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BONAIRE December 2-16, 2013; Year 20, Issue 23
The REPORTER
BES Island News Too

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BOINAIRE The REPORTER



Governor Lydia Emerencia

Bonaire's Governor, Lydia Emerencia, resigned last Friday in the wake of the Island Council's (The Island Government's Legislature) vote of no confidence. The tally was five votes in favor and three votes along party lines.



Jeffrey Levenstone

During the regular meeting of the Council, Councilman **Jeffrey Levenstone** (UPB) presented a motion with 42 items critical of the Governor. The motion of no confidence had been hanging for months. Coalition parties UPB / Santana announced in July this year their intention to submit a motion against the Governor. This didn't happen, perhaps because Emerencia received massive support from hundreds of Bonaireans who gathered at the building where the Island Council meeting took place.

The Council was aware that Governor Emerencia was on holiday through mid-December.

According to local newspaper, *extra*, Councilman Livingstone stated that the coalition has tried to talk to Emerencia, but in vain. "Instead of improving, the situation has become worse. It is enough. The intransigent position of our Governor is

that we cannot work together," said Levenstone.

The considerations relate to the Governor's behavior and policies. According to Levenstone it was impossible for the Commissioners on the Executive Council to work with the Governor. The behavior of Emerencia caused, says Levenstone, a deterioration of Island Government services.

Levenstone: "Her behavior violates several rules of public law of the BES (WolBES) Islands Act. Her behavior not only undermines the functioning of the deputies but also the Island Secretary." A series of issues mentioned in the motion stated that Emerencia has not acted properly. Such as the withdrawal of the authorization for Pachi's Place sex club, effectively making prostitution illegal and causing life in general to be more difficult. Even Sinterklaas' arrival was mentioned. According to Levenstone Emerencia refused to welcome him because she sees Sinterklaas as colonial and discriminatory.

Furthermore, the governor is accused of stalling and discouraging certain investors, taking too long to issue residence and company permits which counter the economic development of the island.

► In her resignation statement **Governor Emerencia confirmed she was resigning because of the no confidence vote. After conferring with the Ministry of Internal and Kingdom Affairs she decided to quit.** She said she hoped that that resigning would help preserve tranquility in the community. She said she had intended to serve out her six-year term to participate in the development of Bonaire. But that was now impossible considering the situation. She added that she considered being Governor an honor and great privilege and expressed her love for the Bonairean people.

Emerencia was named to the position following the resignation of Glenn Thode, who resigned because he felt it was impossible to do his job properly given the conditions in the Island Government.

► **THE HAGUE** – Last month it was revealed that the Dutch AIVD intelligence service spied on Bonaire politicians between 2005 and 2010 while negotiations were underway about joining the Netherlands. It was an illegal operation that was kept hidden from the former Antillean government, according to research by the *NRC Handelsblad* newspaper.



The AIVD gathered incriminating information through informants on the islands. This showed that the politicians were possibly corrupt and were guilty of widespread abuse of power. An informant to the newspaper detailed plans of the AIVD to place listening devices. **Ramonsito Booi**, then leader of the UPB and strong man on the island, and his right hand man, Deputy **Burney El Hage**, were the focus.

Sources close to the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK) confirm that the top men of the department were aware of the AIVD information.

The trial of Booi and Elhage began last Monday. It will continue on December 9. It is conceivable that the evidence presented against the two men is tainted by being obtained through illegal means.

► **The RBC Merchant Bank (Caribbean) Limited recently extended a "Senior Secured Credit Facility" of \$60 million to Fundashon Mariadal.** With this the renovation and expansion of the medical services offered by the hospital will be financed. With the transition to the new political relation Fundashon Mariadal received the mandate to expand and renew its services to meet the prevailing standards in the Netherlands. The foundation is the most important medical institute on the island and offers a range of medical services to the 16,000+ residents.

During the meeting in which the agreement was concluded, medical director of Mariadal, Giovanni Frans, said: "This credit facility offers us the opportunity to further improve and expand the health service on the island."

► **Last week two representatives of the National Ombudsman were on Bonaire.** Every citizen has the right to make complaints about the functioning, not the laws, of the government to the National Ombudsman.

The National Ombudsman offers a route for people to complain about government. The Ombudsman is an impartial complaint practitioner who upon request or at its own initiative can conduct research on the propriety of the conduct of governments. For example, on Bonaire these entities are the police, the public body Bonaire (OLB), the ZVK (Health), the RCN and the tax authorities (*Belastingdienst*).

► **Repairs are being made to the water pump windmill at Dos Pos.** So far the top half of the tower and the windmill have been renewed. This is at the initiative of WEB. At one time Dos Pos (Two Wells) was an important source of water for Rincon.

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Flotsam and Jetsam (Continued from page 2)



► Following their stellar visit to the Dutch Caribbean, King Willem-Alexander and Queen Maxima had a **brief introductory visit to Columbia. It was the first time that a Dutch head of state visited Columbia.** There was massive media interest in Columbia for the royal visit. The welcome ceremony was broadcast live on TV.

According to the king, the Netherlands and Columbia are “neighbors who are becoming more acquainted and appreciating each other’s friendship by the year.” “The closer we work together the more we appreciate the mutual bonds and the more chances we see to widen and deepen those bonds.” Columbia is an important trade partner of the Netherlands and of the Caribbean part of the Kingdom. There is a large Colombian population on Bonaire.

The royal couple also visited Venezuela.

► **The short film, "Natural Treasures of Bonaire," won the Golden Conch award** for best documentary at the CINE-FISH film festival which was part of the 66th Annual Conference of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) held this year in Corpus Christi, Texas. The film, in English, produced by Alalena Media Productions, was part of the project, "What's Bonaire's Nature Worth?" which investigated the economic and social value of Bonaire's ecosystem. This is the eighth

edition of the film festival and this year was the highest number of film submissions, 113 in total. You can see the film and learn more about the project at <http://www.ivm.vu.nl/en/projects/Projects/economics/bonaire/>

► The office of the Governor of Bonaire said that **applications for Certificate of Good Behavior (Verklaring Omtrent Gedrag-VOG)** will not be obtainable from December 5, 2013 to January 7, 2014. As of January 7, 2014 there will be a change in the days to retrieve the VOG, which is required for immigration and other offices. Days to retrieve the VOG are: Tuesday: 2-4 pm; Thursday: 8:30-11am; Friday: 1:30-3:30 pm.

► **Fifteen students have just completed the "Bonaire In-depth and Guiding Skills Course" and are now certified as tour guides for Bonaire.** You will recognize them by their name badge that says “Certified Tour Guide” which has a copy of their certificate on the back. A guide with this qualification will give you accurate and interesting information about Bonaire and will be skilled in dealing with people.

The course was held from September 2 to November 21 and consisted of three sessions each week covering Bonaire related subjects such as geology, history, diving, education, salt, BOPEC, the government, medical care, the national park and marine park, language, slave trade, real estate, and architecture as well as specific guiding skills such as voice projection, customer service and first aid.

There were many guest lecturers but most of the course was given by Mrs. Sue Felix of Achie Tours. Sue has been on the island for 42 years and she has been a tour guide

Surinam Independence Day



► On Sunday November 24, Vincent Rommy and Amina Kromodimedjo organized a **social gathering commemorating the Independence of the Republic of Surinam.** The gathering was held at the public playground at Kant i Awa on the seaside. The theme of the gathering was “Freedom and fun with each other.” The attendance was very good and the ambience was tremendous.

All enjoyed great Surinam food, pastries, drinks and music.

for 41 of them. Sue is grateful to all the guest lecturers for their assistance and to BOPEC, Cargil, Fundashon Mariadal and Mangasina di Rei for guiding the students around the respective organizations to further their knowledge. *By Carla Hay*

Vincent Rommy, a former President of Mietie Makandra, the Surinamese native association, hopes that the Surinam people will solve their disagreements if any, live in harmony and come en-mass to enjoy social events like this. He wants to thank Paul Breinburg and Guno Gerling for the music and all attendees for their positive energy and contribution to this great event. Everybody is looking forward to the next social event. *by Paul Wichers*

► **The DECEMBER HOLIDAY CONCERT will be a musical party.** The Classical Music Board Bonaire (CMBB) will hold its traditional end of year concert on **Saturday, December 14, at 8 pm in the**

(Continued on page 11)



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On the Island Since... August 5th, 2001 - Helen Hoen



Helen Hoen

"I came from Holland, but I was born in Paramaribo, Surinam. I had very nice parents who were also tremendously sweet and they taught us so much! One of the things they used to say that has always stuck with me is, 'You are a world citizen and everywhere you go you have to adjust yourself to the norms, values, customs and traditions of that particular country.' My dad would describe it in his own lovely way. 'If you go somewhere and they dance on one leg, then you also dance on one leg!'

My mother was a teacher and my father was an inspector with the social service. My mother passed away at a very young age; she was only 56, the same age I am now. My dad died in January, three years ago; he was 87 years old. We were eight children and I was daddy's favorite. He was a very active and adventurous man and in that sense we are very much alike!

