Act BES (WWFT BES) 14 findings were registered. All took place on Bonaire. In total, USD 209,545 of undeclared cash amounts were detected with travellers. In most instances, an administrative fine was imposed due to non-compliance with the declaration requirement.

Narcotics. Under the Opium Act BES 1960 11 findings were registered. On Bonaire (9 findings: 2,770 grams of cannabis, 59 grams of hashish, 7.44 grams of XTC), St. Eustatius (1 finding: 96 grams of cannabis) and Saba (1 finding: 0.25 grams of cannabis).

Weapons and ammunition: Under the (Fire) Arms and Ammunition Act BES 7 findings were registered. Bonaire (1 finding: 1 stun gun and 1 box of ammunition of 20 pieces), St. Eustatius (5 findings, in total: 3 pepper sprays, 4 lipstick guns, 1 knuckle duster and 1 stun gun) and Saba (1 finding: 1 box of ammunition of 500 pieces).

Protecting public health: Under the Pharmaceutical Provision Act BES 4 findings were registered. Bonaire (3 findings: GafPlus and VitaFer, products that contain diclofenac) and Saba (1 finding: 192 pills of sildenafil citrato).

Nature. In the context of supervision on the import of prohibited animal products, a total of 186.4 kilos of pork were intercepted on Bonaire and St. Eustatius. In addition, on the basis of the flora and fauna legislation, 440 kilos of queen conches (also known as 'karko', a protected animal species) were also intercepted on Bonaire.

Customs supervision. Through targeted inspections and close cooperation with chain partners, Customs Caribbean Netherlands was able to anticipate risks at the border effectively in 2025.

CN Belastingdienst release

The Bonaire Reporter Feb. 25 - March 11, 2026

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 Donkeys -Wild or Domestic?

Urgent response to the Bonaire's Wild or Domestic post by Linda McGiven, under the Letters and Opinions section of the Feb 11th issue of the Bonaire Reporter:

In my response I am going to refrain from opinion and state only the facts. Sadly, Linda's opinion is without full knowledge and is far removed from the truth.

First, I want to briefly address her reference to AI, someone the writer evidently knows little about. Many know AI Catalfumo as an authority on Bonaire's Free Roaming Donkeys who was and is successfully monitoring and caring for the Bonairean Donkeys in the wild. May I add, long before Marina Melis arrived on Bonaire. The movement to secure the normal life of our donkeys is by many people, most who have lived with and are very familiar with our local wildlife.

Second, The proper solution that will finally get our "Special Historic Nubian Donkeys" off the streets is a holistic management approach, not breaking up content families by capturing and confining females in a zoo like situation or the planned elimination by 2030.

The Citizens For Better Safer Animal Friendly Bonaire, along with the nature foundations, We Care for Bonaire, Bonaire Donkey Protection League and with land, herd and wild life professionals have already submitted to the government such a plan. The Holistic Manage plan will get our remaining wild donkeys off the streets to safe areas, in an amount that is helpful not harmful to the land. They will be monitored and population controlled to that amount if needed, with humane temporary contraceptive injections of females. The harmful castration that has been done in the past and is currently being proposed again of male donkeys that is not recommended by equine veterinarians and those with proper knowledge of Donkeys.



Linda clearly states her support of the Donkey Sanctuary's plan to capture only females and their young, stressful, barbaric, castration of males. What she may not know is the failed plan has broken up small comfortable family groups and has destroyed the 500 year normal niche that had created stable population control. It has created large herds of males that are now doing damage to the land and there is more than one case where bands of males encounter family groups and attempt to kill the young males.

Bonaire does not need a failed \$70,000 tax payer program orchestrated by those that lack wildlife experience. It needs input from those like, George Thode, Michael Obersi, Buchy Frans, AI Catalfumo and other concerned citizens that have well over 40 years wildlife experience.

We suggest all interested in knowing the true facts or want to assist in saving our remaining sadly abused free roaming Historic Nubian Donkeys to contact: Email bdplf@gmail.com or WhatsApp +599-785-2206.

Kayla Flinn, AI Catalfumo

Bonaire's Donkeys -Wild or Domestic?

Dear Editor

I'm writing in response to a recent article "Bonaire's Wild or Domestic" article, particularly to the author's reference to AI Catalfumo, whom I have known for the last 30+ years. Protecting the Nubian donkey while allowing them to roam free off the streets of Bonaire and within their family nucleus has been a primary focus of AI's since I've known him. I just cannot wrap my head around the barbaric castration of the males, the capturing and seclusion of the females (where a \$25 charge is levied to enter the sanctuary ...or in this case "zoo") to pet and mingle with them as they live a secluded life without mates and families. Also, the castrated Males without mates and families are more apt to be destructive to nature.

I would urge everyone to look at and consider supporting the "Bonaire Protection League Foundation" amongst others, to ensure these beautiful wild creatures are not "eliminated from Bonaire by 2030," which I understand is the primary focus of the "business" of the current "sanctuary." Moving the donkeys (males, females and young... Families) to the back country is doable if they are provided food until they can self sustain and become accustomed to the location (so they don't come back to the streets) and water are provided. This will ensure that, by 2030, there will still be Nubian donkeys surviving on Bonaire, as they have for the last 500 years.

Lori Wald

Ask Bob

Bonaire real estate advice



**Hi Bob –
I'm thinking of buying a property on Bonaire, and I've heard there are various annual costs like property tax, leasehold fee, and HOA fee. How are these typically handled if I buy mid-year, so I can avoid any surprises at closing?**

Regards, Christopher

Hi Christopher,

Thank you for your question. Buying a property on Bonaire can come with several annual costs that every buyer should know.

Property tax (Vastgoedbelasting) is billed one year in arrears and applies to second homes or investments properties.

Ground tax (Grondbelasting) is billed in the current year and applies to primary residences.

You only pay either Vastgoedbelasting or Grondbelasting, depending on how you use the property.

Lease land fee (Erfpacht) is also billed in the current year and applies to all properties situated on long lease land.

The notary does not pro-rate these costs at the closing of the deed. It is up to

the seller and buyer to settle their shares among themselves. Make sure your purchase agreement clearly states how these costs are divided this will then also be mentioned in the transfer deed.

For properties consisting of a right of apartment, Home Owner Association fee (Vereniging van Eigenaren) is pro-rated by the notary at closing as the notary is obligated by law to pro-rate this fee.

Knowing these costs helps you budget accurately and enjoy your new Bonaire home with peace of mind.

Sunny regards,

Bob

**Bob Bartikoski,
Re/Max Bonaire Broker/Owner**

If you are looking to buy or sell a home on Bonaire, or if you have a real estate question for Bob, email him at info@bonairehomes.com. Bonaire: +599-717-7362. Toll free from US: 1-866-611-7362

Cruise ship brings nudity to Bonaire's beaches

On February 14 the Norwegian Pearl's Big Nude Boat spent the day on our beautiful island. While I have no objection to people living their lives with or without clothes, I fully believe that it should be done so with respect to local laws and without infringing on the rights of other people. Sadly, this respect was not given by some of the passengers on Saturday because nude snorkelers were seen at Klein Bonaire and at the Andrea sites.

I know very little about the rules and regulations that cruise ships and their passengers are subject to while visiting Bonaire, regardless topless sunbathing and nudity are prohibited on this island. It's my understanding that in this case the cruise ship was told their passengers had to wear clothes at all times when they

were on Bonaire. If this is in fact true, the passengers obviously did not obey.

Bonaire is traditionally a conservative island. It wasn't many years ago that the locals and residents of the island would raise a fuss about cruise ship passengers walking around in bathing suits without wearing a cover up. Now we have full exposure.

Nothing can be done now that the ship has sailed on. I did write to TCB so they were aware of the disrespect some passengers demonstrated. I hope that TCB will inform Norwegian Cruise Line that such behavior is unacceptable on Bonaire and the Big Nude Boat is not welcome to our island if their passengers continue to disrespect the local laws.

Leanne Pinkerton

Nightclub shooting trials underway

Legal proceedings have begun against two suspects (of several) in the shooting death of a 15-year-old boy at nightclub Club Rush last June. On Thursday the 12th they appeared in court for a pro forma hearing.

A pro forma hearing is defined as a brief court appearance primarily for procedural purposes. It serves as a check-in to ensure that the case is progressing through the legal system. These hearings are often scheduled to maintain the court's schedule and ensure compliance with legal timelines without delving into substantive issues.

