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Beautiful Miss Bonaire 2022 Ruby Pouchet and Santa Claus. Photo Julie Morgan

## Christmas Shopping Night draws crowd

Whether you love to shop or not, Tourism Corporation Bonaire (TCB) once again organized a Christmas Shopping Night on December 17 that brought joy and smiles to the crowds.

For years, on this one special night, the stores in the Kaya Grandi area open their doors for a few extra hours, extending them from 6-9 p.m. The festivities allow friends and family to gather, do some last minute shopping and enjoy a unique holiday evening in Bonaire. This year almost every shop in the area was open, including first-timer Terramar Mall, and all offered special deals for shoppers.

The mood was festive. Bestuurcollege and the Pasangrahan were lit up with colorful lights. And this year something new was added. A beautiful new light structure proclaimed, "I ♥ Bonaire." Shoppers entering Wilhelmina plaza by El Mundo restaurant gathered to admire it and those who posed with it collected the perfect photo memory of Christmas on Bonaire.

The street from Karel's Beach Bar to the customs office was closed to traffic for safety. Unfortunately, the entrance to Kaya Grandi by TCB was also closed, creating somewhat of a hazard to pedestrians. This strip of the road has been under construction for several months and the government's road department was unable to keep its promise that the work would be com-

pleted by shopping night. But nevertheless, the streets were alive with hundreds of people and as the night progressed more and more seemed to be making their way from store to store enjoying the evening.

Music filled the air from several DJ's playing their own special styles. Local bands Gaiereos Canonasos and Jom Gaiteros drew crowds on the streets by Littman and Cuba Compagnie. The parking lot by Wilhelmina Plaza sold crafts and traditional holiday food. The plaza itself was host

to many of the cruise ship crafts people, artists, charity organizations and food vendors. Little kids and big kids could sit with Santa Claus to ensure the jolly old man knew exactly what was on their Christmas wish list.

The busy Kaya Grandi shops welcomed customers with holiday specials. Digicel rewarded their customers of the last few weeks, giving them the chance to win prizes and vouchers in Digicel's Cash Vault of swirling money.

Style Code in the Terramar Mall featured a Christmas themed fashion show with four men, 12 women and a young boy modeling sparkling holiday outfits to the music of DJ Jerr'i. The models who were of all ages and all walks of life included business people, hospital techs and the newly elected Miss Bonaire 2022, Ruby Pouchet.

Bedazzle Adaliz jewelry sweetened the shopping experience with Stollen and champagne for guests.

Along the street more food vendors served local food, holiday drinks and "while you wait" freshly made Olliebollen.

Terramar Museum was open for tours. In Terramar's courtyard, Petals sold live mini-Christmas trees, Sweeti Bakery delicious specialties, No Waste Caribbean Vibes their recycled products, and Bonaire's Vibra her Sobi Palabra puzzle book. There was even a masseuse to alleviate shopping stress.

The Bonaire Reporter would like to wish everyone a happy holiday season 2022 and Happy New Year.

*Story/photos Julie Morgan  
 (More photos of shopping night  
 will be posted on our Facebook page.)*



## “Purple Friday?” or “Don’t Say Gay?”

In the European Netherlands almost 3,000 schools, from elementary through university, participated in Purple Friday on the second Friday of December. Some spent weeks preparing for the day’s activities. Purple Friday is a day on which pupils and students are encouraged to show their solidarity with LGBTIQ+ people by wearing the color purple to school.

This year Purple Friday apparently caught the secondary school Liseo Bonairiano unprepared. On Thursday they sent students home with a last minute letter encouraging the wearing of purple the next day.

Many parents were unprepared as well. They vociferously objected to the school’s support of Purple Friday, to the short notice, and especially to the school’s lack of consultation regarding the event. They declared it another example of European high handedness and indifference to local norms in the management of the schools.

The school administration ignored the objections and pro-

ceeded with Purple Friday, which, according to reports, turned out to be pretty much a non-event. It did further enrage some parents though.

A press release from the schools said, “The School Community of Bonaire – as an inclusive school – finds it important that every student can be himself and is not bullied because of his or her sexual orientation.”

Lilian Domacasse, chairman of the Parent Council, countered with: “Bonaire is not ready for a Purple Friday. Not yet. We are more conservative and calm here. Things don’t go as fast here as in the Netherlands. The management must take this into account, otherwise the conflicts will continue.”

A third view was expressed as well: “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” Since no one is reporting that LGBTIQ+ students are bullied or discriminated against in Bonaire’s schools, why hold an event that assures them they won’t be? *DMR*

## Unexpected waste water charge raises ire of BONHATA

The island council has decided, with no pre-announcement or discussion, to require the hotels to pay a waste water charge of \$600 per room per year, effective January 1. BONHATA and its membership are up in arms over the decision. They accuse the OLB of transferring the waste water costs almost entirely to the members of BONHATA. They say the decisions came so late in the season hotels cannot build the extra cost into their fee structures. They are already committed to honoring reservations at declared prices. Larger resorts will face \$85,000 - \$100,000 in increased and unbudgeted operating costs.

BONHATA chairman Luite Berkenbosch said, “We regularly sit around the table to discuss all kinds of things,” but the OLB has never mentioned a pending charge for waste water. On the other hand he says, the OLB has been pressing BONHATA members to raise the wages of their lowest paid workers, another added expense for the hotels.

The Chamber of Commerce has also expressed concern. It says the waste water levy is a significant burden for the tourism sector. It also points out that the cost of doing business on Bonaire has been increasing in recent years because of several tax increases. The Chamber of Commerce says the Public Entity Bonaire should work with interest groups, companies.

*DMR (BESreporter, Bonaire.nu)*

**Flotsam & Jetsam, continued on page 4**



## Funding assured for BIA’s future

Bonaire and the Netherlands have planned long term improvements to Bonaire International (BIA) to meet international safety standards, to expand and modernize the terminal, and to prepare for the sustainability that will come with the adoption of electric aircraft. Eventually 50 million euros will be invested in the airport. Under a recently signed agreement, Bonaire is investing 15 million euros now and the Netherlands 6.6 million euros. *DMR*



## WEB to build new head office

In January construction will begin on a new headquarters building where WEB’s various departments will be brought together under one roof. The site on Kaminda Djabou will be easily accessible for customers, offer enough parking space, and provide a good atmosphere and enough space for employees. The building will be hurricane resistant, maintenance free, and sufficiently flexible in design to be adapted to changing needs in the future.

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**Our Facebook page and The Reporter’s Online Updates** bring you news that arrives between issues

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**Fight cancer. Join the Ride for the Roses January 29, 2023**



# Perfect for coffee lovers and more

You are on vacation and you can't find a decent coffee shop, what do you do? You open one. Well, at least that is what Tim Winkel did. Back in the Netherlands Tim is a partner in the well-known coffee distributor Den Leeuw - Caribbean Coffee Affairs.

Two years ago in January 2020, Tim was visiting Bonaire for his ninth time and came up with an idea.

"We couldn't find a good place to go to have an espresso and a sandwich. It would be nice to have a really cozy place here, a good place," said Tim.

With that idea he found the support of someone who liked the concept and owned the more than 100 year old historic Mi Poron building.

As the building needed a bit of renovation anyone driving by could see something new was happening at the old Mi Poron. This included Larissa Meijer, who'd

moved to the island in July and stopped in to apply for a job.

Larissa said, "Tim called saying he needed help with the opening day and I never left."

Together they made it happen and on August 24 this year, The Coffee Bar opened its doors.

The Coffee Bar includes two small seating areas and a large outside shaded patio with comfortable chairs, built in cushioned lounge seating and intimate or long farm type tables large enough for a big group or meeting.

"We want everyone to feel welcome to come for lunch, coffee or conversation. Come and sit for coffee or drink or food. We've tried to create a place where it feels like home. It's perfectly okay for people to come and stay all day if they like. Everything is possible," said Tim.

The Coffee Bar may be the best place for all types



Tim Winkel and Larissa Meijer



of coffees including Espresso, Cappuccino, Lattes and adult coffees. But there are other offerings, including freshly made smoothies, teas, juices and even vitamin shots. The food menu is extensive including breakfast foods, snacks, toasties, finger food and sandwiches with many vegetarian options. And if you are looking for something sweet, The Coffee Bar features a new assortment of goodies from Sweeti Bakery every day.