After I finished teacher training college I went to work deep in the interior of Surinam because I felt that people there were also entitled to qualified teachers instead of missionaries or trainees. It was fantastic!

I regularly go back to that village. The only way to get there is with a 'korjaal' - a hollowed out tree trunk. In the old days the trip would take two days, now it's about half a day. When I arrive there I am honorably received by my former students who are now the prominent people in the village.

After two and a half years in the jungle I left for Holland where I started working as a teacher at a school in Rotterdam. From then on I worked at all types of schools - from elementary up to universities.

In Holland I also met the man who became the father of my children, my daughter Bianca and my son Calvin. However, the relationship did not last and I became a single mom, working full-time.

When I was 33 - Bianca was 9 and Calvin was 4 - I was diagnosed with breast cancer. At the time I was studying and the institution was very cooperative and supportive because they let me take the exams when I was capable. I was one year out of circulation. First 16 cycles of chemotherapy, then the operation and then the radiation. But I did graduate in remedial education that year.

"If you go somewhere and they dance on one leg, then you also dance on one leg!"

My children were born in Holland, but I also wanted them to experience what my childhood had been like, so when I graduated and finished the treatment I went with the kids to Surinam.

I was invited by the Ministry of Education and I became head of the Special Education Office where I managed 16 schools.

My children had the best of times - we had half a zoo at home plus 16 dogs! It was a turbulent political time and as the situation worsened I no longer felt it safe to expose my children to it and so, after two years, we went back to Holland."

She laughs. "I felt utterly miserable! The grayness, the lightlessness... Well, sometimes it could be cozy, but in general! Also, the political climate had changed. It was the time of Pim Fortuyn, a populist Dutch politician who had his own view on Islam and foreigners and who left his mark on what once was a liberal and free thinking society. I felt I was only respected because I had a higher position in secondary special education where I was responsible for intake and

placement. But it no longer felt good. Without being dramatic - people didn't have respect anymore for other people with a different color or background. The effect it had on me was that I didn't feel at home anymore. My kids were okay because they were born and raised there - but I felt out of place.

Then an old study pal of mine - who had been teaching on Bonaire - phoned me one day and I asked her the address of SGB high school - just for the fun of it. But I did write them and applied for a job and to my great surprise I was hired! It went almost too fast! Yes! Goodbye Holland!

Bianca stayed in Holland and Calvin came with me and I started teaching Dutch at SGB. It was great fun. At the time it was one big school and all the teach-

ers were teaching at all levels.

Then, about a year and a half year, I got some troubling reports after my breast exam. It was Doctor Schröder - I am still very grateful to him - who advised me to do genetic testing. I was sent to Holland where I was diagnosed as carrying the BRCA1-gene and I was given the choice either to come back every six months for check-ups or to have a mastectomy and removal of the ovaries and fallopian tubes. The choice was quickly made, and" - *she grins* - "I did it before Angelina Jolie did it. No, seriously, it gave me a whole lot of peace of mind.

At SGB I became a coordinator. I launched the 'Work and Education Program,' where practical oriented students got more practice than theory. It's still a very successful project.

I am a committed teacher. For me the child comes first and I will do everything and way beyond that to get it through its exams. Several times, also this year, I have been chosen 'Teacher of the Year' at SGB. Children can always come to me and - if I may say so - they trust me.



Helen and her business partner, Andre Haltman

The biggest obstacle for the majority of the Bonairean children is that they're not fluent in the Dutch language. The consequence is that they are following an education which is way below their intelligence level. I do respect Papiamentu and I speak it fluently, but it's not a matter of 'or Dutch or Papiamentu' - it definitely should be Papiamentu and Dutch. After all, the exams must be taken in Dutch.

After 10-10-10 there was a great need for accredited training on the island. 'Learning never ends.' That's my slogan! I am still with SGB. I've been working in education for 38 years now, and in May 2012 I opened KOD Education, Training and Courses where people can take a variety of training and education which take from one to two and a half years for Middle Professional Education or Higher Professional Education.

I work together with examination offices in Holland so we get the end terms from Holland. The exams are the same as in Holland and the diplomas and certifications are recognized in Holland and they come from Holland. I work together with the Association Practice Exams and with LSSO training for office functions. Those are the big ones, but I also work with EBFS, the exam institution for professional education in the financial sector and with SVPB, the foundation for professional exams in the private security sector. Soon we will begin with sports massage training. And on November 29th we opened a branch on Curacao as well! It's a hit! For instance our Dutch course was attended by 400 people! Just great!

The main thing for me is that people will be able to increase their opportunities. Therefore KOD stands for: Knowledge Opens Doors. The majority of people get the training from their

employer, but if you want to do it privately it costs \$1100 for MBO2 training and \$2500 for HBO training, exams and book costs not included.

In August Andre Haltman became my business partner. He's a Master of Laws and he takes care of general affairs so I can concentrate on the educational affairs. We're located at Kaya Amsterdam 25, next to Homestyle and you can mail us at info.opleidingenkod@gmail.com or go to www.kodbonaire.com or www.kodcuracao.com or phone 717-1810 or 717-9105.

In the meantime," *she laughs*, "I am a proud grandmother of six grandchildren - all of them in Holland. I want to be an example for all children never to give up on your ideals and to reach for the stars. Focus on a goal and don't go for less!

From the time I went to live in Holland until July last year I've been going to Surinam on a regular basis and every time I left I always felt good - like, 'Okay, I'm going home.' But last year December I cried when I left Surinam and that was a first. To double check," - *she smiles*, "I went again in July and then I stayed a month. Then, when I left I cried my heart out... For me it's a sign that my country of birth - because Bonaire is my home - is pulling me and that's one of the reasons why I am also starting with KOD in Surinam where there is a great need and a big market for education. From there on we will see..."

■ Story & photos by Greta Kooistra



After the Last Picture Show



PART 8 FROM THE SERIES, DOWN IN THE LAND OF BON BINI

When I first started coming to the island over 10 years ago, there was the Bonaire Twin Cinema located Kaya Princess Maria, just a few feet down from the six-lane, second-floor bowling alley, Bowling di Danilo. I was much too busy then exploring the island to take in a film, let alone go bowling, but I was glad to know that in the future I would be able to go to a movie house in Kralendijk.

The Bonaire Twin Cinema (above) was inviting. Painted on the building's bold, yellow front were bigger-than-life portraits of Hollywood greats, complete with cartoon-like captions. Marilyn Monroe with folded arms cooed, "SO WHERE ARE WE? IN HEAVEN?" A macho James Dean replied, "NO, THIS IS MOVIELAND." A somewhat prophetic T-Rex dinosaur countered, "I KNOW WE'RE ALL DEAD!" Unfortunately, the dastardly dino proved right. By the time I moved here to live full time in January 2008, the movie house had shut down. DVD rentals and satellite TV were probably the culprits. The Bonaire Twin Cinema had become the island's last picture show.

Boarded-up doors are all that is left at the theatre's entrance. For a time, there was a promotional poster from probably the last picture shown at the Twin, *I Now Pronounce You Chuck & Larry*. It hung in an exterior glass case for years and was heavily faded by the sun. This 2007 film starred



Boarded up doors are all that's left

Adam Sandler and Kevin James, two firefighters who masquerade as a domestic couple in order to claim insurance money. It's not the kind of film that I would choose to see, and perhaps that would have been true for many of the films carried at the Bonaire Twin Cinema.

But that is not the issue. Once I moved here, I had to resort to downloading flicks from iTunes or going to a movie rental shop. For a while after the Twin Cinema's closing there was Hums Video in Nikiboko that carried the latest DVD releases, in Blue



The last poster

Ray if you so chose. Even next door to the last picture show was Movieland Rentals. Ten bucks would get you five DVDs for three days. They also had Playstation 2 games for those who wanted to relive NASCAR 2007.

Those options left me cold. I still yearned for that intimacy of the theatre crowd, that bonding event of watching a film in the dark among strangers. I wanted the picture show experience. Thanks to our friend, Nathalie from Boston who visits here each spring, I was saved. She introduced me to the Caribbean Chillout (below).

The CC is a funky, mini resort with individual cottages and palm trees surrounding a swimming pool. But on Wednesday nights the place is transformed into a cinema. A white rectangle painted on one of the building's exterior walls serves as the screen. Low rider beach chairs form rows of seating. They surround a squat structure that houses a video projector. The Caribbean Chillout became my new picture show.

Owners Marloes and Eric served up deli-



cious plates of food under the tiki bar. These included spicy Indonesian chicken sate, hardy goulash over rice, and my favorite Dutch dish, *boerenkoel*—a mix of green kale and potatoes served with sausage. While dining, the crowd enjoyed music videos by various artists including Eric Clapton, Santana, and Simon & Garfunkel.