The Judge and the Public Prosecutor's Office say prosecuting the crime will be complicated. Not all the evidence has been gathered and processed, and witnesses have not been forthcoming. Initially eight suspects are scheduled for pro forma appearances now and in March, and another six may be required to appear later. The cases against two defendants, Q. de P. and U.S.S., were brought before the court last week because the legal issues regarding their possible involvement in the crime were relatively straightforward and a good place to begin organizing the whole case.

DMR (first reported in Bonaire.nu)

Bonaire hosts Kingdom symposium on digital data and privacy

The Commission Supervision Personal Data Protection BES (CBP BES) organized a successful symposium on digital data and privacy within the Kingdom of the Netherlands on Wednesday, January 28, 2026. The symposium took place on Bonaire.

During the symposium, administrators, supervisors, policymakers, and professionals from various parts of the Kingdom came together. They engaged in discussions on digitalization and the protection of personal data. Among the attendees were the Governor of Curaçao, his excellency Mauritsz de Kort, representatives of the Parliament of Curaçao, and Aleid Wolfsen, Chair of the Dutch Data Protection Authority.

The meeting was opened by the Governor of Bonaire, John Soliano. In his opening remarks, he emphasized the importance of proper protection of personal data and a secure digital government for Caribbean Netherlands. He stated that residents must be able to trust that their personal data are handled carefully and securely.

The central question that emerged during the symposium was: how do we ensure that personal data are properly protected in all parts of the Kingdom and that citizens can rely on a safe and trustworthy digital government? The symposium confirmed the importance of continued cooperation within the Kingdom. Only by working together can the protection of personal data be strengthened and citizens' trust in digital services be sustainably maintained.

DMR (government press release)

Exec council to create international relations office

The Executive Council intends to propose to the Island Council that Bonaire spend a million dollars on an Office of Administrative and International Relations (BIB). This new unit will be responsible for "coordinating administrative and international affairs, maintaining contacts with national and international partners, and strengthening Bonaire's advocacy." *DMR*

Jetten cabinet sworn in

The Netherlands again has an official government. On Monday (February 15) The Jetten coalition took the reins. *DMR*

SGB computer hacked

The Scholengemeenschap Bonaire (SGB / School community) was the victim of an international ransomware attack on February 17th. Hackers gained access to one of the school's limited-use computers and stole some archived files. The Cyber Team of the Caribbean Netherlands Police Force (KPCN) and Europol are investigating the intrusion and the BES Personal Data Protection Supervisory Commission has been notified. Although what data was stolen has not yet been determined, user data and passwords are safe, according to the school.

Regular educational activities were not disrupted. Since SGB operates in a secure cloud environment, systems such as Magister, AFAS, Zermelo, Eduarte, and Microsoft Office were not affected. The school emphasizes that standard security measures were in place, including multi-factor authentication, firewalls, and secure login procedures.

SGB will provide further information to those involved once the scope of the stolen data is determined. *DMR*

Karnaval food stands inspected

During the karnaval parade the Directorate of Supervision and Enforcement carried out checks at food stands, catering locations and mobile sales points along the route. All exhibitors and karnaval groups were informed in advance about the hygiene and safety regulations that would be enforced.

Entrepreneurs were responsible for complying with the applicable hygiene and safety regulations. The checks focused on, among other things: food preparation and storage (proper temperature for refrigeration and keeping warm); hygienic working methods and personal hygiene of staff; prevention of cross-contamination; correct storage of products; presence of fire extinguishing equipment and general fire safety; and general layout and safety of the stand.

DMR (government press release)

Accessibility law may be passed sometime

The Executive Council has issued a press release under the title Breaking Barriers: Bonaire Launches Accessibility Program. The press release announces that the Executive Council will present a new Island Ordinance (EITB) for the approval of the Island Council. "The law will formally establish the legal obligation to be accessible. This formally marks the start of a historic journey that will make Bonaire an island where everyone—regardless of disability—can live fully and independently. The vision is clear: Biba Huntu: Bonaire Makes Accessibility Law."

Bonaireans can await developments. *DMR*

Money coming to promote food security in the islands

Pending parliamentary approval, the government intends to establish a CariFoodFund (CFF) to promote food security in the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Initially the foundation will have 18 million euros in capital to provide loans to agricultural entrepreneurs on Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, and BES. The government intends to provide an additional €6 million local governments can use to support policy initiatives related to food security. CFF is expected to begin lending money this year.

CFF will manage a revolving fund. As loans are repaid, other entrepreneurs in agriculture, horticulture, livestock and fishing will be able to borrow the moneys. The fund is expected to grow to at least fifty million euros.

The foundation also wants to set up an academy for knowledge development, training and support of entrepreneurs and governments on the islands. *DMR*

Abraham says diabas issue blocked action on Lagun air pollution

According to a report by Dick Drayer in *Bonaire.nu*, Deputy Clark Abraham acknowledges that for years the board of Bonaire failed to protect residents of the Lagun Landfill area from known health hazards. Abraham said he agrees substantively with the conclusions of the National Ombudsman, who ruled that the Bonaire Public Body (OLB) had violated its duty of care. At the same time, Abraham emphasizes that the island is now "in a different phase and that the government has taken steps to structurally improve supervision and enforcement."

Abraham did point out, moreover, that the period examined by the Ombudsman is "largely before the current administration period." He said the ombudsman's report focuses on an old complaint from a resident who experienced nuisance for years from illegal excavation of diabas. According to Abraham, "the board of directors was trapped between enforcement and social consequences for a long time. If you hold on hard while no one has a permit to dig up diabas, you shut down housing construction and infrastructure in one fell swoop. No diabas means no houses, no schools. That doesn't speak well. It was unlawful. But without policy, you also had no way out to do it legally."

Now, Abraham points out, the OLB has the new 2026–2028 Supervisory and Enforcement Policy, which was adopted by the Island Council at the end of November. According to him, "the document is a turning point. In the policy, illegal waste disposal and the excavation of diabas are classified as a top priority. The approach is risk-driven and explicitly focuses on themes with a high social impact, such as public health, environment and safety."

"For the first time in the history of Bonaire, an integral supervisory and enforcement policy has been established," says Abraham. "With a three-year implementation framework and a risk analysis that determines where we intervene. We are now working on interim rules so that activities do not continue uncontrolled, but under clear conditions."

DMR (source: Dick Drayer, Bonaire.nu)

Reef Renewal at SGB's Activities Day

On February 11th, Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire (RRFB) teamed up with Scholengemeenschapbonaire (SGB) for their second and largest annual educational event for SGB's Activities Day! Sixty students from VMBO in years 3 and 4 joined RRFB for a day of snorkeling and interactive games at Bachelor's Beach.

The goal of the event was to introduce young people to the importance of healthy coral reefs and coral restoration for Bonaire's community, not only through games and challenges but also by seeing the corals up close in the water. In fact, students were able to see divers actively working in the Bachelor's Beach coral nursery and restoration site during the snorkeling session.



The RRFB team demonstrates how a branching coral nursery tree works.

Photo Julie Morgan



RRFB staff Jason Mirtsopoulos shows a group of VMBO students how to build a coral rope nursery, part of a competitive relay challenge at Activities Day. Photo Julie Morgan

RRFB continues to grow their educational program, partnering with more schools to reach more kids on the island each year. In the summer of 2026, they are kickstarting a traineeship program designed to engage, train, and empower young people from Bonaire to play a role in coral restoration.

If you're interested in the traineeship program or are an educator interested in collaborating, please contact info@reefrenwalbonaire.org for more information.

By Caitie Reza,
Communication & Development officer

Did you know:

81% of young people want to leave Bonaire?

Data isn't boring when it is about you because data isn't spreadsheets; it's stories. Stories that help people make better choices, at school, in policy, and personally. Bonaire's kids between the ages of 12 and 16 can learn about themselves in two interactive workshops after school at 3 to 4:30 p.m. on March 3rd and 5th at the Biblioteka Públiko Boneiru.

Registration for the workshops is required. You can register by emailing caribischneiderland@cbs.nl. Or sign up at: <http://tinyurl.com/data-vibes-CBS>

Young people can also talk with CBS staff and discover what data reveals about the lives of young people on Bonaire. During the week, figures will be shared about how young people spend their free time and how they view their future, among other things.

In addition to the kids' workshops, Statistics Netherlands (CBS) cordially invites all ages to visit the Public Library of Bonaire during March 2-6, between 2 and 5 p.m. to discover what statistics reveal about young people on Bonaire - how young people spend their free time and how they view their future, among other things.

For more information call us at +599 717 8676 or send an email to caribischneiderland@cbs.nl.