The Coffee Bar shop sells coffee and espresso ma-

**The Coffee Bar** *continued on page 4*

## FOR SALE Great Investment Property Kaya Kuarts 7A + 7B



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chines, grinders, cups and, of course, the coffee. Three different types of coffees are available in beans or can be freshly ground: Il Leone Italian Espresso, Den Leeuw Dutch coffee and Love organic coffee. The Coffee Bar even sells the specialty Vondelkoeken cookies that accompany each coffee served in the restaurant.

From December 19 to Christmas, a basic or deluxe breakfast is served all day for \$12.50 or \$22.50 respectively.

And on December 25 and 26 from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., The Coffee Bar will serve a Christmas breakfast with coffee/tea, juice, croissant, Stollen, egg salad and ham and cheese for \$25 or the Luxe that includes a Mimosa, Salmon and eggs on toast for \$40. (\$15 for kids).

Current hours for The Coffee Bar are Sun., Mon., Tues., Weds. from 7 a.m. – 3

p.m. and Thurs., Fri., Sat. from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

In the coming year, The Coffee Bar is hoping to include a Happy Hour and expand to evening hours.

Daytime and evening parties are possible with catering by reservation and availability.

For more information, contact [info@thecoffeebarbonaire.com](mailto:info@thecoffeebarbonaire.com), visit the website [TheCoffeeBarBonaire.com](http://TheCoffeeBarBonaire.com) or Facebook page.

*Story/photos by Julie Morgan*



## FLOTSAM and JETSAM continued



**Elvis Tjin Asjoe (R) has returned to the Executive Council, replacing Nina den Heyer as deputy for Social Affairs and Welfare. Richèna de Windt-Look (L) will fill his seat on the Island Council. Until the formation of a new coalition after the upcoming elections, Tjin Asjoe will be responsible for matters such as social affairs and welfare, public health care, labor affairs, culture, education and public housing.**

### Cheaper air fares between islands coming - - - some day

The Hague's promise to reduce the cost of air traffic between the BES Islands by organizing it as a form of public transport has again been pushed to the back burner.

Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management Mark Harbers informed the House of Representatives that the exploratory study that was to be completed by the end of 2021, then was rescheduled for the end of this year, will not begin until the end of 2023. Then the Aviation Act BES would have to be amended for this purpose, and the legislation would have to pass the House of Representatives, then go Senate for approval, then the routes would have to be tendered. The public might see cheaper tickets in 2025, hypothetically.

### Civil servants get pay increase

All civil servants will receive a structural increase of 4.75% on the gross salary effective January 1. Everyone will get at least \$100 more per month, and the minimum wage will be increased to the subsistence minimum of \$1,350 per month plus the \$100 increase.

This wage increase is based on the inflation figures and it is an interim adjustment to the current employment agreement negotiated with the ABVO 2021-2023. The agreement was recently adopted in the context of the revitalization of the civil service, the improvement of community services, and the assurance of adequate working conditions for the staff of the OLB.



**Alwyn Braaf has been appointed the new Chief of Police of the Dutch Caribbean Police Force (KPCN). Braaf has an extensive career with the Force, with more than 25 years at the KPCN, currently holding the position of Chief of Investigation within the Force. Braaf will be installed as the new Chief of Police on Friday, January 13, 2023. The current Chief of Police of the KPCN, Jose Rosales, will resign his position, one he has held for six years. Rosales will serve as an advisor to the Board of Police Chiefs for several more years.**

# Ask Bob

*Bonaire real estate advice*



**I'm thinking about listing my house for sale. What should I consider besides the selling price?**

**B.L. in Cleveland**

Hi B.L.

First things first, READ THE CONTRACT before you sign it! Besides the obvious things like selling price and the broker's selling fee, it is important to understand the length of the agreement and what you can do if you're unhappy with your broker's services. Understand all of the following:

- What is the duration of the listing contract? Most brokers ask for a 12 month contract, but you can usually negotiate it to be for six months.
- In some cases, listing contracts also

### Cas Boneriano to build 400+ new homes

Fundashon Cas Boneriano (FCB) is proceeding with two major projects, 245 homes to be build near the Hato district and 172 new residential units in the Nikiboko district. Series production techniques used in the Netherlands will be employed, and multiple contractors will be hired, so the new buildings are expected to go up quickly.

Most of the Hato homes will be rentals, though some will be owner-occupied. Clinker brick roads will be built in the development and green spaces are planned. Solar panels and batteries will be installed in the new Nikiboko district as part of a sustainable energy supply.

### 2023 water and electrical rates set

The Netherlands Authority for Consumers & Markets (ACM) has announced the 2023 maximum rate for electricity and drinking water on the islands as well as the applicable subsidies. The standing charge for electricity, or fixed cost, will continue to be fully subsidized, so consumers will pay for only the energy they use. The average household cost for electricity will run around \$85 per month, including Pagabon users. The water bill for an average household will increase by about \$1.70 per month.

include a clause that obligates you to pay the broker a selling fee if you sell directly to a buyer who the broker offered or showed your property to during the contract period. This is a normal clause, but you should ask for a written list of all potential buyers the broker worked with during the contract. You should also insist that the clause be no longer than six months after the contract terminates.

- How long is the contract in effect after you terminate it? Some brokers include a clause that says you still need to pay them a selling fee if you sell your property within six to 12 months after ending the contract, even if they are no longer your broker and no matter who you sell the property to. This extends the true life of the listing contract for an extended period beyond the original terms - often 12 months. So even if you fire your broker, you may still have to give them a cut far down the road.

So make sure you carefully read any listing contract before you sign it.

Happy Selling,

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

**If you have a real estate question or want to buy or sell property, email me at [bob@bonairehomes.com](mailto:bob@bonairehomes.com) or call or WhatsApp me at +5990786-7362**

### VET improvements not approved in time

The permanent committee of the Island Council for Management & Support wrapped up the year without passing changes to the Visitor Entry Tax regulation that the Executive Council had proposed.

The Executive Council wanted to solve a few problems that had emerged during an evaluation of the VET. Most importantly, the Executive Council wanted to provide a four week validity period so people could island hop without paying more than once. The Council also wanted to set a lower rate for those born on Bonaire who live abroad.

The Island Council deferred implementation of these until a more extensive evaluation is completed. It wants an exemption for the group of Bonairean students who do not fall under the BES Student Finance Act. The evaluation revealed that exemption for this limited group would be technically difficult and might duplicate an existing exemption for persons born on Bonaire. Action on the revisions is now postponed until next year. *DMR*

### Bon Bini Winter 2022/2023

The winter edition of the government's magazine, *Bon Bini*, highlights climate change. Download it from OLB site: <https://bonairegov.com>.



**Pick up Dates for t-shirt and bags: Orco Bank January 26,27,28, 2023  
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# Letters & Opinions

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

## KvK Art Show

First, congratulations to KvK for sponsoring a second successful annual Art Show. I think the artists and population on Bonaire are welcoming such recognition and to see their crafts displayed. The artists are very talented and take pride in their creations. Thank you to the KvK staff for hosting the shows.

Kudos to *The Bonaire Reporter* for their article in the December 7-21, issue 24, 2022 with numerous photos of the displays; highlighting the artist's name; presenting a short summation of their offerings and a contact where the artist can be reached. Exceptional journalism, giving each exhibitor recognition.

I was disappointed to read that a van was not secured to transport for free tourists and local Bonaireans' to the location of the show.

The KvK opens its business doors to put on the exhibit in its offices but it does get crowded and therefore cramped for the visitors and displays. I love to read when various organizations join together to reach a common goal. I know one organization loses full control of an affair but it may be best for all concerned. I am suggesting KvK and TCB join in presenting the 3rd Art Show. A portion of the sports complex could be rented on Kaya Amsterdam Road. It is nearby the KvK offices, within walking distance and between the two locations sufficient parking should be available. It would be indoors; displays could be easily accommodated and foot traffic would be easier. People in wheelchairs and other mobile devices could be accommodated, making a wider audience included.

KvK will always have the title of putting on the first two art shows but it has outgrown their accommodations. Should a van transport be provided in the third year, a larger group of cruise ship tourists could be accommodated. A collection point for riders at the nearby cruise market could be arranged and publicized. A schedule could be developed indicating pick up and return times. Nearby islanders may wish to come to Bonaire for the day to attend the art show. It could get to the point where the event is advertised in art magazines in other countries. If one is going to dream, dream big.