But by eight when the sky was fully dark, Eric would leave his post behind the bar and start the movie for the evening. Most films were subtitled in Dutch. Occasionally, I saw a "for promotion screening only" notice superimposed over the opening titles only proving that pirates of the Caribbean are still alive and well. It was an under-the-stars, barefootin' cinematic delight. But Wednesday nights at the Chillout became so popular that I often had difficulty finding a seat. Plus, the movie selections began veering away from high quality films like *Julie & Julie*, *Doubt* and *The King's Speech*. These days most offerings are sensational Hollywood flicks with emphasis on explosions and violence. Thus, I rarely go to the CC anymore.

So my quest for a satisfying cinematic experience continued. Strangely, the key to the puzzle was my new Smokey Joe grill, a small Weber that easily fits in the car along with beach chairs and a cooler full of adult beverages. Take all that plus some friends south in search of sand and I discovered the greatest show on earth. The drama opens with a flock of pink flamingoes flying overhead, desperately seeking an evening roost. Act Two is centered on a live-time dripping sunset of orange, red and yellow that paints the sea in other worldly colors. It all concludes with a cavalcade of stars as the Milky Way clouds the heavens, determined satellites track east to west, and shining planets cast silver streaks in cosmic BTUs across the black water.

Yes, Bowling di Danilo has closed its doors. Gone too is the Bonaire Twin Cinema on Kaya Princess Maria. And then there is character Duane Jackson, played by Jeff Bridges in the Peter Bogdanovich's *The Last Picture Show*. Duane had it all wrong when he prophesized towards the film's end, "Won't be much to do in town with the picture show closed." What Jackson did not realize is that movies are not everything. Plus, he never got to witness the greatest show on earth, sunset time on the southern beaches of Bonaire. All that's missing there is the smell of popcorn.

■ Story & photos by Patrick Holian



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A New Foundation Wants To Make Underprivileged Youngsters Happier



Ilva St. Jago, Dalitza Victorina, Notaris Aniek Schouten, Alda Dirksz sign the papers to create Fundashon Sonrisa



Bonaire's official Fundashon Sonrisa (Smile Foundation) aims to put smiles on the faces of the underprivileged Bonairean young people.

The initiative arose two years ago when some friends spontaneously came up with the idea to sponsor less fortunate children to visit the "Coney Island" amusement attraction that was set up on the island at that time. With the help of sponsors the organizers managed to give 300 kids a great time, a fun activity.

The idea was so well received that the organizers, all friends, decided to formalize the activity by setting up a non-profit foundation. It is of course a noble endeavor to try to give the young people a smile, but the founders do realize that this is not possible without the support of the

business community and the population.

To help make our underprivileged Bonairean kids happy during the month of December the Foundation came up with an idea together with "FESBO." As they did last year they are organizing a **St. Nicholas Feast on December 1st for 200 kids between 4-8 years plus a Fun Fair on December 14th for 100 kids between 9-12 years.** A donation of just \$15 will provide a gift for a child.

For next year, a comprehensive program has been drawn up, the details of which will be announced later. The foundation receives the names of children who qualify through Youth and Family and FESBO.

For more information about the work of the foundation you may contact Dalitza Victorina (786-0299), Ilva St. Jago (786-5451) or Alda Dirksz (785-6378). Email: fundashonsonrisa@gmail.com.

The Foundation welcomes any donation. Deposits can be made to Giro Bank Bonaire bank account 21101625 in the name of Fundashon Sonrisa.

■ Press release/ G.D.

Art Tour

The 'Kaminda di Arte' (Art Tour) started again last month. Just like in the past years professional and recreational 'artists' show their work every third Saturday of the month from November till March in a mostly homey ambience.

For this year's Kaminda di Arte four very diverse artists joined together at one location to exhibit and sell their works. This offers visitors an interesting and versatile pallet of art all in one spot.

Last month's visitors were very enthusiastic about this approach.

On **Sunday December 15**, you can experience this for yourself. In the courtyard of Kaya Nikiboko Zuid 124 under and around the oldest Tamarind tree on Bonaire.

Wolmoet, Josea, Fred and Tom will show their work. It ranges from statues to paintings, from realistic to abstract, from mosaics to jewelry. But first of all from Bonaire. They look forward meeting you Sunday December 15. ■ Press release/ G.D.



TCB—A Year Later

It's been about a year since Ethsel Pieterella took over as the managing head of the Tourist Corporation of Bonaire (TCB). It had been without formal leadership for some time and was being criticized for lack of innovation and focus. The staff seemed discouraged. Stakeholders were complaining about lack of support.

The Reporter met with Mr. Pieterella to review recent accomplishments and plans of the TCB for the past 12 months.

He compared his task at the TCB to baking a cake. "All the ingredients are there but they have to be mixed correctly and baked just right to be tasty," he said. And that's what he's been trying to do.

An early focus was on the infrastructure of the organization: The offices were run-down and dingy, the reception lobby was claustrophobic, the information technology ancient and the Internet connection slow. Today the building renovation is almost complete with an open landscape office space, an uncluttered lobby featuring local artists on a rotating basis, cheerful colors and an information system second to none that unites workers from their office workstations and allows them to work from anywhere, even via their smartphones. Information is backed up and stored in "The Cloud" and accessible from almost everywhere via Internet. The Internet speed is high.

There is a large LED information billboard up on the outside wall of the office giving timely information about local events and can be used for special messages, for example weather warnings or most recently for a greeting to the visiting king and queen. He agrees that while not everyone likes the billboard it is a useful tool.

Recently he has been focusing on cruise ship tourism. Passenger arrivals are up this year from about 170,000 to 200,000, and next year perhaps as many as 250,000. Some of the future ship arrivals are planned for the off-season. The island's investment of equipment, time and quality of activities devoted to cruise ships is growing and it makes sense to keep it running year-round, he said. Bonaire is rated high by the cruise ship lines mainly because their passengers are treated well on Bonaire. They feel protected. They are not besieged by hustlers, the quality of the tour guides is high and there are a variety of activities to choose from. Bonaire became an FCCA (Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association) Platinum member this year. "Of course we had to pay for that," said Pieterella, "but the benefits are worth it, especially the access to the high level decision makers."

A "Cruise Ship Visitor Conversion Program" is in place to make it easier for cruise ship, and other visitors as well, to learn more about the island and hopefully return.

Keeping track of the number of tourism arrivals is key to knowing how effective are the promotions and advertising that the TCB and its partners are sponsoring. Pieterella is convinced that the method used today, using government arrival data, is accurate to a point and useful for year-to-year comparisons. But to better fine-tune those numbers, exit surveys, using CBS (Central Bureau of Statistics) sampling techniques, will define more about the origin and preferences of the visitors.



A "non-residency card" will also be offered so a visitor can provide even more information to help the TCB in its marketing campaigns. It will be optional but it's expected that many visitors will fill them out.

Pieterella says his "first priority" is to get more airlift to Bonaire. He's disappointed by the discontinuance of Insel Air's Miami non-stop but encouraged by ArkeFly's additional flight. He is constantly working on that but has nothing firm to report about more flights.

Promotions to non-North American and non-European markets, especially to Mexico is to be expanded. Latin America is a relatively untapped market, he feels.



Combination local-area marketing is to be stepped-up as well. Packages of air/car/hotel will be offered by island resorts at special rates for ABC Island vacationers. The popular Taste of Bonaire events will be a focal point.

Pieterella is concerned about the advancing age of the typical Bonaire diver-tourist. As people get older, they tend to dive less, so Pieterella is looking to have more soft adventure activities.

Local people haven't been forgotten. The TCB program of giving \$5000-\$10,000 grants to local events that draw locals and visitors has been most successful, for example the recent kite-surfing championships.

It was an eventful year and Pieterella hopes that the elements put in place will bring the island more visitors in 2014 season. We'll see. ■ G.D.

Word on the Street

Operators of the Peruvian restaurant in Playa will run the restaurant in the space that housed the former Sunset Bar and Grill at Den Laman. But rumor has it that the condominium owners in that building are legally contesting the division of the original space which reduces the size of the restaurant space but adds another condominium. Apparently condo rules require a vote of the owners to increase the number of condos. Condo drama!

Word on the street is that the remodeling of Hotel Rochaline/City Cafe will be significant. No more hotel. Hotel rooms on the first floor will be converted into shops, second floor rooms into office space. City Cafe space will be transformed into three different eateries.

Island Fashions and El Mundo restaurant, adjacent to the same building, will remain as is.

Sources say Xander Bogaerts, Boston Red Sox player and World Series winner, will visit Bonaire in early December as he promised. Local baseball team, SBT Padres, and the government of Bonaire are sponsoring his visit. Reporter readers will remember that the Aruban athlete lived and played baseball on Bonaire as a pre-teen.