CBS press release



Make Bonaire Accessible

Carnival..... all over.... by Ria Dokter

Carnival..... all over....

All by myself on the porch.... Reading a good book and enjoying a piece of pineapple... it is so nice and quiet. And then it hit me: There is a column waiting to be written.

Of course, I should know that, but quietness can be so deceiving...and accessibility will always be a problem.

After the MiVaBo board had good meetings with our lieutenant-governor and deputado's, it was an absolute pleasure to read that Bonaire's government finally will pick up the challenge and start a program on accessibility. And that will make a lot of people very, very happy.

But that does not mean that one can lean back and enjoy the progress. It means that we have to be more alert than ever. But I promise you: whatever happens, we will keep you informed.

By now you should know that I get a lot of help, and with me a lot of others do as well. Those who cannot carry out certain household tasks, get help. Last week something really fun occurred: we were at the entrance of a big supermarket, when I heard someone calling my name out loud repeatedly! Two ladies called me, shook my hand and asked me if my name was Ria Dokter. This I confirmed. Now those ladies told me that they had seen me from the parking lot and knew right away that this was me. They recognized my picture from *The Bonaire Reporter*. They decided to call out my name and they were absolutely thrilled to meet me in person. They told me that they have followed my column on accessibility for a long time now and they were very happy to meet me in person. I thought that was pretty special. We had

a pleasant talk and when we parted, they told me that they hoped I would go on writing this column as long as possible, because they loved it so much and that it was so informative.

Can you imagine doing something you love that people like so much and thank you for it?

And the ladies were right: When you want something to change, you have to work for it. And when you cannot do so by yourself, you should ask for help.

Coming back to the carnival: I did not go. When you depend on others it is hard to participate in that kind of activity. This is why I really appreciate everybody involved in the organization. I know there are many participants that need help getting their wheelchair pushed. Pushing a wheelchair is a HARD job. But doing so is very rewarding, because you are making the person being pushed very happy and allows them to participate in something they really love. They might be old, they might have a handicap, but they still count and want to be able to join the fun just like anybody else. So, please sign up and become a "carnival-volunteer." Your reward will be smiles and happiness.



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.

“We found the flag guy and he came to Bonaire!”



Emmanuel is greeted at the airport by a welcoming crowd
Photo Julie Morgan

Tourism Corporation Bonaire (TCB) led a social media campaign to find the guy waving the Bonaire flag in the Super Bowl's Bad Bunny halftime show.

TCB said, "You asked for him, we searched for him, and we found him."

Emmanuel Lopez Alonzo, Puerto Rican, professional dancer, living in Los Angeles is the flag guy. After an audition last December, he was hired as an official Bad Bunny dancer for the halftime show. He thought he would just be one of the crowd of dancers.

Emmanuel said, "I didn't know until four days before the



The Maskarada made a special appearance just for Emmanuel's visit
Photo Julie Morgan



Emmanuel carrying the Bonaire flag at the Super Bowl Bad Bunny half time show /

show I'd be dancing with Lady Gaga and Bad Bunny. And then I had the honor of waving the Bonaire flag and making it all the way to the front. How could I know somebody from Bonaire would see it and it was going to be such an impact? I didn't even know I would make it to the front of the crowd as I was always a little bit behind and there were like 300 people."

One of Emmanuel's friends saw the TCB social media campaign and told him the Bonaire tourist board trying to find him. That was on a Tuesday and on Wednesday morning he was on a Zoom call with TCB asking if he could come to Bonaire.

Emmanuel flew from Los Angeles to Miami, meeting his mother from Puerto Rico and they headed to Bonaire on Friday, February 13.

As he stepped into the airport reception waving a large Bonaire flag, Emmanuel was welcomed by a huge crowd complete with TCB, cultural and salsa dancers, Miss Universe Bonaire and deputy Silberie.

Emmanuel said, "I've done a lot of things that I have always wanted to do. I dived, snorkeled, went on a jet ski, windsurfed, ate goat meat, joined the Karnaval and had fun with the Maskarada."

Back at home in the US, Emmanuel is a dancer and actor in Los Angeles. He has performed on Broadway, Hollywood films, National commercials but according to him, one of the biggest things ever was to perform in the Super Bowl.

Julie Morgan

Is your Sabal Palm rare?

BonBèrdè will begin additional DNA research this month on Sabal palms growing in Bonaire gardens. The research focuses on the rare and endemic Sabal loughediana, a palm species found exclusively on Bonaire, of which only 18 mature specimens remain in the wild.

Although the wild population is located in the Lima region, Sabal palms also grow outside their natural habitat, including private gardens. These palms can play an important role in the conservation of the species. DNA analysis will determine whether the palms are indeed Sabal loughediana and will provide better insight into how the palms are related to each other.

An extensive field survey of the wild Sabal palm population has already been conducted recently. The DNA research is an important addition to this survey and provides essential information about the genetic composition of the entire Sabal population on Bonaire. This knowledge is necessary to carefully and thoroughly design future protection and recovery measures.

The DNA research is part of the broader protection program for the Sabal palm within the Nature and Environment Policy Plan for the Caribbean Netherlands (NMBP). This program is being coordinated and funded by the Public Entity Bonaire (OLB). BonBèrdè is responsible for conducting the research within this framework.

For the research, owners of gardens in which a Sabal palm grows will be approached and asked to participate voluntarily. During a short visit, with the owner's permission, a small leaf sample will be taken for DNA analysis and a few additional questions will be asked.



The visit lasts a maximum of ten minutes and will not affect the palm.

The results of the research will be used within the broader process of protection, recovery, and knowledge building regarding the Sabal palm, including the devel-

opment of the Bonaire Sabal Palm Park.

For more information:

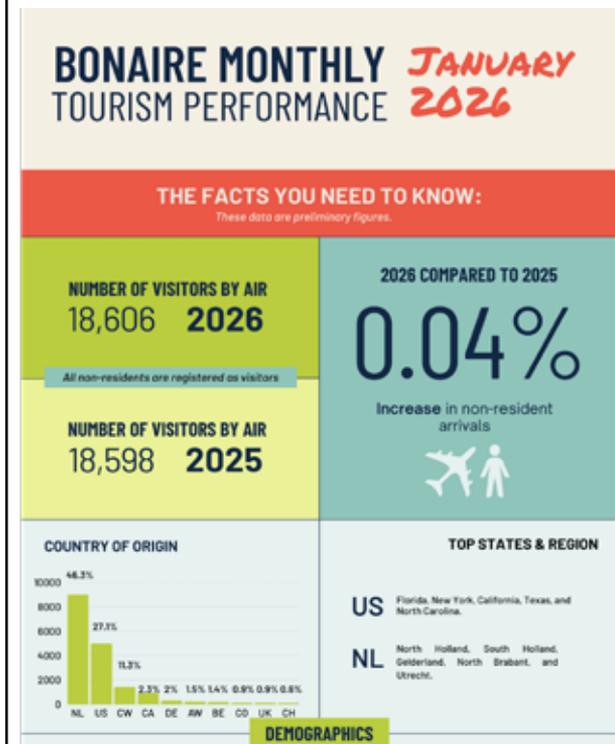
www.bonberde.com/bonaire-sabal-palm-park

by Roos Coolen of BonBèrdè

Unfairly accused at Karnaval



Much to the dismay of their customers, the popular Beer & Burger restaurant, with a prime viewing location for the Karnaval parade, was shuttered after a man was seen by a KPCN officer walking out of the establishment with a beer bottle. The officer questioned the man, and he said he had purchased the bottle there. Beer & Burger was not selling bottled beer, but only in paper cups or in their new recyclable signature cups which they had purchased for the event to prevent less trash on the island.



Find TCB's full report in our online issue, page 27

<https://bonairereporter.com>



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Nature Fee?

International Energy Launches Bonaire Blokart Racing Association

Local boy, Tim Martinez gives a thumbs up with wheels up. Tim is a senior instructor at Bonaire Landsailing and will be competing in 2026 Blokart World Championship in Wales this September.

The Bonaire Blokart Racing Association (BBRA) successfully launched its first official race day at Tras di Montaña, marking the beginning of an exciting new chapter for wind-powered sport on the island.

— an impressive debut performance. Bonaire locals Shaquil Boezem and Tim Martinez also delivered strong and confident races, demonstrating the growing strength of local talent.