*Happy holidays, Earline Wasser*

## 'Follow the Money' investigates OLB's role and actions concerning Bolivia

During the summer of 2022, two journalists from the Dutch 'Platform for Investigative Journalism' 'Follow the Money' ([www.ftm.nl](http://www.ftm.nl)), that has a robust reputation for unearthing irregularities in the performance of public administrations and their actors, paid a visit to Bonaire. A work trip: Their purpose was to learn more about the roles and actions of lawmakers and civil servants that were involved in the process of developing Bolivia, the boom town projected on the wild East side of the island.

After their arrival however, the researchers, while working down a list of interviewees and hearing their stories, found out that their target was not so much the main problem, but merely emblematic, part of a plague that has been victimizing Bonaire since 10-10-10: illegal building. Illegal, but legalized. The information they received from their informants led them to a multitude of building projects that were erected without the necessary – compulsory, that is – paperwork, their completion being tolerated by an OLB turning a blind eye. Ties between government officials and investors appeared way too close, they noticed, with, consequently, corruption lingering in the curtains. More righteous civil servants, suggesting that rules were to be enforced, received threats, and were told to follow their deputy's orders or leave. Life in a banana republic, so to say.

In the meantime, information kept flowing towards the researchers from all over the island. It seemed the lack of transparency (BTW, we're still waiting for the traffic circle report...) suddenly was over: former and prevailing lawmakers and civil servants, politicians, members of their families: they all told their stories and handed over stacks of correspondence and documents. The researchers only had to pick out the tasty bits and build their stories.

Which they did: the largest projects FTM investigated during their stay on Bonaire have already popped up in the headlines (for details – in Dutch - see [www.ftm.nl](http://www.ftm.nl)).

nl on Aug 27, Oct 1, Oct 12, Dec 1 and in Dutch and Bonairean news media as well), mainly concerning the newly deposited beaches at Ocean Oasis and Chogogo. Both projects were legalized by the OLB via ex-post licensing, the story on the latter inciting the Public Attorney to press charges against the owner of the TUI-resort, as well as ordering an investigation into the actions of a number of lawmakers (among which Gezaghebber Rijna, who was sent home for two weeks) and civil servants. So far so good. But there's more to come.

As we've seen, the story on Chogogo was composed by merely arranging coincidental, collateral information. This collateral information has, so far, led to legal procedures, an investigation into the way OLB lives by and enforces her own rules, and into the integrity of the Island Government and her civil servants. So: a high success rate, giving the Public Attorney plenty of instruments to push on.

But the FTM-researchers still have a major job on their hands: their research project on Bolivia, the one they had pipelined while analyzing the data they found working on Chogogo. If they succeed in digging up as much dirt on that project (and/or Broomhaar and his cronies) as they did on the crimes and misdemeanors at Chogogo, the process of rewriting and licensing the design for boom town Bolivia will have to be done all over again, slowing down construction considerably, and giving the Dutch Department of Internal (Kingdom) Affairs and Dutch political parties time to rethink their agendas on nature preservation in the Caribbean.

Personally, and on the side, I'd suggest to add an extra paragraph to the contract, describing the 'stikstofeisen', the requirements concerning the nitrogen output of the project, not just for building NEAR a nature reserve (as in Holland), but for building ON TOP of one. I think that'll kinda do the job.

*Gijs Borsten*

## Making Bonaire Accessible

by Ria Evers-Dokter

### Have a Very Merry Christmas

Christmas is such a special holiday that is celebrated all over the world.

It does not matter who you are, what your religion is, how old you are, where you live, what you call it... there will always be a Christmas to celebrate.

Of course, the commercial one is obvious, very present and very demanding. Schools have special vacations, restaurants have special menus and travel agencies have special offers.

During the season it is always very busy when travelling because everybody wants to be home for the holidays.

Gift departments, post offices, lines full of waiting clients wanting to mail cards and/or gifts. Christmas music sounds are everywhere.

It is exactly like those songs, "There is a kind of hush... all over the world" and "Let it snow, let it snow."

People seem to be kinder, more willing to forgive, wanting to help others and do volunteer work in homeless shelters.

Suddenly it does not matter what color your skin is, what religion you have or where you live or come from.

And it always makes me wonder, why now? Why not always? Why does the scenery change after a week or three?

I fondly remember the days when I was young and lived with my grandparents together with my Mom. We did not live in the village, but outside, near the dunes and the sea. It was pretty isolated.

In those days it was very normal to have snow during Christmas. We did not see many people around. Only those who went for a walk in the snow. Or those that came to the forest where the Christmas trees were felled and sold.

There were always two huge trees set aside for the churches.

We always had a small tree, one that would fit perfectly in the water bucket that was filled with dune sand for the occasion. The bucket was dressed beautifully in a white bed sheet. And to finish it off, we put a huge bow of crepe paper around it. We always had the same decorations made from East German blown glass and the candles we used were set in holders with a clip.

There was also a bucket full of water and a sponge on a stick just in case a decoration would catch fire.

Granny was the fireguard. She was very afraid of fires because we lived far from the village, and it would be hard to get help if a fire happened. As soon as the little candles were burnt, that was it.

We did not have a real Christmas dinner. Grammy cooked salted string beans with potatoes and served boiled potatoes with them. Sometimes we would have roulade or meatballs. First course was always Granny's famous vegetable soup. For desert there would be a vanilla pudding. During the first Christmas day we would have cookies in the form of little wreaths with almond slivers on top or chocolate wreaths covered in little white sugar balls.

It was good, honest and simple. And life was good. And that is what I want to wish you all. A good, honest and simple Christmas.



*Ria Dokter is living happily on Bonaire, where she also used to work as a director at the 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.*



Ride



Sail



Swim



Walk

...for the Roses

Sunday, January 29

# RoffaReefs could keep reefs fishy

Observant divers and snorkelers on Sand Dollar's Bari Reef may wonder what that thing is floating off the Pelican boat offshore. If all goes well, it could be the future of keeping Bonaire's reefs fishy. In the future the system could help stabilize or raise reef fish stocks. It would work together with reef building organizations like Reef Renewal as fish and reefs are co-dependent.

The hexagon shaped object is a prototype for a fish breeding system designed by RoffaReefs and Bonaire's Bari reef is the first ocean test site.

RoffaReefs is the brainchild of Sander van Lopik, senior aquarist at Blijdorp Rotterdam Zoo in the Netherlands.

Van Lopik said, "Basically we do not

know how to breed reef fish. We capture the eggs and learn from the sea. I wanted to do something proactive. People around me do the science. I just have the ideas that result in the crazy stuff that we developed."

The floating breeding system contains incubators which are surrounded by stabilizing rings. The boxes making up the hexagon shape provide the stability causing the rings to float like a compass. On top the solar panels provide the power to provide air, refreshment of water and food for the fish to survive.

As with any prototype, there are a lot of things to work out. Van Lopik is especially concerned with the wave action from storms and how the technicians can



Sander van Lopik and the fish breeder on the Sand Dollar dock prior to placement.  
Photo Casper Douma



Local diver Becky Pruitt keeps an eye on the breeder while the RoffaReef team is off island. Note that many juvenile tangs and Sgt. Majors have found a safe haven around the breeder. Photo Julie Morgan

adapt the system to survive bad weather. Adjusting the amount of a continuous power supply for the aeration of the incubators is a concern. How will the solar panels hold up in a saltwater environment? The unit will be connected to computers and will eventually be a plug and play system to adjust the water flow aeration in the incubators.

The eggs and larva are collected at various sites around Bonaire with handmade planktonic nets made of 0.2 millimeter mesh. Collection bottles on the

end hold the captured egg/larva and are then deposited manually into the incubators on the unit.

"Biggest thing in catching the eggs is using the nets in different places, good spawning grounds need to be identified... Pink Beach and Bachelor Beach have produced results, but Karpata probably had too many waves," said van Lopik.

Around 85% of all fish species have never been bred before and that includes the surgeon and parrotfish living around

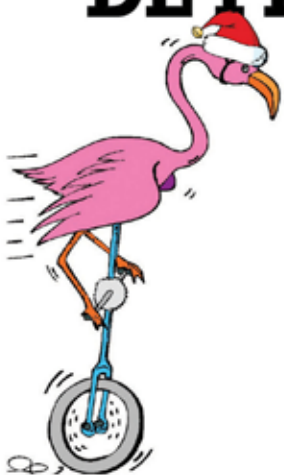
*Fish Breeding, continued on page 15*

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# A Garden? Just Do It!

by Angliet, Nature Lover

The end of the year always has something special, a kind of feeling; a strange mood.