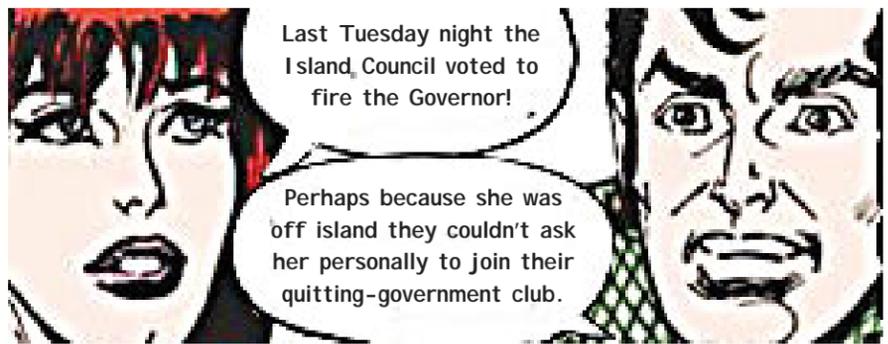
Reportedly retiring Commissioner Burney El Hage has been tapped to serve as advisor to Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte. Whether fact or fiction

it surely will depend on the outcome of the criminal case against him that went to trial November 25. A local Papiamentu language newspaper seemed disappointed that there was not a large citizen turnout for the start of the court proceedings, but there were a number of journalists from abroad.

- Who will take Burney El Hage's seat as Commissioner of Finance?

We hear it may be Dutch VVD Party General Secretary for Bonaire and Island Government policy advisor Caryl (Hans) Els (above). Hans Els has been working as an advisor to the UPB council members for a couple of years and is acquainted with current government issues. We also seem to remember that when he headed the government Workers pension Fund (APNA) it lost money. We haven't yet heard who will be named to replace Silvana Serfilia who resigned two weeks ago for personal and political reasons "known to her party."

- Seems the law is cracking down on "fever." "Fever" is the colloquial term for the local "recreational sport" of irresponsible racing and laying down black tire marks with cars, motorcycles and



quads. Just take a look at Kaya S. Van Epps midway to Sorobon and you'll get the "drift." The Prosecutor has sent a serious warning that anyone caught doing "fever" will have their vehicle confiscated and he will ask the court to permanently remove the vehicle from circulation.

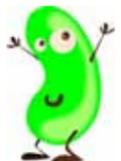
- Times are tough money-wise and it is evident lately in traffic court. Many people have been going to court over minor traffic violations (i.e. no insurance, expired tags, etc.) because they don't have the money to pay the fines. People are lining up to ask the judge if they can make payments as they do not have the cash to pay the fine in a lump sum. Turns out that when the statutory fine is less than about \$140, the court cannot allow monthly payments. So, many people are agreeing to increased fines to allow a payment plan!
- What's the story with the island's cell phone operators? A couple of weekends ago it hit a new low... if that is possible. Digicel customers couldn't connect with UTS customers and the next day UTS decided that its Bonaire

clients had to prefix Bonaire Digicel numbers with the country code, and they did NOT inform many of their subscribers. Of course customer service was not answering on the weekend so the problem couldn't be reported and fixed. Cell service is relatively expensive too. Depending on your provider and plan you can pay around \$0.25 cents a minute.

- We heard some rumblings about the commercialism and sponsorship involved with the arrival of Sanikolas last week. When we talked with the volunteers and organizers of the event they were really pleased that they were able to welcome the saint with ease and in style thanks to the sponsorship. We did observe there were some small changes from past years but the event seemed joyful to all who attended.

- From a Kaya Grandi storekeeper:

How can you tell when a particular cruise ship's tourists won't be shopping much on the island? Simple, they go back to the ship for their lunch. ■ Sra. Bula Bonchi



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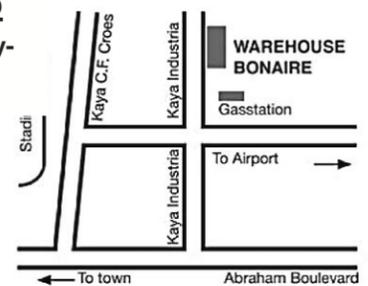
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These are the images of a five-foot Bull shark caught at the Fishermen's Hut in the south of Bonaire.

SHARK FISHING ON BONAIRE

Dear Editor:

Here is my shark story of an event on November 8th:

Bystanders, locals and tourists were all excited to take pictures and to hear the adventurous story of the (shark) fisherman.

They got frantic snapping pictures as one individual was busy cutting the head open to retrieve the shark's teeth.

Now what is wrong with these pictures?

Sharks are a protected species on Bonaire, including trading in shark fins, when the animal has been caught illegally.

Turtles, groupers and parrotfish are protected species under the laws of Bonaire (see sidebar for a list of protected species,

trees and plants).

Many people know this, including the fisherman who caught the shark, but if nobody speaks out some fishermen will continue destabilizing their own future fish stock and with it the quality of our reefs.

Reporting illegal activities does not make you a spy. Whistle-blow misconduct to keep economic benefit from harming the environment. Besides, failure to report a crime often makes you an accessory to the act. Even if you play a passive or minor role, the knowledge that an offense was committed leaves you subject to the same punishment as the perpetrators.

If you witness fish being caught, or fish being traded that are listed as protected, please call the Marine Park or the police even when you are not sure of the species.

Protected List of Fish for Bonaire

Latijnse naam	Papiamentse naam	Nederlandse naam	Engelse naam	
Haaiachtigen				
Aetobatus narinari	chuchu águila	gevlekte adelaarsrog	spotted eagle ray	•
Dasyatis Americana	chuchu ròk	Amerikaanse pijlstaartrog	southern stingray	•
Manta birostris	manta	mantarog	manta ray	•
Selachimorpha (Euselachii)	tribon	haaien	sharks	•
Zeevissen				
Balistes vetula	pishiporko rabu di gai	koningstrekkeris	queen triggerfish	•
Dermatolepis inermis	olitu		marbled grouper	•
Epinephelus itajara	djukvis	itajara	Goliath grouper, jewfish	•
Epinephelus striatus	jakupepu	Nassau tandbaars	nassau grouper	•
Lachnolaimus maximus	hokfis	everlipvis	hogfish	•
Lutjanus analis	kapitán	snapper	mutton snapper	•
Lutjanus cyanopterus	karaña pretu	cupera snapper	cupera snapper	•
Pagrus pagrus	djent'i maishi	rode zeebrasem	red porgy	•
Scaridae	gutu	papegaaivissen	parrotfishes	•
Thunnus obesus	buni wowo grandi	grootoogtonijn	bigeye tuna	•
Ongewervelde zeedieren				
Panulirus argus	kref	kreeft	Caribbean spiny lobster	■
Panulirus guttatus	kref	gevlekte kreeft	spotted spiny lobster	■
Panulirus laeviscauda	kref	kreeft	smoothtail spiny lobster	■
Koraalachtigen				
Antipatharia	koral pretu	zwarte koralen	black corals	••
Gorgoniacea		waaierkoralen	gorgonians	•
Milleporidae		brandkoralen	fire corals	••
Scleractinia		steenkorallen	stony corals	••
Stylasteridae		kantkorallen	lace corals	••
Zeeschelpdieren				
Strombus gigas	karkó	roze vleugelhoorn	queen conch	•••
Zeegrassen				
Syringodium filiforme (Cymodocea manitorum)		zeegras	manatee grass	•
Thalassia testudinum	yerba di kaña	zeegras	turtle grass	•
Zoogdieren				
Chiroptera	raton di anochi	vleermuizen	bats	•
Vogels				
Aratinga pertinax xanthogenius	prikichi	West Indische parkiet	brown-throated parakeet	••
Buteo albicaudatus	gablan di seru, falki	witstaartbuizerd	white tailed hawk	••
Margarops fuscates bonairensis	chuchubi Spaño palabrua boka duru	witogspotlijster	pearly eyed trasher	•
Pandion haliaetus	gablan piskadó	visarend	osprey	••
Phoenicopterus ruber	chogogo	Caribische flamingo	Caribbean flamingo	••
Tyto alba	palabrua	kerkuil	barn owl	••
Reptielen				
Iguana iguana	yuana	groene leguaan	green iguana	•
Zoetwaterdieren				
Typhlatya monae		blinde garnaal	Mona cave shrimp	•

(Continued on page 9)

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Letters (Continued from page 8)

I'm asking you to share your story and take pictures. Do not purchase or participate in illegal trades.

Let me try to explain the importance of protecting species that play an important role in our future.

The ecosystem is like a house of cards. If you take one out, it can collapse, as can the reef. If all the cards are standing together then the reef and its ecosystem is stable and strong. But when you start pulling some out, like the predators, then the herbivores, all of a sudden the reef is susceptible to any kind of impact, for example an increase in sea temperature with associated bleaching or ocean acidification. If the whole system lacks resilience, it will collapse.

You can have a really healthy coral cover but with no sharks or parrot fish, the reef looks healthy until something goes wrong. Imagine a bleaching event and all of a sudden there is so much algae that all the coral gets smothered and there are no herbivores to eat all the algae away, nor are there any predators to keep it all in check.

That ecosystem is a system where often you can't see how far you are down the hill, how far you are into the problem until you have that acute disturbance. You don't know what is going on and now you have passed the tipping point with no way to turn back resulting in the loss of all fish and coral.