Pilots from seven different countries — Bonaire, Curaçao, Switzerland, Germany, the USA, the Netherlands, and New Zealand — lined up on the start grid, making the event a truly international affair. In total, seven races were held throughout the day in gusty and challenging wind conditions. Despite the variability, the atmosphere was filled with focus, determination, and plenty of huge “blokart grins”.

Although spectators were few, everyone agreed it was an excellent start to racing on Bonaire. The combination of fun and high-level competition confirmed that something special is beginning to take shape on the island.

The event was deliberately run to international racing standards, giving participants a genuine taste of competitive blokart racing. Experience levels varied widely, from first-time competitors to seasoned international athletes, including a top-five world-ranked pilot and a three-time European Champion. Five of the day’s racers are now preparing for the upcoming Blokart World Championships in Llanbedr, Wales, this September.

The next BBRA race day will be held on March 6, at 10 a.m. at Tras di Montaña, and the public is invited to come and see what blokart racing is all about. While the event will be another official competition rather than a workshop, spectators are welcome.

Those interested in joining the Bonaire Blokart Racing Association, open to participants age 8 and up, can register their interest at www.bonaireblokart.racing. All members will complete a certification program, with training provided.

For those who would first like to try sailing a blokart recreationally, visit Bonaire Landsailing Adventures and discover whether this fast-growing sport could become your new passion.

*Donna Hudgeons
Photos Julie Morgan*

As expected, the top three finishers were among the most experienced competitors: Amedeo Vaccani, Andrew Sands, and Alexander Bruhn. Notably, this was Amedeo’s very first blokart race



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Planning Rincon Day 2026



tumes, residents will light the flame, dance and sing to begin the month long celebration.

The song festivals, which feature Bonaire's best song writers and musicians, will be held over several days for both youth adults from April 8 through 11. On April 18, families will come together to showcase their respected or notable talents in food, clothes, arts and crafts.

Nos Zjilea at Mangazina di Rei will hold their usual cultural presentation on the last Saturday of the month, April 25, with a fashion show of former Dia di Rincon parade costumes.

The parades will begin on April 28 with the kids and April 29 for adults. On April 30, Rincon Day, there will

be an original parade of costumes, the Simadon parade and the final grand parade.

The wall of achievement will be erected once again with photos and biographies of Rincon's most influential people. And new this year will be a permanent art display tree. To keep informed on upcoming events of the festival, visit Dia di Rincon Pagina Oficial on Facebook. *Story, Photos Julie Morgan*

T-shirt design for Dia di Rincon 2026 - Rooted in Family Union

The t-shirts are for sale at Tianda Onchi in Rincon for \$15-\$20.

The biggest festival on Bonaire, Dia di Rincon or Rincon Day, on April 30, is a little over two months away, but the planning has been ongoing for months. Since 1989, celebration of this oldest settlement in the Dutch Caribbean has been April 30, but events begin as early as March 28 and continue through the month of April.

In a press conference last week looking over the beautiful Rincon valley, we learned the 37th Rincon Day celebration is all about families. Attention will be given to all the original families and their names going back to the 1527 settlement of the town.

On March 28, the lighting of the torch will initiate the beginning of Dia di Rincon. Rincon's residents from north, south, east and west will meet at the intersection of founder Francisco Janga's statue. In traditional cos-



Buckley's Wetlands

by George Buckley

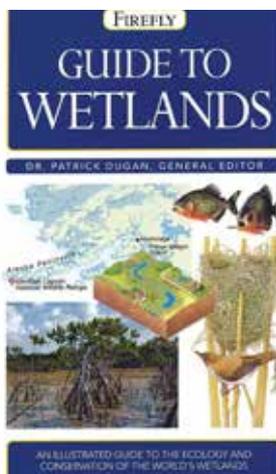
World Wetlands Day was celebrated earlier this month and I write to propose that February be named World Wetlands MONTH, given that wetlands rarely get the attention or protection that they deserve. That attention and protection is very much needed given the continuing damage to and loss of wetlands, particularly coastal wetlands, to development, pollution and damage from storms. They are the critical interface between land and sea, acting as a buttress to oncoming water while creating a rich habitat for wildlife and valuable recreational opportunities.

Wetlands provide a plethora of 'environmental services, making them vital parts of the 'Blue Economy.' From shallow water sea grasses, coastline marsh grasses and other plants such as buttonwoods and mangroves, they all take in great quantities of carbon dioxide, becoming Blue Economy 'carbon banks,' while helping to provide the oxygen in every other breath we take. Their fibrous roots fix nitrogen while helping to hold substrate together, stabilizing it, limiting erosion and storing water. The often dense wetland plants filter particulates, helping to build up or accrete bottomlands and provide hiding, breeding and feeding areas for wildlife, especially recently hatched varieties and create a barrier to high water and floods, often helping to protect landward areas and structures.

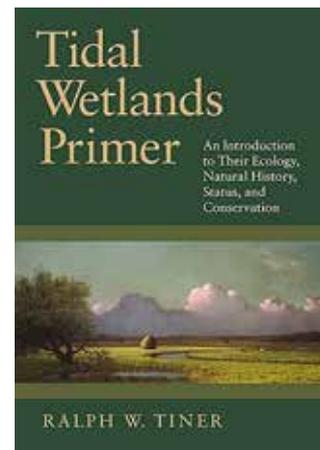
In the United States, wetlands are thought to provide over 20 billion dollars in natural flood protection when compared to 'hardened,' built structures such as sea walls, 'rip rap' etc. Globally, wetlands are estimated to provide over 50 trillion dollars in 'ecosystem services'!

In helping to protect, stabilize and increase populations of invertebrates, fish and birds, wetlands help to increase harvests and biodiversity. They create a complex 'food chain.' Back in 1971, the United Nations Environment, Science and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, coordinated the passage of the RAMSAR Convention, an international wetlands protection treaty that identified some 2500 critically important 'RAMSAR' sites around the world that needed protection, such as Bonaire's Lac Bay. The United States in 1972 enacted the Wetlands Protection Act and the 'Area of Critical Environmental Concern,' ACEC, designation to provide threatened and critical wetlands with enhanced protection. Unfortunately, the US has recently weakened or reduced enforcement of many of its once strong environmental regulations, that interestingly, were supported and passed by previous Republican administrations!

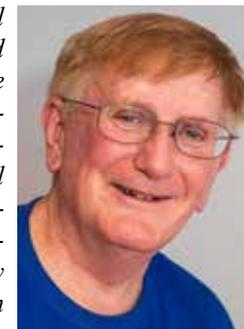
On Bonaire, we benefit greatly from the wetlands of Gotomeer, Lagoon, the salt flats and Lac Bay. They are really interesting places to spend some time exploring and discovering and are often overlooked and taken for granted. Like our coral reefs, each segment of the day brings a varying 'cast and crew' of wildlife to be observed.



Some very fine wetland guides that are well illustrated and expertly written include Charles Dugan's 'Guide to Wetlands,' which provides a wide ranging overview of inland as well as coastal wetlands and Ralph Tiner's 'Tidal Wetlands Primer' that focuses on coastal wetland ecosystems. Both are readily available used online.



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



Reef Glimpses - Thor Shrimp by Dee Scarr

Jim Brandon, former photo pro at Sand Dollar Dive and Photo, called them “popcorn shrimp.” Even the first time I heard him use the term, I knew exactly what shrimp he was talking about, because these little shrimp bounce around their anemones like popping popcorn. In fact, they bounce around so much I’ve never been able to get a good look at them. From photos I could tell that they have brownish bodies with bright white spots edged in blue, and their eyes are spookily white.

I’ve always wondered why they got their scientific name, Thor amboinensis. Okay, Amboinensis I understood; it means “from Amboy,” and Amboy is an Indonesian island, so the first scientifically-described specimen probably was collected around Amboy.

But Thor, the Norse god of thunder, as a name for a warm-water shrimp who’s barely as long as a fingernail? The best explanation I could research was that these shrimp have a pugnacious, warrior-like stance. The problem was that I didn’t see it that way. Then (in Jaeger, Biological Names and Terms, 1955) I found that Greek thourous means “rushing,” and that at least fits the bouncing-around popcorn shrimp.

Or maybe the scientist who named them had a sense of humor. I love calling them Thor shrimp and then pointing out these tiny critters!

Their other common names are “sexy shrimp” and “squat shrimp.”

Apparently these names reflect their posture and their behavior. Thor shrimp don’t keep their bodies close to the bottom like most shrimp and lobsters. Instead, they arch their backs so that their tails are straight above their heads. And since they’re also moving (sometimes sort of vibrating, sometimes jumping, sometimes both) all the time, they earned the common name “sexy shrimp.” No matter what I read, though, the “squat” part doesn’t make sense. At least we all use the same scientific name...