In one way I'm excited about what the new year will bring, but on the other hand, I am saying goodbye to a year that has shown so many good things. (And of course, things that we wished we had not faced.) One of the good things is the blessing of the rain, too much sometimes, but we needed the water. And look, Bonaire turned green, the mondi, the kunukus, the streets and parks are all green. What I, as a gardener, love seeing most is my garden in such a green explosion. And on top of that, I think of all the vegetables and fruits that I harvested this year, and most were at the end of the year. The flowers that bloomed so beautifully the whole year through made people stop in front of my yard to make pictures. Don't forget the birds that came along to enjoy that sweet bushy green in my garden and the butterflies and bats that hang around. I have also seen a lot of strange spiders making huge webs among the plants and trees. And a few weeks ago, I saw big caterpillars for the first time in my garden. I was in shock when I saw the first one, knowing that there must be more. These guys can finish in one night all the green from your garden. I put them carefully in the bush around the corner to continue their life there. Ants in all sizes and colors are around and I also got a lot of rain worms which says that the environment is in a perfect balanced system for plants. There is also a lot of fungi growing among the rotten leaves. I let the fallen leaves compost under the trees and now there is a thick layer of fine rotten leaves which I can add to plants in containers and in holes in the ground before I put a plant in it.

Now at the end of the year I have the best harvest I ever had in this garden. I don't need to buy vegetables, fruits and herbs. The best quality of my food comes straight from my garden. It has the highest health value and the most benefits for my body.

This morning I was impressed by all the green around



me in my garden. A lot of vines from the wild bitter gourd, pumpkin and wild local cucumber crawl over every thing and all over other plants that are in their way. I have to move a bush out of the way to pick eggplant fruits, small cucumbers, to cut other vegetables or to pick guaba fruits. My garden has transformed into a bush. In fact I need to give it a big clean up, but I love to see it this way. I have sweet peppers, spinach, yuca, sweet potato, tajeblad, peppers, wandu beans, parsley, bitter gourd, and plantain; and a lot of herbs that go crazy. The yard is full of Mexican mint and it even crawls over the garden tiles. The iguanas do not like the Mexican mint and since it grows all over the place, the iguanas now live in the big mango tree and on my roof. So now I can "enjoy" them day and night making a lot of noise above my head.

Fruits explode as well in my garden. The starfruit tree has been bearing fruit non-stop this whole year. I have had mangos, birambi, passion fruit, bacaba, cherries, guyaba, soursop, papaya, golden apple, pommegranate, dragon fruit, cinnamon apple and coconut in my garden

all year and yet there is still enough to enjoy every day.

I made a lot of excellent food with them such as chutneys, syrup, jams, marmalade and cooked and wokked with other veggies or enjoyed fresh in salads.

Sometimes my bird friends have nice surprises for me. Every day I watched a nicely growing papaya turn to a deep orange color. Oh, I had prepared myself for that tasty papaya grown by my hand. But, when I picked it, it was hollow inside. Totally empty with a small hole on top of it. Ohh, what a disappointment, I rarely cry, but I was very angry. The same with a huge, beautiful dragon fruit but ... empty inside. And sometimes I get up in the morning and find all my fruits half eaten on the ground or the vegetables are all gone. We know these surprises. But nothing can stop me starting again, to try and do it over again. Look how I have been blessed for my efforts with the green explosion in my garden. There are many more garden lovers who are just like me making their garden lush by sustainable gardening. I think that this year is one of the best years on Bonaire with so many vegetables and fruits coming from Bonairean soil. More and more people make little gardens in their yards encouraged and stimulated by institutes like LVV, garden companies, kunukeros and garden lovers. What a fantastic development. Let's keep on going and make Bonaire and the world a better place.

With this on my mind I wish all of you a blessed green, healthy and Happy New Year.



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

## COVID – 19 Week 49: December 5 – 11

Translated from <https://bonairegov.com/inwoners/update-covid-19>

In week 49, both the number of Covid tests increased and the number of positive results increased sharply again compared to the week before. The increase in the number of cases in all age groups cannot be reduced to a number of clusters. Apparently the virus is still omnipresent on Bonaire. Here there are nine times as many new reports per 100,000 than in the Netherlands (respectively 278 and 31 per 100,000 inhabitants) and with five hospital admissions in two weeks, the incidence of the number of admissions is also high compared to the Netherlands (22 and four per 100,000 inhabitants respectively) in the past two weeks).

Because many Dutch people and many Americans will visit Bonaire, especially during the coming weeks, it is important to realize that the decrease in the number of patients (and hospital admissions) in the European Netherlands has stopped (there is a slight increase). The latest figures also show an increase in the number of covid-19 reports in America. This means that not only is the spread within Bonaire, but there is also a real risk that travelers with the corona virus will travel (back) to Bonaire in the coming period.

**Hospitalization.** In week 49, three patients with covid-19 were hospitalized, bringing the total number of admissions this year to 74. The mean age of all patients in this year was 61 years. Of the included patients, 41% (31) had not been vaccinated, 28% (21) of the patients

had received a booster vaccination. The patients who were not vaccinated were admitted more often due to covid (65%) than the patients who had received a booster vaccination (52%); in the latter group, another illness was more often the reason for admission and covid was found during screening in the hospital.

**Vaccination.** Vaccination protects against serious illness. With a repeat injection, the protection remains better and the chance of hospitalization decreases. People with reduced immune systems and certain diseases and the elderly are more likely to become seriously ill and to be hospitalized.

Since the start of the autumn vaccination round, almost 1700 repeat shots against covid-19 have been administered until November 28. For the over-60s, the vaccination coverage of the repeat vaccination up to 28 November was 19% (European Netherlands 57.6%).

**New variants.** Since week 43, the new covid variants BQ.1.1 and XBB.1 have spread strongly on Bonaire. There are no indications that these new variants lead to a more serious disease, but to a possible faster spread due to circumvention of the immune system. The share of variant BA.5, which was dominant on Bonaire from the summer months, has been decreasing (rapidly) in recent weeks.



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**EVENT DATE:  
29.1.2023**

# Did You Know? *that identifying diseases on coral is really difficult, even for the coral reef biologists?*

Until now, Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD) has not been confirmed in Bonaire. Last summer, STINAPA monitored some suspicious pillar corals that had a fast-spreading disease and we thought it might be SCTLD. SCTLD is a devastating coral disease that has affected coral reefs around Florida and the Caribbean, killing up to 50% or more corals and leaving some species of corals, namely maze corals, pillar corals and elliptical star corals, almost completely absent on their reefs. Because the disease in Bonaire didn't spread quickly to other species over the reef, experts are not convinced that we have SCTLD, but think that it may be a particularly strong strain of White Plague that has been around for years. But nobody is sure and even the experts disagree! Aruba's park biologists are now documenting what they think is SCTLD on their reefs.

STINAPA has a SCTLD response plan and is prepared with many different strategies to deal with SCTLD when and if it arrives in Bonaire. Disinfecting gear, treating large, rare coral colonies and working together with Reef Renewal to try to safeguard some of the species mentioned above that are hit harder by this disease.

So, now for the best part: how to identify coral diseases on our reefs. Here are some tips.

Disease travels from one point or one side of a coral and slowly spreads, killing the coral tissue as it goes. There is live coral on one side of the disease band and dead coral on the other. If disease spreads slowly, there is a narrow band of dead coral tissue (white) followed by turf algae on the parts where the disease already spread (grayish and fuzzy). If the disease spreads fast, there will be a wide white area of dead coral tissue behind the advancing disease band.

**1. Black Band Disease** – usually spreads slow – the coral has a narrow or wide band of black dividing the healthy tissue with the dead tissue.

**2. Yellow Band Disease** – usually spreads very slow – the coral has a narrow yellow band dividing the healthy and dead tissue.

**3. White Plague** – can spread slow or fast – there is a white band of dead tissue next to the healthy tissue.

**4. Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease** – looks just like White Plague, but the coral often has multiple lesions and it spreads faster than your typical White Plague.