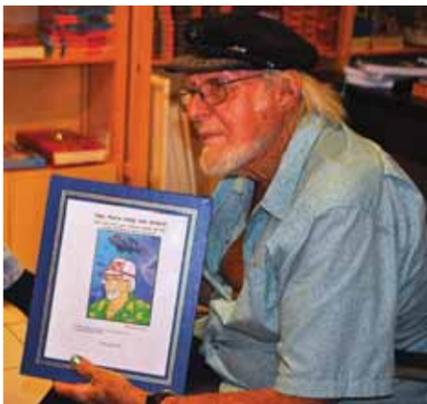
Sharks, parrotfish and groupers are only a few species that are protected by law.

Report to the authorities if you witness any illegal activities. Call the Marine Park: 717 8444 or just call 911.

Hendrik Wuyts

RECOGNITION FOR CAPTAIN DON

Letter to the *Bonaire Reporter*:



Many years ago, Captain Don Stewart arrived on the island of Bonaire and recognized the importance and beauty of the reefs and the sea life that existed around the island of Bonaire. Throughout the years, Don has been an advocate for marine conservation on Bonaire and was honored with the title of Knight within the Order of Orange-Nassau and as a Diving Pioneer by the international organization, Beneath The Sea, Inc. Throughout the years, in addition to his activism in marine conservation, Don has also been a prolific writer and published author. His publications consistently carry the message of the importance of protecting our oceans. Don's publication, a fictional story, *Sea Trauma*, highlights man's flagrant abuse of the ocean. The story carries a strong message about the importance of the ocean, while providing an enthralling story that is appealing to teens and adults.

As a former teacher and an active volunteer in the Beneath The Sea organization, I spend time with teens and young adults. *Sea Trauma* is a book that I recommend to them. While the book is fictional, it carries a real life important message about our oceans.

While visitors to the island can meet Cap'n Don on Monday nights at the Habitat

Resort, it is rare to see his books (*Reef Windows* and *Sea Trauma*) and t-shirt with the message "Enjoy Our Reef Fishes: Let's Not Eat Them!" publicized throughout the island or at venues where the Tourism Corporation Bonaire (TCB) and Bonaire Hotel and Tourism Association (BONHATA) is publicizing the island at international conferences. Why is this? Don uses the proceeds from his books and t-shirt sales to continue educating the public about the precious resource – our ocean – especially the reefs around Bonaire. His message about the beauty and fragility of the reefs of Bonaire is as important today as it was when he started spreading the message decades ago.

As a visiting diver since 1982, I have always been aware of the island's goal to protect the reefs especially in light of the fact that marine tourism is a major part of the island's economy. Yet, over the years, there has been more and more coastal development with negative impact on the reefs. And the recent publicized government plans to build a party pier in town and major development in the National Park north of the town is appalling. Bonaire has always had a unique beauty and charm as compared to other Caribbean islands. Why are you allowing this to be destroyed? Is there no one left with the vision of Captain Don Stewart?

Rosemary Kurti New York City- Bonaire visitor since 1982

OPEN LETTER TO HIS MAJESTY THE KING



Majesty,

First our congratulations with Thee coronation and we welcome Thee on Bonaire and our thanks to His Majesty for reading this letter.

Today, Thee have followed an intensive program and Thee have experienced and seen up close all the beauty of Bonaire and more.

However, we are forced to share a less pretty issue, that Thee also have to be aware of, that there is as never before in our history such a big division and discontent and unrest among the people of Bonaire.

The constitutional reform in the Kingdom on 10-10-10 is the cause. The several referendums that formed the basis and led to this, were highly misleading and never been an honest and conscious choice of our people and even according to international law illegal.

Hereunder attached is our petition for a constitutional self-determination referendum that we have addressed to the governments and representatives of both Kralendijk as The Hague, which relies on the support of over 3,500 - signees. (compared with about 5million Dutch in the Netherlands to support a petition)

We citizens of Thee Kingdom requests and asks passionately to Thee as King and

Head of State and ultimate responsible for the welfare of the citizens of Thee Kingdom the following:

- That Thee can devote all Thee power and influence towards the Dutch authorities (examples : Bijleveld , Kamp , Rutte , Plasterk) asking to stop towards the Caribbean part of the Kingdom, and specifically the Bonairean people, of openly and publicly intimidating and blackmailing of with throwing us out Thee Kingdom and of fanning our people, but on the contrary to support our Bonairean people and help as a good and responsible big brother, to help emancipate and develop our people further according to international law and to our human dignified rights, and especially not to stagnate the arduous healing and reconciliation process of our shared history .

To Thee majesty in this blessed task presented to pursue the wish and promises made by Thee predecessors and that we seek and achieve our common dream, a promising and prosperous Kingdom which is based on "freedom and equality" and that we face and enter the future together with courage, honor and mutual respect.

Trusting to have informed Thee sufficiently and awaiting a word of hope and support on Thee part, I remain.

James Finies, chairman and coordinator "Foundation Nos Kier Boneiru Bek"

NO COOKING GAS AGAIN

Dear *Bonaire Reporter*,

When is someone going to step in and organize the handling of reordering and obtaining cooking gas on Bonaire? The current method is a ridiculous waste of time and very frustrating! Help!

No Tin Gas. Por ta otra siman.

BOAT OPERATOR LICENSE



Dear *Bonaire Reporter*,

The idea of a boat operator license is commendable and has been around for decades. Many questions come up though, regarding this. Will tourists who rent boats require one? Highly unlikely and at best almost impossible to make happen. Does this include all water vehicles? What will the age limit be?

Will it be a difficult license to obtain and then like a car license, no one follows half the laws? Who will check if a boat driver has a license? Who will enforce the violations?

I truly hope this license will not be required to be renewed every 6 months like the boat registration is now. Which brings up the question why does a boat need to be re-registered every 6 months? It is free anyhow. Why not charge a small fee and make it yearly like road vehicles?

Bruce Bowker

THE BONAIRE I ONCE KNEW.....

Dear Editor:

The Bonaire I once knewwas a self-sustaining marvelous entity. There was discipline, courtesy, hard work and pride, virtues that always existed among Bonaireans. It was a place where one could produce whatever was needed from scratch! (Needed mind you, not wanted). I think that must be the most fulfilling feeling in the whole wide world and one of the reasons why we don't throw anything away in Bonaire! If those virtues no longer existed, what do you think would happen?

The development of our country through technology and from influences abroad, that place you worked so hard to build up, would just crumble away. The way of life knows no boundaries. The simplicity of living would be gone, old friendships drifted apart. People would begin not caring anymore, stop doing for others. If they couldn't afford to go out, they'd stay home....they wouldn't perform their best at work, and probably kick the dog when they got home.

Some say it takes centuries, yet it can happen in just one generation. What is happening here on Bonaire has taken only 50 years! Change came so drastically and quickly that it is chasing away people born and raised here. Why, just the other day, a young Bonairean told me he doesn't want to stay here any longer, and is planning to move elsewhere as soon as he saves enough money to skidaddle. Loyal return visitors are deciding to seek new destinations.

Bonaire was left on the back burner (luckily) for many years while the rest of the islands around it have continued to have unbridled development, haphazardly and without guidelines. For me, there's no other place like it on earth. Visitors tell me there's a "coming home" feeling when they reach Bonaire. A feeling so mystifying it is hard to grasp. A sensation that you are the luckiest person on the face of the earth once you have "discovered" Bonaire, yet I fear the charm of Bonaire that visitors seek is fast disappearing.

A JFK Magazine (a life style magazine) article read: Of 50 things to do before you die, make one of them a visit to Bonaire. "Try before you die," it said. But what will happen to the Bonaire we love when 200 year old structures are torn down and others fall to ruin?

What will happen when that last tree standing has been cut down?

What will happen when the sea that surrounds us is no longer the pristine sea it once was, and the creatures within it struggle to survive?

What will happen when its precious natural beauty is a thing of the past?

What will become of the Bonaire we once "had"?

I cherish the hope that the harmony we once knew will not be lost..... that Nature will prevail and that the mystical aura that has always hung over Bonaire will continue to do so for a long, long time to come.

Christie Dovale

TRAVEL WARNING

The US Department of State has issued this Travel Warning to inform US citizens about the security situation in Venezuela.

Violent crime in Venezuela is pervasive, both in the capital, Caracas, and in the interior. According to the non-governmental organization, Venezuelan Violence Observatory (VVO), there were 21,692 homicides in Venezuela in 2012, amounting to a rate of 73 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, among the highest in the world. In Caracas, the homicide rate is even higher at 122 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants.

Kidnappings are also a serious concern throughout the country. In 2012, 583 kidnappings were reported to the authorities. It is estimated that roughly 80% of kidnappings go unreported. Common criminals are increasingly involved in kidnappings, either dealing with victims' families directly or selling the victims to terrorist groups. All US direct-hire personnel and their families assigned to US Embassy in Caracas are subject to an embassy movement policy for their safety and well-being. **The policy divides Caracas into three zones: Yellow, Orange and Red.**

Movements into the Orange Zone between the hours of 8pm and 6am are not recommended, and if US personnel choose to visit the Orange Zone during those hours, they must notify the Embassy when entering and upon departing the zone. In addition, US personnel must request armored vehicles to transit the Orange Zone between midnight and 6am.