Much information about Thor shrimp has been gleaned from aquarists, since Thors are peaceful additions to tanks where there aren’t too many triggerfish, wrasses, or other predators. Thors reproduce sexually but do not pair off and they copulate without courtship. Only the female is known to care for the 200-500 eggs per mating, which she carries, cleans, and aerates for the two to four weeks it takes for them to hatch. The larva drift for up to a month, then settle to the bottom and seek an anemone or some type of coral with which to



Julie got this perfect portrait of Thor, despite its jittery behavior. Its white eyes blend with its spots.

Julie Morgan 96’

live. Thor shrimp receive protection from the stinging tentacles of their anemones, and pay rent (and get food) by cleaning the tentacles.

Female Thor shrimp are generally bigger than the males, a useful characteristic when you’re carrying a few hundred eggs. Note that I didn’t write anything about young Thor females, though. That’s because there are no young Thor shrimp that are females! Thor shrimp are called protandric hermaphrodites: that is, they are all male when they reach sexual maturity, then at some time – generally after they grow bigger than the other guys – their body changes to female! Once it’s time, and in less than a month, Victor Thor evolves from a “loving-” and leaving-type guy, to Victoria Thor the responsible mother who guards, aerates, and cleans her eggs until they hatch. After that they drift for a month or so, molting every two to three days, until they settle to the bottom and look for a host.

I had never heard of a marine invertebrate that changed sex, had you? Fish, yes, though many, including the wrasses, begin as females rather than males.

Other protandric shrimp may include the Caribbean’s Scarlet-Striped Cleaning Shrimp and Peppermint Shrimp. In fact, close relatives of those two are simultaneous protandric hermaphrodites, which means they start as males but then grow female equipment as well, and both the male and female equipment is functional. For the record, though, their anatomy is not set up for self-fertilization.

Just in case you were wondering.

Scarr’s accomplishments were recognized in 2000 by her inaugural membership in the Women Divers Hall of Fame (along with another Bonaire sea protector, Kalli DeMeyer). Her other honors include Captain Don’s Accolade Award, as well as a NOGI Award (“the Emmy of the diving world”) in the category of Distinguished Service, and the SeaSpace/PADI Environmental Diver of the Year Award in 1991. Dee was the Beneath the Sea and Boston Sea Rovers Diver of the Year in 1991 and 1993.



Two-in-One Banana Split by Chef Corjan Hoogerheide

Actually two splits in one, a popular drink, liqueur 43 with cream and the old fashioned banana split

Banana “burger”: 1 banana, finely diced • 10 g (1.5 T) milk chocolate, coarsely chopped • Bonaire rum, a few drops • Bonaire sea salt, a few grains • Cinnamon powder, pinch • Custard powder, pinch

Mix all ingredients well and form into a “burger,” possibly with a ring of about 5 cm in diameter. Let it set in the freezer.

Coating: 20 g (1/4 C) coconut flakes • Possibly 1 egg, beaten

Now coat the burger with grated coconut until it’s well coated. You can also use a beaten egg to help the grated coconut stick even better.

Sabayon: 2 egg yolks • Dash of liqueur 43 • Dash of jus de orange • 1/2 dl (2 C) sweetened whipped cream, whipped



Stir the jus de orange in with the egg yolks in a metal bowl and whisk this in a “bain marie” (bath) over a pan of gently simmering water until it feels light and firm. Now stir in the liqueur 43 and whisk briefly. Let this cool and then fold in the whipped cream to form a nice creamy Sabayon.

Now fry the “banana burger” in a frying pan in coconut oil until golden brown. Scoop some Sabayon onto a plate and place the cooked burger on top. Serve with some chocolate crumble and a sprig of mint, and perhaps a scoop of vanilla ice cream to make it even more crunchy.

The Banana Split was invented in 1904 by David Evans Strickler in Latrobe (United States).

He worked at a pharmacy with a soda fountain and wanted to create something new and distinctive for students. Bananas were just becoming popular at the time and were a bit exotic. He sold it for 10 cents (quite pricey back then), but it became an instant hit — and became a classic dessert.

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.** Free presentations Nicole Pelletier of the Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation. 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)

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. An 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).

Feb. **26** - March **1** **Inter-Island Games, see pages 15 and 16 .**

Feb. **26** - March **1** **Amy's Fundraising Tennis ATD Doubles Open 2026** Eddy's Tennis Courts.

Thursday, Feb. **26** **"United by Language"**
Taalcafé: Mini Taste of Bonaire at Library 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Practise your languages, meet people and taste the diversity of Bonaire

Friday, Feb. **27** **Escape Night at Library** 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Can you escape by working together in different languages? Free, register at: www.bibliotheekbonaire.com/events

Saturday, Feb. **28** **Nos Zjilea Cultural Event** 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. *Papiamentu - The Mother Tongue-* Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei, Rincon. Enjoy the music, dancing, crafts, amazing food and drink. See online *Reporter*, page 28

February **14** **Art Exhibition Dillon Rannou** at SACA, Front Gallery, Kaya Korona 74. Open to April **4** Thurs. Fri. Sat. 2 - 5 p.m. See poster in online *Reporter*.

February **21** **Art Exhibition Carlos Porras** at SACA, Piano Galley, Kaya Korona 74. Open to April **4** Thurs. Fri. Sat. 2 - 5 p.m. See poster in online *Reporter*.

March **3 & 5** **Kids After School Data-Vibes Workshops** at Library. See page 7.

March **4 & 6** **Kids After School Art Workshops** at Sobremesa. See page 15.

Friday, March **6** **Blokart racing** 10 a.m. at Tras di Montaña. The public is invited to come and see what blokart racing (land sailing) is all about. See page 10.

Sunday, March **8** **Walk-A-Thon for Special Olympics** \$20. Buses leave for White Slave huts at 4:10 a.m. See poster page 16 and in online *Reporter*.

Saturday, March **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.

Sunday, Mar. **29** **Animal Shelter Bonaire Easter Market** 9 a.m.- 2 p.m. Food, drinks, second-hand items, handmade gifts, Easter decorations, and other fun goodies.

2026 Cruise Ship Schedule

DATE	TIME	CRUISE SHIP	PIER
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
Thurs. March 5	0500-1800	SEVEN SEAS GRANDEUR 746 guests	North
	0600-1300	NORWEGIAN SKY 2480 guests	South
Sat. March 7	0700-2200	CARNIVAL GLORY 3540 guests	North
Sun. March 8	0900-1900	CARIBBEAN PRINCESS 3622 guests	North
Tues. March 10	0600-1400	MARELLA DISCOVERY 2 2076 guests	North
Wed. March 11	0600-1900	BRITANNIA 3674 guests	South
	0730-1900	HEBRIDEAN SKY 120 guests	North
Thurs. March 12	0500-1400	NORWEGIAN SKY 2480 guests	South
Fri. March 13	0700-1800	BRILLIANCE OF THE SEAS 2496 guests	North
Mon. March 16	0730-2100	STAR PRIDE 321 guests	North
Tues. March 17	0800-1700	ROTTERDAM 2668 guests	South
Wed. March 18	0700-2300	SILVER SHADOW 388 guests	North
	0800-2200	CARNIVAL HORIZON 4683 guests	South

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

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/

Funds Available



CARIBBEAN
CULTURE FUND

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 caribbeanculturefund.org.

This fourth call covers two themes, reflecting CCF's commitment to 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. Deadlines for the last funding round of this year:

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

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

ART NEWS
opening soon...
IN THE PIANO GALLERY
21 February - 4 April
OPENING: Saturday 21 February 5-7 PM
CARLOS PORRAS
SOLO EXHIBITION
21 February - 4 April
Opening: 21 February 5-7 PM
Open weekly:
Thursday, Friday, Saturday 2-5 PM
ART CENTER ANTRIOL
SACA BONAIRE KAYA KORONA 74

weganan
Interinsular
INVITATION
You are cordially invited to
Weganan Interinsular - Bonaire
A celebration of sport, unity and
island culture.
Feb 26 - 1 March 2026

Watch the kids compete in inter-island games

The season for kids sports competition begins with Interinsular or inter island games for elementary and high school athletes February 26 -March 1 in Bonaire. Joining the games this year will be kids competing from Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius, Saba and, for the first time, Suriname.

Beach Tennis (girls and boys elementary and high school), Football (girls elementary school) and Basketball (boys elementary and high school). In March the games will move to Curaçao and then on to Aruba for other sports.