**5. Dark Spot Disease** – only affects a couple of star corals – forms dark spots or dark tissue on the coral, sometimes forming small lesions in the center of the spots. Doesn't usually kill the coral.

Then there are things that also affect corals that are not diseases such as biting and bleaching.

Parrotfish or damselfish biting – this is when the fish actually bite and damage living coral tissue.

**6. Parrotfish biting** – parrotfish will often bite corals, leaving large white marks where you can see that the coral skeleton is damaged (this doesn't happen with disease). Sometimes the parrotfish will keep



**1. Black Band Disease**  
Photo Christina Kellogg



**2. Yellow Band Disease**  
Photo NOAA



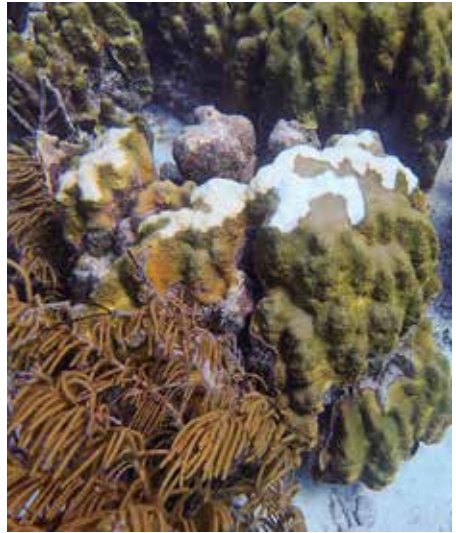
**3. White Plague**  
Photo Caren Eckrich



**4. Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease**  
Photo Caren Eckrich



**5. Dark Spot Disease**  
Photo Caren Eckrich



**6. Parrotfish biting**  
Photo Caren Eckrich



**7. Damselfish biting**  
Photo Caren Eckrich



**8. Bleaching**  
Photo Caren Eckrich

**Did You Know:**  
**Coral Disease, Biting & Bleaching**  
*continued on page 13*

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# Dutch Government apologizes for slavery past in the Netherlands

In a speech Monday, December 19, Prime Minister Mark Rutte apologized for the actions of the Dutch state in the past: posthumously to all enslaved people worldwide who suffered from that action, to their daughters and sons, and to all their descendants up to the here and now. The prime minister expressed his apology at the National Archives in The Hague in the presence of representatives of organizations that advocate recognition of the consequences of slavery. In Suriname and in Aruba, Curaçao, St. Maarten, Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba, members of the cabinet will enter into discussions after the speech with relevant organizations and authorities about what those apologies mean on site.

## Prime Minister Mark Rutte:

“We are doing this, and we are doing this now, standing on the threshold of an important anniversary year, to find the way forward together. We don’t only share the past, but also the future. So today we are placing a comma, not a period.”

The Prime Minister’s apology and talks by Cabinet members elsewhere are an important part of the Cabinet response to the report Chains of the Past presented in July 2021 by the advisory panel Dialogue Group on the Slavery Past. In it, the government is advised to proceed with recognition, apologies and reparations for slavery, in the Kingdom. The Cabinet response to the report was sent to the Senate and House of Representatives this afternoon.

After the speech, the prime minister, together with Vice Prime Ministers Kaag, Hoekstra and Schouten and Ministers Bruins Slot and Dijkgraaf, will engage in a private meeting with those present.



## Cabinet reaction

The Cabinet is making a fund of 200 million euros available for measures in the field of awareness, involvement and impact. The programming and allocation of the fund will take place jointly with, among others, descendants and those involved.

In addition, the Cabinet proposes to establish an independent Commemoration Committee. In the coming years, this Commemoration Committee must ensure a grand, dignified commemoration of the slavery past on 1st of July, together with the Caribbean part of the Kingdom, Suriname and other countries. The cabinet wants to use the coming commemorative year 2023 to examine, together with social parties and the Commemoration Committee to be established, how the annual commemoration can be organized in a more lasting and dignified way and in a more coherent way.

The coming commemorative year, which begins on

the 1st of July 2023, will include several large Kingdom-wide events. The King feels personally very involved and will be present at the commemoration and celebration in Amsterdam on the 1st of July. The upcoming commemorative year will offer plenty of room for social, cultural and educational initiatives from the community.

## Further steps

The government sees today’s apology as a first step. In addition to the apologies, the government announced in its response the intention to give the slavery past a firm place within education because that is the place where young people come into contact with history.

The Cabinet is also committed to increasing knowledge and awareness through the preservation and further development of museums, archives and the protection of cultural heritage, both in the European Netherlands and in the Caribbean parts of the Kingdom and other countries involved. Consultations are held with Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba about their specific wishes in these areas. The Cabinet is also contributing to the development of a national slavery museum, with a knowledge center attached. Announced, multi-year research on the history of slavery will provide input to those institutions. In addition, it will be easier to change a slavery-related surname.

For the horribly murdered Curaçao resistance hero Tula, the cabinet announces an official rehabilitation. The anticipated fund will also provide opportunities to appropriately honor other resistance fighters.

*Communication SSO-CN*

## Lieutenant Governor of Bonaire acknowledges the apology

At Mangazina di Rei, Rincón, Lieutenant Governor Edison Rijna responded to the Dutch government’s official apology.

## Lieutenant Governor Edison Rijna:

We are gathered here today because of a special event. This day will go down in the history books as the day on which the Dutch government officially apologized for the role of the Dutch state in the slavery past. We have all just seen Prime Minister Rutte’s speech at the National Archives in The Hague and I would like to thank Minister Van Gennip in particular for coming to Bonaire to personally convey the apologies on behalf of the Dutch government.

Slavery has left deep marks on our island. Visible, invisible and still noticeable every day. For generations, the enslaved had no prospect of a free future. Yet they tried, where possible, to shape their lives. For example, by making music together and singing songs in which they could express their feelings about their existence. The Barí - known as the Tambú on sister island Curaçao - is an example of this. It is both a musical genre and a dance. Only two instruments are used, the drum (barí/tambú) and the chapi, supplemented by hand clapping and heel stamping. Usually the women took care of the singing. The Barí developed on the plantations where the slaves worked. The lyrics were a secret language so that the slaves could communicate with each other about matters that the Shon, the plantation owner, was not allowed to know. Ambiguity is an important characteristic of the Barí. The events of the old year are still sung around the turn of the year in the Barí. The listener must pay close attention to what is really being said between the lines.

The apologies offered today by the Dutch government



are anything but ambiguous. Personally, I see this as a starting point to look straight into the eyes of a dark period in our shared history. We must pay attention and follow up on this special moment. The board of Bonaire will prepare an official response to The Hague. Our representatives will debate with each other and prepare an appropriate response. The advice of, among others, the Bonaire Dialogue Group and other experts in the field of the slavery past are included in this.

## The Dialogue Group

The Dialogue Group Bonaire originates from the activities of the Advisory Board Dialogue Group on Slavery History, which was established on July 1, 2020 by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations. The aim was to organize a broad social dialogue about the Dutch Slavery past and its impact on contemporary society. All six islands of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom have set up their own dialogue group with representatives from their society. On Bonaire, talks were

held with, among others, residents and social organizations to broadly gauge, discuss and translate opinions and feelings about the slavery past into advice. That advice was presented to the Island Council at the time and was included in the Advisory Board’s Advisory Report ‘Chains of the Past’, which was presented to the House of Representatives in 2021 by the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations.

As Minister Van Gennip quoted, the Bonaireans who contributed to the dialogue group do not expect an apology from the Netherlands. For them, other aspects of Justice and doing Justice are much more important, for them the following applies: Forgiveness of and Reconciliation with the Netherlands. Great importance is attached to ‘Equality’ and ‘Equal Opportunities for Development’.

This means that everyone in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, including Bonaire, must be given the opportunity to develop his or her talents and must be able to invest in a good future.

Bonaire has chosen to become part of the Netherlands on 10-10-2010. Since that date we have continued as a ‘special municipality’. This has benefited us in terms of investments by the national government for, among other things, better education, better health care and raising the quality of other shared facilities. Eliminating social disadvantages is also receiving attention, but not every Bonairean has improved. We hear and see that every day. The gesture that the Dutch government is making today means something different to everyone. For some it is a necessary step to improve relations, for others it is about more concrete matters.