Unofficial (i.e., personal) visits to the

Red Zone are prohibited, and US personnel are only authorized to transit the Red Zone on personal travel during daylight hours provided they remain on one of the city's highways. If a trip includes movement through the Red Zone, US personnel must notify the Embassy. Furthermore, US personnel are required to leave public establishments, regardless of zone, by 2am. In addition, all US direct-hire personnel and their family members who are assigned to US Embassy Caracas are **required to take an armored vehicle when traveling to/from Maiquetía Airport.**

US citizens should be vigilant of their surroundings at all times and in all locations, especially when entering or exiting their homes, hotels, cars, garages, schools, and workplaces. Whenever possible, US citizens should travel in groups of two or more persons; avoid wearing jewelry and carrying large sums of money or displaying cash, ATM/credit cards, mobile phones, or other valuables; and avoid walking at night in most areas of Venezuela or walking alone on beaches, historic ruins, and trails. Incidents of crime along inter-city roads, including carjacking and kidnapping, are common in Venezuela. Motorists should avoid traveling at night and always drive with their doors locked to deter potential robberies at traffic lights and on congested city streets.

Up-to-date information on security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the US and Canada or, for callers outside the US and Canada, a regular toll line at 001-202-501-4444. ■ *Press release*



Eric Erkelens, manager of MCIS Curacao; Carlenis Martinus, MCIS; Wim Timmermans MCIS; Lisa de Gouveia-van Haaren, leader of the BSure project; Omar Winklaar MCIS; Rudsel Coffie, MCIS; Leonard Domacassé, managing Director of MCB Bonaire; and Janella Jansen of MCIS in front of the new office.

At last week's grand opening of MCB's new downtown building next to the MCB Playa branch, the bank introduced a new, convenient way to obtain insurance called BSure. BSure makes getting good insurance fast, hassle-free and at as competitive a price as possible. One way is to apply on-line. You can calculate your premium, download relevant documentation and apply for your insurance from the comfort of your home. You can even pay your premium on a monthly basis and, if necessary, change from your current insurance provider to BSure. It could not be any easier. Go to the website www.bsurebonaire.com to find out more. Is online not so easy for you? Not to worry. All insurance products are also available at the MCB BSure branch.

BSure can insure your house, its contents, your car, and even your travel. Pass by their office or surf to the website to find out more. ■ *Press release/G.D.*



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Flotsam and Jetsam (Continued from page 3) festively decorated Cacique Hall of Plaza Resort Bonaire. The concert will consist of a variety of musical styles performed by musicians living on Bonaire.

CMBB is pleased to be able to show case the newly formed **children's choir** of the San Bernardo Church. The choir has its own musical accompaniment and they recently performed with Carel Kraayenhof and his ensemble to a very full San Bernardo Church.

Anne Marie Kors, a well known singer on Bonaire, will be accompanied by Hans Faassen on piano and will entertain with jazz ballads. Hans will also accompany the violinist **Elaine Marchena**. They will play

duets by Russian composer Tchaikovsky. Elaine has a lot of experience performing in a variety of musical settings and will play on a violin that once belonged to maestro **Tata Mirando**.

Syliva Ploos will play saxophone and flute accompanied by **Anne Hoemakers** on piano.

Music by will be by **Bach, Schubert and Faure** as well as traditional Christmas songs and jazz ballads will ensure the evening has something to please the entire audience.

The after show party entertainment will be provided by **Creme de la Creme**. Bonaire performing for Bonaire will be a relaxed and entertaining evening and the

CMBB looks forward to welcoming you. See page 15 for more information.

► **Our hopes of seeing a spectacular comet were dashed on Friday.** It seems that Comet ISON has flown too close to the surface of the sun and disappeared as it circled the fiery surface, astronomers said. But it reappeared the next day. It's a zombie comet.

► **Don't miss the big December sale on gym memberships at Bon Bida Spa.** A Spa membership or a therapeutic massage makes a great gift too. Call 717-7224 for gym or 717-7330, for Inge's massages.

► **Botox and other rejuvenation treatments are now available on Bonaire.** Ir. Carola E. Roeters, *bedrijfsarts* (occupational physician), of ARBO Medical (BES) handles the procedures. For a free consultation or more information see the bottom of page 10.

► **Rectification:** In the last edition of *The Reporter* (Nov. 18-Dec.2, 2013) on page 15, the photo at the top left should read, "Judo," not "Karate." We apologize to the group and their instructors for the error. ■ G.D./L.D.



Sanikolas Comes To Town

There may be controversy over Sanikolas and his Black Petes in other parts of the world, asserting that it's racist, but in Bonaire, the group appeared and performed as normal – which is wild and crazy. The Bonaire Petes, both boys and girls, members of Jong Bonaire, were all in blackface, colorful silky costumes, earrings, wigs, sunglasses. Sinterklaas was in white face, robed in white and red. On this island people come in all different colors, but on Saturday, November 25, it was shown that, with or without makeup, they're all pretty much the same underneath.

You could hear them coming from the harbor to the pier, the Jong Bonaire drum corps loudly announcing their arrival, the Petes cavorting and bouncing all over the boats – the tugboat *Lucaya* and the party boat *Good Return*.

Energy and anticipation were high, Wilhelmina Park and the waterfront crammed with people of all ages, and they were not disappointed. The Black Petes tumbled, walked on their hands, jumped and danced and threw candy to the children. Regal and imposing,

Sanikolas was greeted by Commissioner **Silvana Serfilia** who accompanied him to meet the children. It was decided that this year the event would be in the afternoon instead of during the morning hours as it has been in the past. It was explained that due to the possibility of vandalism and thievery of the displays the committee couldn't set up the night before as usual. Nonetheless, the excitement and thrills were worth it all!

Many thanks to the Center for Child and Family (*Sentro Hubentut i Familia*) and their principal sponsor, MCB, for putting on an unforgettable event. Other sponsors: Hites, Caribbean Laundry, Best Brands Bonaire, Addo's Books & Toys, NosStrea, TungFong Store, Van den Tweel Supermarket, Obersi Electronics, GoodReturn, Magic ED, Bon Tuk Bonaire, Don Andres, Tony Marchena, TioPepe, DJ Omega 13, Koks Gesto BV.

Thanks as well for the cooperation of Jong Bonaire, Indebon, SKAL, BIA, Rode Kruis, Bopec, Directie R en O, Sekshon Beheer en Openbare Werken, JICN (Huis van Bewaring) and SELIBON. ■Press release/ L.D.



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DATE

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TIME

6 DEC: 08:00 - 21:00
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Buy Local, Eat Local



If you're buying US or Netherlands-grown organic fruit because you know organic food is better for the environment, then you might want to reconsider your purchase—or at least your motivations. While choosing organic over "conventional" does reduce the pesticide burden on the ecosystem, shipping organic food thousands of miles across the sea creates an even greater environmental woe—fossil fuel consumption.

In a 2005 issue of the journal *Food Policy*, researchers stated that although organic farming is valuable, the fact that organic food often travels thousands of miles to get to our supermarkets creates environmental damage that outweighs the benefit of buying organic.

Before the advent of air shipping and fast ships, most food was grown or raised on family farms, packaged or processed nearby, and sold in local retail outlets. In Bonaire much of the food eaten before the 1950s was produced locally: greens, goat meat, fruits and grains. Today, this has become the exception to the rule. Although this shift results in an exceptional selection at the supermarket, it causes a host of other problems. Taste, quality, freshness, and nutritional value all decrease, and the environmental burden balloons. So what's the alternative? Buy local. Buying food that a nearby farmer has grown or raised uses far less fossil fuels, and the benefits don't stop there.

Locally grown food is also better for: **Your Taste buds:** Buying local will yield food so fresh and ripe that your taste buds won't know what hit them. **Your Health:** The moment an item of produce parts from its mother plant, its nutritional value begins to decline. Produce at the supermarket has likely been in transit or sitting in the display case for days or weeks. **Farmers:** Buying local stimulates our local economy. A dollar spent locally generates twice as much income for the local economy. The main sources for local food are the local Farmers' markets. The next Farmers' Market (the first Saturday of every month) is on Saturday, December 7. All that extra money circulating on island translates into better schools, with all the healthful foods you purchased locally. ■ G.D.

Picture Yourself In Bermuda

Janet and Ramsay Merriss, from Weston, CT, have been coming to Bonaire annually since 2001. This year they were celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary and decided to renew their vows on Bermuda where they'd visited since 1979. The kilt Ramsay is wearing is a "Ramsay Plaid" which is from an ancient Scottish family from which he is a descendent. The ceremony took place on October 26, 2013, on a hilltop at Fort Scaur Hill Park in Sandys Parish, Bermuda, and after renewing their vows they posed with a copy of *The Bonaire Reporter*. Photo by Alan Zale. ■



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Festival di PlantaPalu - Tree Planting Festival



The Festival di PlantaPalu is a yearly recurring event presented by STINAPA through its Nature and Environmental Education (NME) department and the Washington-Slagbaai National Park since 2009. The event is designed for 5th grade students of elementary schools. All students and teachers of the 5th grades are invited to participate in the event. STINAPA provides transportation for all the students to the destination and back to school.