After a basketball clinic for girls held February 25, the official opening on Bonaire is February 26, 5:30 – 8 p.m. at Kralendijk Stadium. The games will officially begin February 27. On both February 27 and 28 competitions will be held at: - Cruyff Court games in Rincon, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.; 3x3 Basketball at the Sport Hall 9:25 a.m. – 3 p.m. and Beach Tennis at Rudy Boezem, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

A medal ceremony for the athletes will be held February 28, 3:30 – 4:30 at the Sport Hall. The closing ceremony for the Bonaire leg of the games will be at Onima from 7:30 – 10 p.m.

The Interinsular Games are organized by IBISA (Aruba), INDEBON (Bonaire) and FDDK (Curacao).

Looking ahead this spring, Bonaire will host the Special Olympics Walk-a-Thon, March 8; Bonaire International Sports Week, March 21 – mid April and Baseball on the Corals, April 6 – 10. Julie Morgan

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

2024 business survey In the coming months, Statistics Netherlands (CBS) will contact businesses on the three BES islands to complete the annual business survey for the 2024 reporting year. The survey aims to map economic development on Bonaire, St. Eustatius, and Saba. The results of the survey will be published in the last quarter of 2026.

Statistics Netherlands (CBS) is legally obligated to treat all collected data as strictly confidential. For questions, information, or assistance with completing the survey, please contact the Statistics Netherlands office on Bonaire.

CBS Caribbean Netherlands
Bulevar Gobernador N. Debrot 67, Unit 9, Kralendijk
Telephone: +599 717 8676 Email: economie.cn@cbs.nl

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>

STUDIO MUZO
MAGIC IN SAYERS
ART ALCHEMY FOR KIDS
Wednesday March 4 2026
at Sobremesa
J.A. Abraham Boulevard 10
15:00-17:00
\$120,-
A WEEK COURSE
10 SPOTS
\$45.00 p.p.
From abstract play to finished artwork
• A week journey from ideas to gallery ready art
• Learn color mixing and create
• Develop your artistic skills
• Finished mixed media artwork + Certificate

STUDIO MUZO
Creative Color Lab - Afterschool Art
at Sobremesa
J.A. Abraham Boulevard 10
14:30-16:30
6 March 2026
\$100,-
FOR 4 SESSIONS
2 HOURS
AGE 10 -15
• Paint on real canvas
• Learn color mixing & expressions
• Create unique and abstract art
No "right or wrong" way
• Lets have fun in a supportive group
*Materials included



Basketball is taking the spotlight

Basketball is taking the spotlight with efforts to build the future of the sport in the Dutch Caribbean for both women and men. Leading up to the Wegannan Interinsular Games this week, Bonaire has hosted a new girls basketball initiative called *She got Game* as well as a Referee and Coaching.

Basketball will be represented in the Wegannan Interinsular Games on February 27 - 28. Top players in boys basketball from schools in Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius, Saba and Surinam will participate. Competitions will be held at both elementary and high school levels.

The free girls' basketball clinic introduces young girls to the fundamentals of basketball. Clinic times are February 25: Girls ages 6-9: 4 - 5:30 p.m. and age 10-12: 5:30 - 7 p.m. Sign up for the clinic: <https://forms.gle/hDMgXYSkwhjD6Tcq8>

By combining youth participation, women's development, certification programs, governance meetings, and elite inter-island competition, the initiative establishes a comprehensive foundation for sustainable growth of basketball in the Dutch Caribbean.

Julie Morgan (release)

The referee and coaching course are conducted by NBB (Nederlandse Basketball Bond). Bonaire, Aruba and Curaçao will participate. The aim: to improve officiating standards, quality of coaching and to develop the sport of basketball.

To promote Dutch Caribbean basketball leadership, sport federations from Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius and Saba will meet to discuss regional cooperation and joint initiatives for the growth of basketball in the Dutch Caribbean.



United by Language

two multi-lingual events to come Feb. 26 & 27

The first event was February 21 with National Dictation and Academy Papiamentu. Participants were tested on their Papiamentu knowledge.

The second day of the program was Motivational Speaker Night for entrepreneurs and networking. Four speakers in four different languages shared their business experiences with multilingualism. The speakers included language teacher Mina Girigori with stories from a language teacher (Papiamentu); business advisor Pierre Perigault Monte spoke on how multilingualism creates opportunities (English); political scientist Fernando Nava told inspiring stories from Venezuela (Spanish) and speech therapist Astrid Dieters gave her perspective on multilingualism (Dutch). People attended the event but they also joined the podcast online and shared their own story

Two more evenings remain. On February 26, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. is Language Snack: a language fair in four languages. Practice your Papiamentu, Spanish, Dutch and English, meet new people and enjoy international snacks. Game Night is February 27, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. with an Escape Room where participants work together in multilingual teams to escape the library with Wanika Games.

The program is free to everyone, but you do need to register www.bibliotheekbonaire.com/events.

Julie Morgan



The Public Library of Bonaire is celebrating multilingualism with a free program February 21 - 27. The program is focusing on the four most spoken languages in Bonaire: Papiamentu, Spanish, Dutch and English. Although the campaign has already begun, it's not too late to participate.

Head of the library, Jennifer Pocomie-Martis said, "We are proud of the multilingualism of our residents. Language connects us to Bonaire in a unique way, and this is exactly what we want to celebrate with our community."

SUNDAY MARCH 8TH

Special Olympics Bonaire

START
SAM AT THE WHITE SLAVE HUT. FINISH AT TIA SANI RINCON
THE BUS LEAVES FROM STADIUM TO THE WHITE SLAVE HUT :
ALL BUSES WILL LEAVE AT 4:10 AM

PRICE
\$20.00

T-SHIRT PICK UP DATE & TIME
FRIDAY MARCH 6TH, 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM
SATURDAY MARCH 7TH, 10:00 AM - 4:30 PM
KAYA NIKIBOKO NOORD Z/N (BEHIND CATHOLIC CHURCH PLAYA)

CONTACT
ROLANDA +5999 525-7080 - EARON +599 7960909

INCLUDED
T-SHIRT, WATER, FRUIT & SMALL BREAKFAST AT FINISH

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

A friend recently asked me how to remove a termite nest from a dead tree next to a house. This was not an easy question to answer, because depending on many factors, so many things can go wrong. My friend has a lot of rotten wood, layers of dry old composted leaves and also fresh biological compost from fruits and vegetable in the garden. This is fantastically valuable stuff for the soil to make it healthy and rich, but if all of this surrounds a house, you have the perfect ecosystem for all kinds of insects, rats, mice, lizards and for sure termites. So it's not a good idea to have these conditions close to your house.

When we were living in Surinam, we had a big garden in a huge backyard, far from the house. There were fruits trees and a lot of vegetables, and because of all the dead leaves and rotten wood, there were also termites. We had termite nests in trees and also in the house.

So how did my dad get rid of them? Simple, he found the nest and set the dead trees with the termite nests on fire. And there were no termites for a while. But there are 4000 types of termites and part of that family is roaches. With all the dead wood and leaves in the garden they showed up again.

We know that termites have a very important task in soil. They help to compost dead wood and dead leaves creating a better conditioned and rich soil. But while termites are a valuable creation of nature, you don't want them in your house, so don't create the perfect situation for them to live.

Termites can also make nests under a concrete foundation. In Surinam, we suddenly noticed small tunnels in the concrete floor and small dust piles in the house. It was clear what was going on there. My dad contacted a



A termite nest Photo: Angliet

professional termite control company to handle the job.

There are some simple solutions to fight them using kerosene, liquid soap, or tea from the leaves of the neem tree. Termites are not strong and easily die. A local told me that in the old days, people would burn dry aloe with dry neem leaves. The ashes of this were used in the garden against white fly and bugs and also against termites. But you never know if you handle this problem well. If

not they just move to another place where they feel safe. Every colony has a queen that produces eggs. She and her nest with eggs and babies are well protected by the termite soldiers.

So when you see the tunnels on walls and wood, there are termites in the area. The nests can be in a tree, under the concrete foundation and the soil of your garden. The nest of the queen is the most important to destroy, because if not, the queen will lay even more eggs to and create an even bigger army.

On a kunuku with much more land, one can work with the Syntropic farm system of which I have written about before. In that system dead wood and dead leaves are a fundamental condition for sustainable agriculture. But when you have a house and a small yard, don't keep rotten wood and leaves around, because it is a perfect condition for all kind of bugs and insects including termites and woodlice.