*Communicatie Openbaar Lichaam Bonaire*

# Reef Glimpses

by Dee Scarr

## The Gift That Keeps On Giving

The gift was discovered on the Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire fishing-line-collection dive around our North Pier on September 16: a circle of algae that was a different color from the other algae all around it. An unnaturally perfect circle, it seemed. A close look revealed that the algae was growing over a pile of debris consisting mostly of broken bottles, but also including tiny glass jars, broken crockery, and odds and ends of similar stuff. Many of the bottles were broken lengthwise; in some cases, several sections of glass were still attached to a single label. Tiny shards of glass rested on larger pieces, or inside broken-off bottle tops.

My first thoughts weren't printable, but settled on, "We've gotta get this out of here!"

So, in conjunction with the Dive Friends Quarterly Clean Up at the North Pier, three of us removed 87 pounds (just under 40 kg) of that stuff on October 22.

Then, with special permission from the Harbourmaster's Office on December 4, four of us collected 117 pounds (around 54 kg). The December collection took longer because more animals were living on the debris and we didn't want to take them, of course. Becky Pruitt found and relocated two beautiful little cowries with their mantles out.

Where did this "gift" come from?

- people fishing off the Pier
- Selibon dumping yellow klikos off the pier.
- a ship, by accident.
- a ship, deliberately.

If you chose option a, you're wrong! Most folks who fish off the pier take their trash with them, but what they leave is likely to be – this from over 40 years of experience around and under the Pier – fishing line, open cans from fish and the occasional whole bottle. Our fishers don't seem to have a taste for wine or champagne, either, which

many of these labels advertise.

If you chose option b, shame shame on you!

If you chose a ship, that's what makes sense to me.

In the mid-90's, we found a similar, smaller, debris pile near the North Pier. That "gift" took more than a dozen diver-hours (Susan Porter, David Batalsky, and myself) to remove, including the challenge of removing glass shards from within tube sponge tubes. Identifying the culprit was easy, since some of the crockery was imprinted with the name of the ship, Silver Whisper! STINAPA with Elsmarie Beukenboom, and the Bonaire government, were able to successfully fine the ship.

This recent glass and crockery debris was also probably dumped by a ship. But would they dump it deliberately, right here in port? On the land side of the ship? Where any time of the day or night they could be on camera?

Not likely, right?

What's more likely is that this debris dump took place in port accidentally, because a more sensible (read "less likely to be discovered") procedure would be to dump it at sea. If that is so, our possession of such a dump could be instrumental in persuading the cruise industry to recycle glass rather than dumping it.

Our single "gift" can be mostly neutralized by divers, who have and will continue to remove the larger pieces after checking them for creatures. After that, we'll filter the small, sharp glass shards out of the underlying sand. This danger to our undersea residents, who spend time under the sand, will be removed. This sign of disrespect for Bonaire's undersea world will be mostly gone.

Wouldn't it be nice if we could identify the ship or line responsible? They probably would not face legal consequences, but it would still be nice to know who's



From left to right: Sally Simons, Susan Porter, and the author collecting glass during the Dive Friends Quarterly Clean Up on October 22nd. Photo Julie Morgan

to blame. Clues we have so far are only the crockery manufacturer, and wine labels with a partial bar code.

However, as satisfying as it would be to figure out who did this, cruise ships all over the oceans are deliberately dumping similar debris, with no negative consequences whatsoever. By gathering all of this dump in one place, we are hoping to create a visual image that will result in cruise ships recycling rather than dumping – a positive outcome for us all.



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



A quick look at this image might register as a very cool, swirly ... something. Julie's photography skills transformed this dangerous, disrespectful pile of broken glass into a thing of interest. Photo Julie Morgan



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**Arts & Crafts Market in Wilhelmina Plaza.** Weekly schedule can be found at: <https://www.bonaireartsandcraftscruisemarket.com/market-schedule> or <https://www.facebook.com/BonaireArtsandCraftsCruiseMarket/>

**Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei in Rincon:** Tuesday - Friday -10 - 4

**Library:** Mon. 12-5; Tues. to Thurs. 8-5; Fri. 8-4:30; Sat. 8-12. Kaya Gramel 715 5344. Anyone can become a member. Free for residents between 0 and 18 years. Adults \$6 a year. Members can borrow ebooks online. [www.onlinebibliotheek.nl](http://www.onlinebibliotheek.nl)

**Pakus di Pruga (Animal Shelter flea market. Central Kralendijk):** 8- 4 Saturdays.

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

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

**Washington Slagbaai Park:** Open every day. 8-5 (entry up to 1 p.m.)

Thursday, Dec. <b>22</b>	<b>Exhibition - Sandra Hay &amp; Mytsah present: IMMORTAL.</b> 5 - 8 p.m. Kaya Finlandia 41 (City Shop Street, the pink house) <a href="mailto:info@everythingbutlola">info@everythingbutlola</a>
Sunday, Dec. <b>25</b>	<b>Christmas Day.</b> A public holiday. Most businesses and government offices are closed.
Monday, Dec. <b>26</b>	<b>Boxing Day.</b> A public holiday. Most businesses and government offices are closed.
Saturday, Dec. <b>31</b>	<b>Nos Zjilea Cultural Event, New Year's traditions</b> 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Cultural Park Mangazina di Rei, Rincon. Enjoy the music, dancing, crafts, amazing food and drink. See page 8.  <b>Free De Freewieler Oliebollen fun bike ride, 3 p.m.</b> See page 16.  <b>New Year's Eve Fireworks</b>
Sunday, Jan. <b>1, 2023</b>	<b>New Year's Day.</b> A public holiday. Most businesses and government offices are closed.
Jan. <b>3 / 4</b>	<b>Quadrantids meteor shower</b> will peak with the possibility of sighting up to 110 meteors per hour. See <a href="http://Timeanddate.com">Timeanddate.com</a> .
Saturday, Jan. <b>21</b>	<b>Quarterly Clean up Dive, Dive Friends</b>
Sunday, Jan. <b>29</b>	<b>Ride, Walk, Swim and Sail for the Roses.</b> Raise money for Cancer Fund Bonaire. For more information and to purchase tickets online, visit: <a href="https://www.ridefortheroses.org">https://www.ridefortheroses.org</a>

## Coming Up

### KIDS' STORY WORKSHOP

**Jan 11 - Feb. 1.** Terramar after school workshop. Kids can learn the old stories of heritage and write them in their own newspaper. Two hours a week, \$20 for the entire workshop. Register: +599 701 4700 [terrarmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:terrarmuseum@gmail.com)

### JUNE WELLNESS FESTIVAL

Bonaire Tourism Corporation Bonaire (TCB) is organizing the first Annual Yoga & Wellness Festival for June 19 – 25, 2023 in partnership with Bindu Yoga and Bonaire's wellness sector.

The week long festival will include two yoga retreats focusing on gentle healing and positivity run by the renowned Ashtanga yoga teacher and influencer, Laruga Glaser, in tandem with local yoga teachers. Restaurants and hotels have signed up as participating partners and will offer a special deals. Featured island treatment programs include healing, rejuvenating, relaxation, and exploration. On the last day, a Yoga Festival with music and food will offer visitors wellness activities such as yoga, meditation, and fitness workshops.

### International Flights to Bonaire

<b>Amsterdam (AMS)</b>	<b>KLM</b> Daily flights connecting through Aruba <b>TUI</b> Daily
<b>Brussels (BRU)</b>	<b>Air Belgium</b> will fly to and from Bonaire on Dec. 23 & 25 and on Jan 6 & 8, 2023. Will also connect through Curacao.
<b>Atlanta (ATL)</b>	Currently <b>Delta</b> has a weekly Sat. flight. From Dec. 17 to Jan.8, Delta will fly five flights per week: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. and Sat. From Jan. 9 to March 8 the flight schedule will be two weekly flights on Wed. and Sat.
<b>Miami (MIA)</b>	<b>American's</b> current flight schedule through Dec. 12 is three weekly flights: Mon., Wed., Sat. Starting Dec. 14 through Jan. 7 there will be daily flights with a Boeing 737 offering more capacity in both Business Class and Main Cabin. January 9 the flight schedule will go back to three weekly flights on Mon. Wed. and Sat. with A319 Jet.
<b>New York (EWR) &amp; Houston (IAH)</b>	<b>United.</b> According to TCB, the flight from Newark, New Jersey with United Airlines is currently on hiatus but will resume on October 29, while flights out of Houston, Texas will remain with a weekly flight to Bonaire on Saturday with return flight on Sunday.