The event starts with an opening ceremony and speeches by NME's Desiree Croes and commissioner James Kroon.

Prior to the event all the students participate in a fantasy tree drawing contest – the winner's drawing becomes the official event poster for that year. During the opening ceremony the winner of the poster contest receives a framed poster as a gift. The students and teachers also receive the official song of the Festival di PlantaPalu, which they practice prior to the event in order to sing along when the song is played on the day itself.

After this the tree planting begins. The students follow the Washington Slagbaai National Park rangers to the area where



Overall Poster Contest winner Mèrelt Frans from the Kolegio San Luis Beltran

holes have been made to plant the trees. This year 100 trees were planted!

Several organization and an individual, like the ECHO Foundation, LVV and Edshel Martha collaborated with STINAPA for a couple of months, growing the trees until they are strong enough and of a good size to be planted by the students at the Washington Park entrance.

Once all the plants are firmly planted in the ground, it is food and beverage time – the students and the invitees receive a drink and a snack and afterwards everyone can sing and dance until it is time to go back to school.

The winners of the drawing competition were:



Anne Los – KolegioKristu Bon Wardador
 Duncan Marsman – Aquamarijn School
 Lars van Veenendaal – Pelikaan School
 Siovager Chirino – Kolegio San Bernardo

Elena Werdath – Kolegio Reina Beatrix
 Eldmar – Kolegio Papa Cornes
 Evior – Watapana School
 And the overall winner is:
Mèrelt Frans – Kolegio San Luis Beltran

One hundred trees are now planted at the entrance of the Washington Slagbaai National Park and will provide shade, shelter and food for birds in years to come. ■
 Story & photos by Anouschka van de Ven

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 Childrens Choir San Bernardo Church
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 Sylvia Ploos (flute & sax)
 Anne Hoemakers (piano)
 Hans Faassen (piano)
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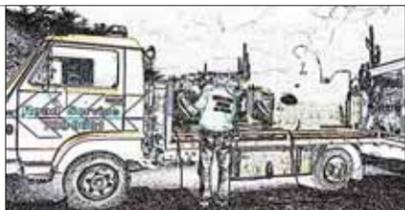
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Guesthouse for rent in Belnem beginning December 10, 2013. Spacious bathroom, kitchenette, bedroom, and outside gazebo "living room." Looking for mature, single woman who loves dogs and gardens. \$550 a month includes power, water, internet, and cable television. Contact Pauline at pkayes@diversityworksinc.net or **700-3800.**

Bonaire-Sun Rise/Set, Moon Phase and Tides

Day	High	Low	High	Low	High	Sunrise	Sunset
	01:56	04:47	12:40	21:45			
Tue 03	0.14 ft	0.12 ft	1.20 ft	-0.20 ft		6:42	18:09
	03:20	05:58	13:33	22:28			
Wed 04	0.19 ft	0.18 ft	1.19 ft	-0.25 ft		6:42	18:09
	04:18	07:33	14:28	23:09			
Thu 05	0.28 ft	0.24 ft	1.15 ft	-0.28 ft		6:43	18:09
	05:04	09:13	15:25	23:49			
Fri 06	0.39 ft	0.29 ft	1.07 ft	-0.29 ft		6:43	18:10
	05:47	10:48	16:21				
Sat 07	0.52 ft	0.30 ft	0.96 ft			6:44	18:10
		00:27	06:30	12:16	17:18		
Sun 08		-0.28 ft	0.66 ft	0.29 ft	0.83 ft	6:44	18:10
	First	01:03	07:13	13:39	18:16		
Mon 09	Quarter	-0.25 ft	0.79 ft	0.24 ft	0.69 ft	6:45	18:11
		01:38	07:55	14:58	19:16		
Tue 10		-0.20 ft	0.90 ft	0.18 ft	0.54 ft	6:45	18:11
		02:11	08:38	16:14	20:18		
Wed 11		-0.14 ft	0.99 ft	0.11 ft	0.40 ft	6:46	18:11
		02:42	09:20	17:27	21:27		
Thu 12		-0.07 ft	1.05 ft	0.04 ft	0.28 ft	6:47	18:12
		03:10	10:02	18:38	22:46		
Fri 13		0.00 ft	1.08 ft	-0.02 ft	0.20 ft	6:47	18:12
		03:31	10:44	19:44			
Sat 14		0.07 ft	1.08 ft	-0.07 ft		6:48	18:13
	00:28	03:36	11:25	20:45			
Sun 15	0.15 ft	0.13 ft	1.06 ft	-0.11 ft		6:48	18:13
	12:05	21:39					
Mon 16	1.03 ft	-0.13 ft				6:49	18:14
	12:45	22:23					

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Sudoku Puzzle

7		2		3				
		4	6					
3					1	9		
9	5					1		
	2			7	5			
		6	1					
8		7						
9			4	8				
3				9	6			

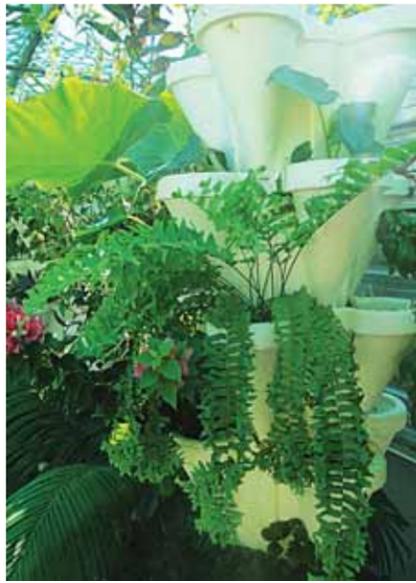
Sudoku Solution

4	8	3	9	1	5	8	2	7
8	7	2	3	4	6	9	5	1
9	1	5	7	8	2	3	4	6
1	8	4	5	6	7	2	3	9
2	3	7	4	9	8	5	1	6
5	9	6	1	2	3	4	7	8
8	5	1	2	7	4	6	8	3
7	2	8	6	3	9	1	5	4
3	4	9	8	5	1	7	4	2

Kunuku Di Mamai Rosa

“A lot of families used to come here to the kunuku at Punta Blanku. My grandmother was very generous.”

If you turn right by Fatima Snack on Lagun road you’ll find Onnie’s hydroponic farm. In order to get there you will have to stop by a group of children playing in a corn field, get them to get their parents, talk to their parents and if they’re kind enough they will drive out in front of you and lead you there over dusty tracks. Onnie Emerenciana received this land from his father who received it from Onnie’s grandmother, Mamai Rosa, after whom the kunuku is named. The kunuku is alive with memories as Onnie fondly recalls the Oliba tree he would climb and all the families that would come from town to farm on their plots. His father said everyone could cultivate some land to grow food.



Bonairean hanging garden



Onnie Emerenciana

Onnie doesn’t live on his kunuku but he tries to be there every weekend. Lately he’s had a slight glitch in his farming – he is currently president of Tene Boneiru Limpi (the organization responsible for the cleaning campaigns in different barrios or neighborhoods.) I asked if that was a job and he replied it was just volunteering. This seemed odd at first since the majority of people are in the sea or in a ditch on the weekend but after hearing his resume of jobs and volunteering positions it made more sense. I can’t really do it justice without stepping on Greta’s “On the island since” articles! All I can say is he is an extraordinary person, back on Bonaire since 2000 and currently a School Attendant Officer who makes sure children stay in attendance until the age of 18 as well as a promoter of agriculture.

Outside the house built (by Onnie) over the original wooden house are a small maze of greenhouses. Onnie is very composed and relaxed, but he gets things done. *“I built everything alone. You have to invest something to get something. You see those beams? I had to use oil drums and lift them step by step.”* It is quite some weekend hobby – while some come out of their garage with a toy truck, Onnie comes out with a network of greenhouses, wind breaks, borders and irrigation. He confesses that his main job is keeping everything clean now. In his seedling station he has wooden trays and herbs like mint, parsley and chives growing. In his potting sta-

tion he has an army of Beefy Tomato and Warmoos (chard). *“I grow almost everything,”* he says.