One thing more, take care when you are fighting insects in the garden with anti-bug liquids when children are around. A friend was treating her plants with dish soap in a cup and a one year old child drank the liquid and became very sick. Please don't leave your gardening stuff like sharp tools, all kind of liquids and powders out. Keep them far away from children and pets in a safe place. Just 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.



Creating Optimal Health by Irene da Cunda Costa

Understanding the Global Mental Health Crisis — And What We Can Do About It

In recent years, the phrase “mental health crisis” has appeared everywhere—on television, in schools, at workplaces and increasingly in our day-to-day conversations. But what exactly does this crisis mean, and why has it become one of the most urgent social concerns around the world?

The idea of a mental health crisis is rooted in several troubling trends. First, global rates of anxiety, depression, substance abuse and suicide have risen significantly over the past decade. The World Health Organization has repeatedly warned that mental health conditions are now among the leading causes of disability worldwide. Some of this rise is due to better awareness and more open conversations. We are naming what older generations sometimes suffered in silence. But experts also point to real pressures that have intensified mental distress: economic uncertainty, social isolation, climate-related disasters and rapid changes in technology and work.

We see signs of this crisis in many places. In high-income countries, mental health services are overwhelmed with long waiting lists and growing demand from young people. In low- and middle-income nations, resources are often limited, making it challenging to provide consistent care. Small islands like ours face particular stressors, where stigma can discourage people from seeking help due to the tight-knit nature of small communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic amplified these pressures. Around the world, people grappled with grief, fear, job

loss and isolation. Even though the pandemic has eased, its psychological effects continue.

Despite these challenges, the global shift toward acknowledging mental health is also a positive sign. People are talking more openly, questioning old stigmas, and recognizing that emotional well-being is just as important as physical health. This cultural shift gives us an opportunity to build healthier, more compassionate communities.

So, what can we do individually and collectively to address the mental health crisis?

Start with awareness and empathy. Talking openly about mental health helps reduce stigma. When people feel safe to share their struggles, they are more likely to seek help early. Families, churches, schools and workplaces can create supportive spaces where listening is valued over judgment.

Prioritizing community connections and strong social networks are one of the most powerful protective factors against stress and depression. In Caribbean culture, our sense of community has always been a strength. Rebuilding that through community events, youth programs, cultural activities and neighborhood support groups can make a real difference.

To strengthen local services, governments and health systems should invest in training more counselors, integrating mental health into primary care and ensure services are accessible to people of all ages. Even small

improvements like placing a trained counselor in every school or community clinic, can have a lasting impact.

Encourage healthy routines. Simple daily habits support mental well-being: regular exercise, time in nature, adequate sleep, balanced eating and limiting excessive screen time. For many spiritual practices and traditional healing also play an important role in emotional resilience.

Knowing where to turn for help. Every community should make sure residents know who to call or where to go when a crisis arises. Strengthening local helplines, promoting support groups and sharing mental health resources can save lives.

The mental health crisis is real, but it is not hopeless. With understanding, openness, and collective action, we can create a community where people feel supported, not just in moments of crisis, but every day. Our island may be small, but together we can make it a place where everyone has the chance to thrive, both mentally and emotionally.



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.

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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



Patsy

Meet Patsy . Patsy is a 5.5-year-old female dog with the sweetest, most gentle soul. She has been living in

the shelter for the past seven months after her beloved owner sadly passed away.

Patsy is an incredibly loving and sensitive lady. She has the softest coat and an even softer heart. All she truly wants is to be close to you. Patsy adores cuddles and will happily curl up against you or climb right into your lap if you let her.

She is a medium-sized dog and gets along wonderfully with other dogs, including smaller ones. Patsy has a calm and friendly nature, making her a lovely companion both for people and for other pets. She longs to leave the shelter behind and find a forever home. Patsy has so much love to give, she just needs someone willing to open their heart to her.

Story / Photo: Marissa Lamers

This is Garfield. And as you can see in the photo, he honors his name. Also because he loves to eat. Garfield is a big, beautiful orange boy, with golden brown eyes. He is now one year old and when he was brought to us 10 months ago, he was very malnourished, anemic and covered in fleas. But look at him now! Garfield loves



Garfield

to cuddle, but is also a bit lazy. He is very friendly and goes very well with other cats. So who wants to be the John Arbuckle of our Garfield!

Story / Photo: Bo Attevelt

Animal Shelter Bonaire Just in time for Easter



Easter is April 5, and on March 29, Animal Shelter Bonaire is hosting a cozy Easter Market at the Shelter from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. We're looking for individuals and businesses who'd like to rent a table to sell their products: food, drinks, secondhand items, handmade gifts, Easter decorations, or other fun goodies. The table rental fees go directly toward the care of our animals.

We'll also have our own shelter booth, and we're always happy to receive items to sell new or second-hand; everything is welcome. All proceeds from our booth will go to helping the cats and dogs.

If you would like to be a part of the Easter market, send us an email at animalshelterbonaire@gmail.com or stop by the shelter for more information!

*Story Marissa Lamers
Photo Julie Morgan*

Safe Together Strong Together: one year of working together on domestic safety



Since January 1, 2025, the compulsory Protection Code BES has been in effect. These regulations help professionals and citizens recognize early signals of domestic violence and child abuse.

A safe home environment is not self-evident. The "Safe Together Strong Together" campaign was launched to raise awareness of domestic violence and child abuse. Everybody deserves a place where they feel safe — and nobody needs to face things alone.

The Protection Code BES is a step-by-step plan for professionals in the care, education, and judicial sector where they suspect someone is not safe at home. It is compulsory for organizations in these sectors.

The awareness campaign initially focused on professionals and later in 2025 also on citizens. Questionnaires examined what people need to know to recognize signals of unsafe situations. Discussions about safety and responsibility were held with young persons at secondary schools on all three islands and on Saba and St. Eustatius open sunset gatherings were organized for adults to talk about the topic together.

In 2026 the Safe Together Strong Together campaign will be continued. The campaign will focus on how to act in situations of violence, neglect, or abuse.

ZJCN Communication

**Safety begins with seeing, daring to speak up, and not looking away.
We can do this together.**

Do you want to know what you can do? Follow Rijkdienst Caribisch Nederland on Facebook and stay informed of tips, stories, and activities surrounding "Safe Together Strong Together." Together we ensure that nobody needs to face things alone.

Advice Centres and More Information

Bonaire: Advice and Reporting Centre Guiami <https://www.meldpuntguiami.com/en/> 0802-0802 • **Saba:** Domestic Safety Point 416 6936 / 416 3053 • **St. Eustatius:** Statia Strong Support Hotline 318 4837

<https://www.zorgenjeugdncn.nl/jeugd/zorg/safe-together-strong-together> • <https://safetogether-strongtogether.com/>
<https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0050401/2025-01-01>



The World's Finest Food Products, **on Bonaire**

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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.

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.)

Leer

Vraag

Ontmoet

Lees

Doe

UNITED BY LANGUAGE

Snèk di Idioma: Mini Taste of Bonaire edition!

**Taalcafé | Café de idiomas |
Language Café**

**26 di febrüari | februari |
de febrero | february**

18:30–20:30

Edat | Leeftijd | Edad | Age: 16+

Grátis, inskripshon ta nesesario
Gratis, aanmelden verplicht
Gratuito, requiere registro
Free, registration is required

Praktiká bo idiomanan, konosé
hende, i savoriá Boneiru.

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proef Bonaire.

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SUNDAY MARCH 8TH

Special
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23rd WALK A-THON 2026

START

5AM AT THE WHITE SLAVE HUT. FINISH AT TIA SANI RINCON
THE BUS LEAVES FROM STADIUM TO THE WHITE SLAVE HUT :
ALL BUSES WILL LEAVE AT 4:10 AM

PRICE

\$20.00

T-SHIRT PICK UP DATE & TIME

FRIDAY MARCH 6TH, 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

SATURDAY MARCH 7TH, 10:00 AM - 4:30 PM

KAYA NIKIBOKO NOORD Z/N (BEHIND CATHOLIC CHURCH PLAYA)

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ART NEWS

on view...

IN THE FRONT GALLERY
14 February - 4 April



SACA

Stichting Art Center Antriool

ART NEWS

opening soon...