# Activities, Events & Meetings

**12 steps meeting:** 12 Step Meeting, Wednesdays at Kaya Den Haag 30 in Hato. Meeting starts at 7:15 p.m till 8:30 p.m. Info: [12stepsbonaire@gmail.com](mailto:12stepsbonaire@gmail.com)

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

**Beach Tennis Bonaire** can now be found at its new location, the Kaminda Djabou (direct left from Kaya Neerlandia --behind Budget Marine). It is open daily until 10 p.m. People can play for free or register for training and tournaments for a fee.

**Bridgeclub Bonaire** organizes a bridge evening Wednesdays from 7:15 p.m. You are welcome, whatever level you play. Contact us via phone 796 2819 or email [peejeese@gmail.com](mailto:peejeese@gmail.com). See <https://www.facebook.com/BridgeclubBonaire>.

**Underwater photography workshops at Buddy Dive Resort with Lorenzo Mittiga.** Jan. 7 – 14; Jan. 21 – 28. <https://bonaireisland.com/events-calendar/buddy-dive-resort-x-lorenzo-mittiga/>



**Echo Conservation Tours** - weekdays at 8 a.m. or 5 p.m. and Saturday 8 a.m. To reserve email at [info@echobonaire.org](mailto:info@echobonaire.org)



**Manta Monday** - Nicole Pelletier of the Caribbean Islands Manta Conservation Program. Presentations 7:30 p.m.: Dec. 26 - Dive Friends @ Yellow Submarine, email: [Caribbean.Islands@mantatrust.org](mailto:Caribbean.Islands@mantatrust.org)



**Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB).** Free public presentations at Yellow Submarine, every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month, at 8 p.m. Last of year: Dec. 14.

## You can help keep Bonaire clean

Saturdays	<b>One Hour Clean up Power.</b> Weekly coastal clean up every Saturday, 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Location given on FB page: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/OneHourCleanUpPower/">https://www.facebook.com/OneHourCleanUpPower/</a>
Sunday, Jan. <b>8</b>	<b>Boka Onima, 4-6 p.m. Clean Coast Bonaire.</b> Held second Sunday of each month at one of three locations. Collect and count. Donate your time by working as a citizen scientist to collect marine litter and data. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=clean%20coast%20bonaire">https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=clean%20coast%20bonaire</a> .

**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/>

**Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire.** 1. fishing line clean ups with Dive Friends and 2. annual clean up with SELIBON of Klein's beaches that have nest sites. Check FB page for dates. <https://www.facebook.com/bonaireturtles/?ref=hl>

### Tentative cruise ship schedule

DATE:	CRUISE SHIP	TIME	PIER	CAPACITY
Wed. Dec. 21	NIEUW STATENDAM	0800-2300	South	3152
Thurs. Dec. 22	SEABOURN ODYSSEY	0800-1800	North	462
Fri. Dec. 23	SKY PRINCESS	0800-1900	South	4250
Sat. Dec. 24	SEABOURN OVATION	0800-1800	North	638
Sun. Dec. 25	COSTA FASCINOSA	0800-2000	North	3800
Mon. Dec. 26	NORWEGIAN PEARL	0800-1300	North	3130
Tues. Dec. 27	AIDABELLA	0700-1900	North	2500
	VOYAGER OF THE SEAS	0800-2100	South	3838
Wed. Dec. 28	NORWEGIAN ENCORE	0600-1300	South	3998
	CARNIVAL SPIRIT	0700-1600	North	2680
Thurs. Dec. 29	CELEBRITY EDGE	0800-1800	South	3200
Fri. Dec. 30	REGAL PRINCESS	0800-1900	South	4250
<b>2023</b>				
Sun. Jan. 1	ENCHANTED PRINCESS	0800-1900	South	3660
Mon. Jan. 2	NORWEGIAN EPIC	0700-1800	South	5186
	SEABOURN ODYSSEY	0800-1800	North	462
Tues. Jan. 3	VISION OF THE SEAS	0700-1600	North	2435
Wed. Jan. 4	CARNIVAL MAGIC	0800-1600	South	3646
	AMADEA	1200-2000	North	604

biting until there is a line of damaged tissue.

**7. Damselfish biting** – look for the 3-spot damselfish nearby and lots of little dead spots on the coral. Within the dead spots grows algae that the damselfish grooms in order to eat small organisms that grow within the algae. They consider the coral their little garden and defend it.

**8. Bleaching** – this usually happens when water temperatures get too warm. The symbiotic algae that grow within corals start releasing toxic chemicals and the corals evict them. Because the algae give the coral its color, this causes the coral to become pale and then white, thus the term bleaching. Corals depend on their algae to feed them (sugars that they produce from sunlight - photosynthesis),

so if a coral stays bleached too long, it dies.

To identify bleaching, parts of the colony will become pale or white, but it's not a distinct band of white typical of disease, but rather a slow transition from a healthy color to a pale or white color.

I hope this little lesson helps those of you interested in identifying diseases and other strange things affecting our corals.



Written by *STINAPA*  
Biologist *Caren Eckrich*.  
*Connecting People With Nature.*

## Creating optimal health

by Irene da Cunda Costa

### Resolutions with heart

It is common practice to make a list of resolutions or objectives for the coming year. In general, these are grouped into five areas: health, finances, professional performance, learning new skills and modifying, eliminating or introducing habits. According to a study published in the *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 46% of the people succeeded in their resolutions. What can be done to increase the success rate? In last year's issue I shared some suggestions to introduce or change habits. Now I invite you to look at your resolutions for the coming year in the light of something that I have also shared with you in another article, the top five regrets of the dying according to Bronie Ware:

1. "I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me."
2. "I wish I hadn't worked so hard."
3. "I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings."
4. "I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends."
5. "I wish that I had let myself be happier."

These five reflections add depth to our resolutions for the coming year because they involve your values. And when your goals are in line with your values, they are more likely to be achieved. Once you choose your objectives for 2023, it is a good procedure to examine them through the following questions:

- What is the importance of achieving this goal?
- What will I do once I achieve this goal?
- What will change in my life and in the lives of those around me?
- Is this goal in tune with my life values?
- Can I see myself achieving this goal?
- Is this objective ecological, that means, does it take into account the well-being of those I love?
- How well can I define it?

• Is this goal something new in my life? Or have I already tried, and I have not succeeded?

- What have I done before about it?
- Have I carried out actions that brought me closer to this goal? Can I try these again in the future?
- Can I identify what prevented success in the past? Can I change that now?
- Can I break down this objective into smaller objectives?
- Can I make a map or a plan, with deadlines for the intermediate objectives?
- How will I know that I am following my plan? How am I going to determine in my daily life, what brings me closer and what moves me away from the proposed objective.
- What is the first thing I can do towards my objective? When can I do it?
- How will I check my commitment and progress?
- Do I need to share my resolution with someone else and ask this person to be my auditor?
- What obstacles will I find in my path?
- How am I going to overcome them?
- In the event of having a setback or failure in my plan, how will I stay motivated?

These questions will help you determine the deep value of your objectives and also gain clarity regarding their feasibility and implementation. When our goals have a heart, it is much easier to stay motivated and overcome obstacles.



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

## The islands are getting better at self-government

Van Huffelen says

State Secretary Van Huffelen has informed the House of Representatives that Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba (BES) are becoming more and more like "regular" Dutch municipalities in terms of their relationship to the national government. Therefore she intends to submit proposed amendments to the BES Public Entities Act (WolBES) and the BES Public Entities Finance Act (FinBES) that will transfer more authority and responsibility to the public entities.

The main aim of the legislative proposal will be to improve the administrative relations between the public entities and the central government, making use of the experience gained so far. Van Huffelen says the new legislation will prepare for three important steps: the elimination of the position of Kingdom Representative; an increase in the number of Island Council members and Executive Council members; and the modernization of the inter-administrative supervision.

Van Huffelen believes the position of Kingdom Representative will become obsolete in the foreseeable future. The Kingdom Representative constitutes an 'extra layer' of governance between the public entities and the European Netherlands. The working method is ambiguous and too often positions the Kingdom Representative as a representative of the interests of the European Netherlands. When the Kingdom Representative is removed from the equation, the Lieu-

tenant Governor will maintain direct contact with the State Secretary of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK) (Van Huffelen's current job).

Given the relatively large range of duties of the public entities and the high workload for the administration of the islands, the State Secretary proposes to increase the number of island council members on Bonaire from nine to 15 by the 2027 election, then to 19 by the 2031 election. Bonaire's number of deputies will grow to four in 2027, then to five in 2031.

Having more island council members will better distribute the workload and broaden and differentiate the political input from the population. That generally strengthens administrative power and democratic control.

At present the Kingdom Representative must approve all personnel decisions and certain contracts of assignment - including the island secretary, the registrar and officials of the clerk's office. That authority is intended to assure the quality of the person in question, not other factors such as loyalty or family ties, determines the decision. Under the proposed legislations, the executive councils of the public bodies would make personnel decisions.

Van Huffelen intends to present the bill to the House before the upcoming summer recess.

DMR

## NOS ZJILEA New Year's traditions

*The most popular time of the year is the end of the year. Our forefathers came together to share the best memories with each other. There are still several traditions that the Bonaireans try to live up to. In December, the government slaves gathered at Piedra pretu to play the local instrument, Bari, to express their frustration, anger, and joy. On Bonaire it is still a tradition that at the end of the year songs of the Bari are sung about main characters in noteworthy events that have occurred during the year. Another tradition is that the house is cleansed with incense to scare away the evil spirits and welcome the New Year with all the good it brings. Today, these traditions have become a habit for the population.*

Saturday, December 31, the next edition of the cultural event of "Nos Zjilea" will be held at Mangazina di Rei Culture Park with the theme: "New Year's Traditions". During the cultural event visitors can listen to stories from two well-known local Bari musicians, Wesley "Wewe" St Jago and Consalvo Goeloe. They will share their experiences with us and give a demonstration on how to make a Bari.

Our last Nos Zjilea of the year will include Jessy Olbina preparing various traditional dishes she learned to prepare from her grandmother.

Cleaning the house involves not only sweeping and mopping, but also chasing away the evil spirits to welcome the new

year with all the good it brings. Leticia "Letty" Beaumont will come and tell us what you should consider when cleaning your home to usher in the new year with a lot of positivity.

The culture market with local fresh products such as locally produced natural fruit juices, local herbal teas, local delicacies and the local art can not be missed.

The kitchen opens at 10 a.m. with a wide variety of soups and in the afternoon the opportunity to sample various local creoles dishes, including seafood. Do not miss it. All this in a cozy atmosphere with a "live" performance by "Los Cayonazos" and the local band "Nel & Su Gang".

Experience 'Nos Zjilea', the monthly cultural event of Bonaire on Saturday, December 31 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Culture Park Mangazina di Rei. For more information, please visit Mangazina di Rei's Facebook fan page, [www.facebook.com/mangazinadirei](http://www.facebook.com/mangazinadirei). *Izain Mercera*



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The six incubators are surrounded by the stabilizing boxes in a hexagon shape with the two flaps for the solar panels (not in place). Photo Casper Douma

Bonaire. These species are very important gardeners of the reef because they remove algae. Van Lopik explained that, for example, reef renewal (all reef conservation efforts) wouldn't be successful without the grazers.

"The first pilot was one big headache. Luckily it works, but we have to test it again and again. We have a lot to learn and we are trying to speed up the learning process. We see what works by trial and error and the science comes afterwards to confirm our data. It's all logistics. The next time, it will be a bit more relaxed," said van Lopik.

The team will return in February to collect data. We were lucky to have space in the DCNA office to do our lab work, such as DNA analysis.

RoffaReefs is dependent on funding from World Wildlife Foundation-NL (WWF-NL), Port of Rotterdam and the University of Delft, but more funding is

needed. Student volunteers from University of Applied Sciences Leeuwarden and Utrecht University are providing manual and scientific support.

Van Lopik said, "The Zoo agreed that my full salary goes to this project. They provided space and room for the project. I really wanted to work with the sea, but I can't dive. It's a blessing that we can work this way, but it is a curse that we have to work fast due to climate change and the impact on reefs globally. Main focus is to make it on and with the people of Bonaire."

Van Lopik and his team came to Bonaire in May and again from Sept. to Nov. 2. They deployed the fish breeding system on Bari Reef off the Sand Dollar dock on October 7th.

For more information visit the website [RoffaReefs.com](http://RoffaReefs.com), Facebook and Instagram.

Julie Morgan

# Pet of the Week

**Sweet, sweeter, no definitely THE SWEETEST little lady of our cat palace! Meet little Linda.**

She was brought to the Shelter six months ago together with her sister Lucy. Both kittens of 8 weeks old were found on the long way to Sorobon. Somebody must have dropped them there. They were so lucky that they were found and brought to the Shelter. Lucy already found her forever home. Now it's Linda's turn. And who knows, this actually will happen before Christmas! That would be great!!

Linda is now 8 months old, is sterilized, had all her vaccinations and will be chipped if you are coming to pick her up.

Come and see little Linda and be surprised how sweet she is.....

Story/photo Monique Degenaar



Linda

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

## Shelter News Fireworks season

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

- Walk your dogs during daylight hours to avoid times when fireworks are likely
- **KEEP YOUR PETS INSIDE WHEN FIREWORKS ARE BEING SET OFF**
- Close windows and curtains to muffle the sound of fireworks
- Put on some music or TV to mask the firework sounds
- Prepare a quiet space or hiding place for your pet where it can feel safe and comfortable – perhaps under a bed with some of your old clothes. They may like to hide there when the fireworks start.
- Ensure your pet is wearing some form of easily readable identification – even in the house. They should have at least a collar and tag with a phone number. Best solution is to have them micro-chipped as soon as possible.
- Let your pet pace around, whine, meow and hide in a corner if they want to. Do not try to coax them out – it's just trying to find safety, and should not be disturbed.
- Stay calm, act normally and give lots of praise for calm behavior. It's OK to cuddle and stroke your pet if it helps them relax, but if they prefer to hide under your bed, then let them do this instead
- Avoid leaving your pet alone during such potentially upsetting events. If you do have to leave the house, don't get angry with your pet if you find they have been destructive or toileted after being left on its own. Shouting at a frightened



Rini van Leeuwen

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

Jane Disko



Rini van Leeuwen

# Funds for Flamingos

Fine art wildlife photographer Lorenzo Mittaga (L) and Elly Albers of Bonaire Wild Bird Rehab (R) joined forces to help Bonaire's injured wild birds in a fundraising exhibit on December 18. Mittaga displayed 19 of his beautiful images: some unframed paper prints, and some acrylic bond prints ranging in size from 30 x 45 to 16 x 24 in. The work was part of a three-year photography project that told the story of the plight of flamingos. The work was published worldwide in several environmental articles.

After interviewing Albers, Mittaga

said, "I am a storyteller. I learned issues of the island are stripping their habitats. All the construction has an impact due to the fragility of the animal. They are very shy and easily disturbed by outside entities. I want to inspire and raise awareness in order to make people more aware of the problems."

Every purchase of the artwork resulted in a 50% donation to Wild Bird Rehab Bonaire.

Mittaga is a member of the International League of Conservation Photographers (ILFCP). He is recognized for document-

ing Bonaire's coral restoration, invasive lionfish, masbango and mangroves.

In February he will join a group of environmental photographers and others on a trip to Antarctica focused on climate change.

Visit Mittaga's website to view his fine art photography for purchase or to learn more about his work:

<https://www.Lorenzomittaga.com>

Link to purchase flamingo prints:

<https://lorenzomittaga.com/flamingo-prints/>

To learn more about Alber's work at Bonaire Wild Bird Rehab visit

<https://mangrovecenter.com/bonaire-wild-bird-rehab/>

Story/Photo Julie Morgan



The last mountain bike race of the year on Bonaire is the famous De Freewieler Oliebollen fun ride scheduled December 31, 3 p.m. Registration is at Te Amo Beach where the race begins and where it ends with delicious Oliebollen (fried bun), apple turnovers, beer and wine to begin the countdown to 2023.

And it's all FREE, so just come out and ride and have fun!

The race has two routes around the southern part of Bonaire. Fun riders will bike 25 km and Elite 40 km. Sportdrinks and water will be available on the route. Helmets are required. For more information drop by De Freewieler or visit Bonaire Xtreme MTB on Facebook.



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