IN THE PIANO GALLERY
21 February - 4 April
OPENING: Saturday 21 February 5-7 PM

STUDIO MUZO
MAGIC IN LAYERS
 ART ALCHEMY FOR KIDS

Wednesday March 4 2026
 at Sobremesa

J.A Abraham Boulevard 10
 15:00-17:00

- From abstract play to finished artwork
- A 4 week journey from blank wood to gallery ready art
- Learn, layer and create
- Teach safe epoxy rules
- 1 finished mixed-media artwork + Certificate



\$120,-
 4 WEEK
 COURSE

10 SPOTS
 AGE 10 - 15



STUDIO MUZO

Creative Color Lab - Afterschool Art

at Sobremesa

J.A Abraham Boulevard 10

14:30-16:30

6 March 2026

\$100,-
 FOR 4 SESSIONS
 2 HOURS
 AGE 10 -15

- Paint on real canvas
 - Learn color mixing & expressions
 - Create unique and abstract art
- No "right or wrong" way
- lets have fun in a supportive group

*Materials included





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CELEBRATING THE BEST PART OF BONAIRE

DID YOU MAKE A FRIEND DURING
YOUR STAY ON BONAIRE?

SHARE YOUR STORY WITH US

We're celebrating the wonderful people of Bonaire and want to hear your stories! Have you met a local who made your visit unforgettable, maybe by showing you a hidden gem, helping you try something new, or simply lending a kind hand?

Share your experience and tell us about your Bonaire Friend, they could be recognized with a special prize!



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BONAIRE MONTHLY TOURISM PERFORMANCE **JANUARY 2026**

THE FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW:

These data are preliminary figures.

NUMBER OF VISITORS BY AIR
18,606 **2026**

All non-residents are registered as visitors

NUMBER OF VISITORS BY AIR
18,598 **2025**

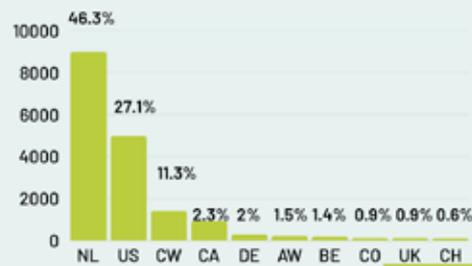
2026 COMPARED TO 2025

0.04%

Increase in non-resident arrivals



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN



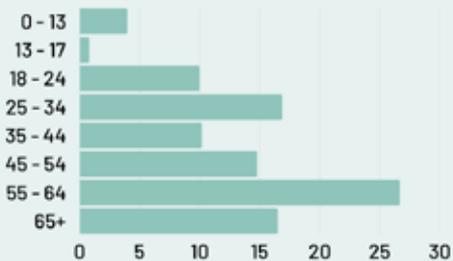
TOP STATES & REGION

US Florida, New York, California, Texas, and North Carolina.

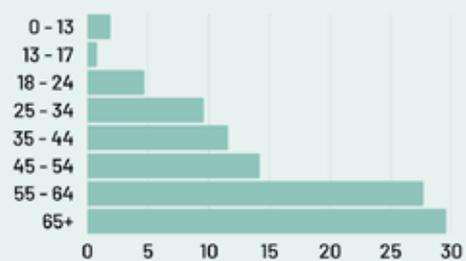
NL North Holland, South Holland, Gelderland, North Brabant, and Utrecht.

DEMOGRAPHICS

AGE | DUTCH



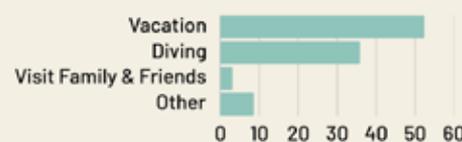
AGE | AMERICAN



REASON TO VISIT | DUTCH



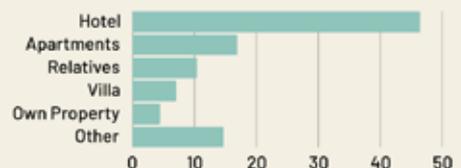
REASON TO VISIT | AMERICAN



VISITOR BEHAVIOR

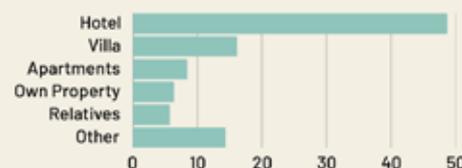
ACCOMMODATION TYPE

DUTCH



ACCOMMODATION TYPE

AMERICAN



LENGHT OF STAY

DUTCH

AMERICAN



FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- www.bonaireisland.com
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Cultural Event **NOS**
Zjilea
It doesn't get more local than this!

Theme of the month:

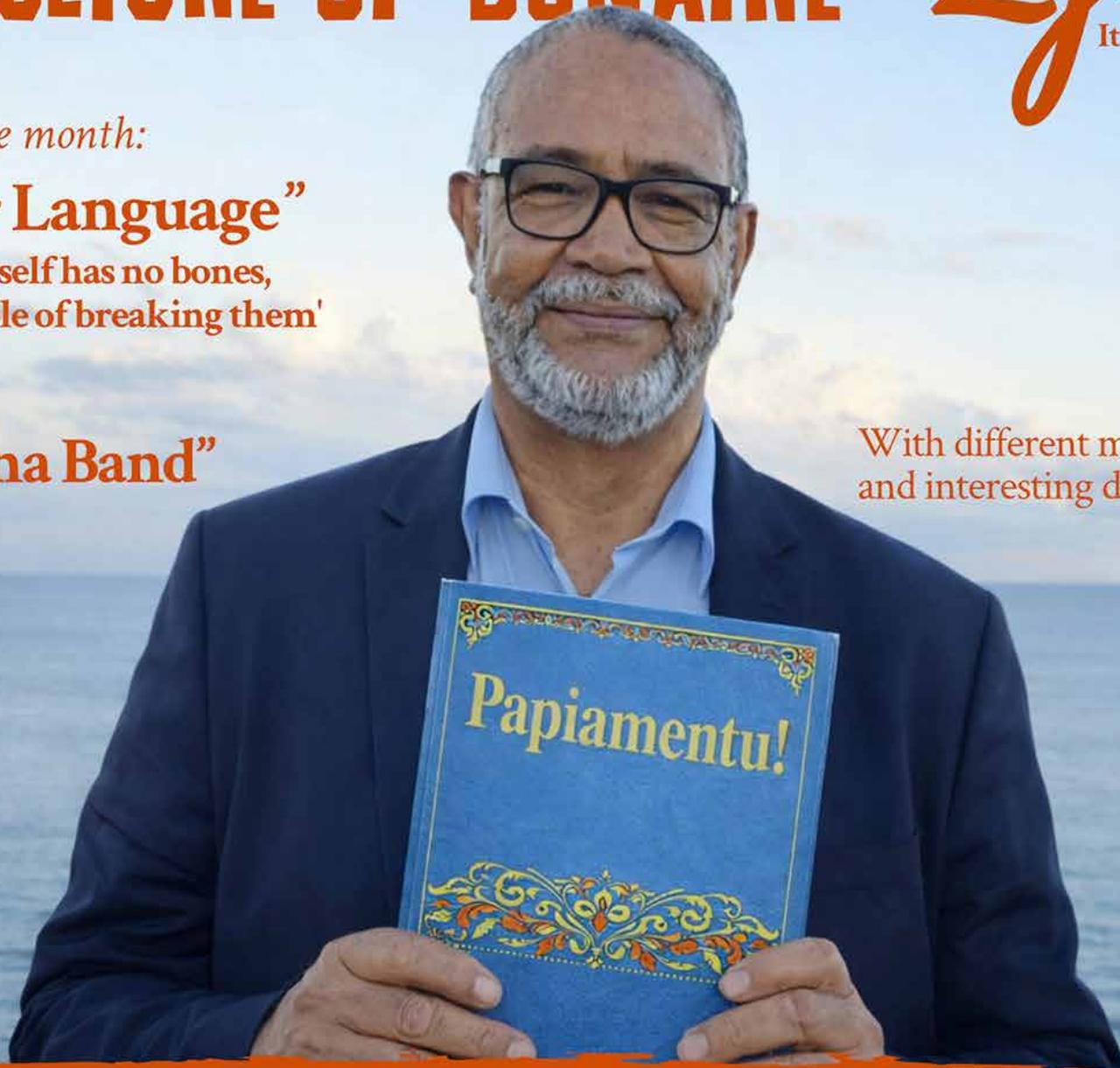
“Mother Language”

'The tongue itself has no bones,
but it is capable of breaking them'

Music by

“Watapana Band”

With different mini-workshops
and interesting demonstrations



Saturday, february 28th from 10:00 a.m.
to 3:00 p.m. at our cultural park on the
east side road of the valley of Rincón