Under an open area is his *pièce de résistance*: his Bonairean hanging garden of Babylon. A hydroponic system which is a series of stacked units that fit 16 plants in one column. He can water at the top and it drips down slowly to the bottom levels. Here he has gone for a little show with ornamental plants mixed with edibles. In the eye candy corner you have ferns, dracaena, wandering jew, curazon, lilies, and in the savory corner you will find broccoli, onion, oregano and dill. The story of how he procured these is somewhat amusing, *“a Dutch man donated these to Kriabon. No one knew what they were and no one wanted them so I came in and took them all!”* He laughs. *“You have to be in the right place at the right time.”*

Next to the hydroponic area is an extremely lush, long length of un-irrigated beds. This is quite some production of local cucumber (the small spiny ones you can stew), various chilis, peppers and Malabar spinach. This is quite an amazing amount of production considering it’s still a weekend hobby. Due to his obligations though he missed seeding a huge irrigated area where he normally plants watermelon before the rain starts. Just when you think you’re finished there is one long irrigated tunnel where he has two types of okra (the regular pointy and a rounder variety), eggplant and beans (*bonchi kunuku*). *“He adds, Everyone loves bonchi kunuku!”* As for his planting technique in his un-irrigated beds he mixes either chicken or goat manure into the soil and places leaves or shredded plant materials on top to hold in the moisture. In permaculture this is called mulching but Onnie has figured this out through his own experience.

Onnie actually has had a vision to become a farmer for a long time – to make his hobby his work long ago. He would buy things in Curacao when he was on trips during his days in the senate of the Bonairean government. He could get cheaper materials over there. Over the years he has collected a range of toys – again *“you have to be in the right place at the right time.”* He has a diesel generator which lights up all his shade houses (although his children don’t like it when he stays in the evening!),



Views of the shade house and garden



Photo credits – Stephanie Rendall



a wood chipper which he uses to break down corn stalks for mulching and a motorized tiller. He also has a rainwater collection as well as a gigantic dam. They are utilized with a submersible pump.

Afterwards, we toured some ruins of traditional houses in nearby Washikemba. As we walked through paths maintained by Onnie he talks about the hidden caves his father would take him to after fishing to show their Arawak heritage. One day he would also like to make tours of this his-

torical area as well as his kunuku. Whatever happens the spirit of Mamai Rosa is definitely alive. ■ *Clark Heijbroek, Freelance web designer and landscape architect*

If you are interested in sharing your gardening passion please E-mail c.heijbroek@gmail.com

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BEAUTY

Bon Bida Spa Therapeutic Massage — Certified masseuse offers the best conventional massages, sports massage, after-dive massage and more. Ask for **Inge Bruijn**.

Beauty Inside Outs— Center for skin care and beauty treatments. Luxury facials, manicures, pedicures, massage, makeup and waxing. Kaya J.A. Abraham #25.

Face Clinic of Bonaire offers anti aging treatments under the care of a medical professional. Injectibles like Botox and Hyaluronic Acid available. Call or email for a free consultation. 7950827, info@fceclinicbonaire.com

CARS AND BIKES

De Freewieler sells bikes and all kinds of bike accessories. They do professional repairs on almost anything on two wheels. **Have your keys made here too.**

Want to see You See Your Business' Advertisement Here? Contact The Reporter at 786-6518 / 795-9332 or email laura@bonairereporter.com. Your "bottom line" will look better as a result of advertising with us.

DENTURE REPAIR

All Denture Lab—for the best denture care by an experienced professional. Repairs while you wait. Next to Botika Korona on Kaya J. G. Hernandez.

ON and IN the WATER

Budget Marine has what anyone with a boat needs, and if it's not in stock they can order it quickly. You can also find special hardware for general use and components for solar and wind electric systems.

Dive Friends has four dive schools and three retail shops so you always get the best deals and can be assured of top notch training. Remodeled shop, Dushi Shoes on Kaya Grandi, open now.

GARDEN SUPPLIES AND SERVICES

Green Label has everything you need to start or maintain your garden. They can design, install and maintain it and offer plants, irrigation supplies and garden chemicals. Off Kaya Industria, behind Lucky Supermarket.

HOME CARE

VanEps Property Management B.V./Bonaire Second Home Care can handle all the needs of second home owners on Bonaire including inspection, management and cleaning.

OPTICIAN

Buena Vista Optics is Bonaire's most up-to-date place to get eyeglasses or contact lenses. The combination of experienced personnel and advanced equipment and technology make it a top value

PHOTOGRAPHER

Bonaire's creative above or underwater video and still photographer for the wedding or other important events in your life. ScubaVision, Kaya Grandi 6. See website scubavision.info or ScubaVision on YouTube

REAL ESTATE /RENTAL AGENTS

Caribbean Homes, "the Refreshing Realtor," specializing in luxury homes, condos, lots, rentals and property management. Yacht sales too.



Sunbelt Realty offers full real estate, rental, and insurance services. If you want a home or to invest in Bonaire, stop in and visit.



RESTAURANTS

Bistro de Paris— Waterfront location at the Harbour Village Marina. Superb menu, genuine French dishes in a waterfront ambiance. Airoc if you want it. Its Zazu Bar is a very popular hangout for divers too.

La Balandra at The Harbour Village Resort offers Bonaire's most spectacular setting. Superb cuisine, top notch service. Eat on the deck or with your feet in the sand.

Pasa Bon Pizza—Bonaire's quality pizza-Best ingredients, best baking and best taste. Great salads and lasagna too. Eat in or take away.

Unbelievable Restaurant is offers rooftop terrace dining with a view of Kralendijk bay, a fine menu specializing in prime steaks and seafood. Just a short walk from downtown or southern "hotel row."

RETAIL

Benetton, world famous designer clothes available now in Bonaire at prices less than those in US. For men, women and children.

Bona Dea is Bonaire's newest Caribbean lifestyle shop featuring good taste gifts, apparel, shoes, accessories and home décor

SECURITY

Special Security Services will provide that extra measure of protection when you need it. Always reliable.

STORAGE

The Storehouse (Mangazina in Papiamentu) offers Secure Storage for Vehicles, Household Items, Diving and Sporting Gear, Business Files or Inventory. Across from the northern hotel row.



SHIPPING

Rocargo Freight Air and sea shipments in/out of Bonaire. Customs agents. Professional and efficient. **FedEx agent. What would we do without their superb services?**



SPAS/GYM/HEALTH

Bon Bida Spa & Gym World Class fitness and health facility- Classes, top notch machines, trainers. Day, monthly or annual rates. Massages by Certified Therapist Inge Bruijn,



SUPERMARKETS

TOP Supermarket—

Conveniently located **downtown** at the old Culti-mara location. Featuring a complete selection including liquors, fresh meat, fruit and vegetables.



Warehouse Supermarket on Kaya Industria—Big air conditioned market with a friendly staff, the largest selection and lowest prices on the island. They stock what you need.



MADE ON BONAIRE

Semper Kontentu goat cheese. Ask for it at restaurants and look for it in the markets. Lovingly handmade. Souvenir mugs available.

VARIETY STORE

The Tung Fong Store is a great asset to everyone on Bonaire because it stocks so many things we want: clothes, hardware, food, auto and bike supplies. If you don't see it... ask for it. They probably have it.

WATER TAXI

Get to Klein Bonaire by Ferry. Ride the *Kantika di Amor*. Hotel or downtown pickup The only water taxi to Klein Bonaire with an easy on/off built-in ramp at Bonaire Nautico (It Rains Fishes Restaurant)



A great new shop devoted exclusively to toys opened just in time for the holiday gift-giving season. The well-loved Addo's Books and Toys store on Kaya Grandi downtown doubled into two shops. The original shop will exclusively sell books and stationery supplies. The new shop, around the corner on Kaya L.D.Gerharts, opposite the MCB Bank, will only sell toys. And what great toys they have. You'll find the top American and European brands that are great fun and safe for the kids.

The original bookstore looks more spacious without the clutter of toys. The ambience is more restful and agreeable to browsers. The decor is a bit reminiscent of Dutch bookstores. They have a broad assortment of books, both fiction and non-fiction, and great coffee-table souvenir books. Titles are mostly Dutch, but there are numerous English and Spanish language books too.

Service is helpful and efficient in both stores and the staff is most accommodating. They offer fun miles and attractive gift wrapping free of charge too. Pass by and take a look. We readers and our children need a place like Addo's to let us remember we are part on the civilized world. ■ G.D.



BONAIRE SKY PARK*

*to find it... just look up

FUN N THE DECEMBER SKY PARK

Shootings stars, planets, and perhaps a comet make the end of 2013 a fun time to look at the night sky.

Comet ISON may provide quite a show in December - right now we just do not know. When the comet was first discovered late last year astronomers thought it might become a very bright comet. Now it is possible the comet could still turn out to be fairly good, or it might never reach naked-eye visibility at all. So, keep looking up in the Bonaire Sky Park and check on the web to find out the latest on this comet.

As comets orbit the **Sun** they leave behind clouds of dust particles. When the **Earth** passes through one of these clouds we see a **meteor shower**. **December 13th to 14th is the maximum of the Geminids Meteor Shower**. Perhaps the best of all meteor showers, the Geminids can produce up to 120 multicolored meteors per hour at its peak. Moonlight will block out some of the meteors this year, but the Geminids are so bright and numerous that it should still be a good show. The best time to look for meteors is between **midnight and dawn**.

As the evening sky grows dark the first star-like object you will see is in the southwestern sky. This is the planet **Venus**. Just before 8pm the largest planet **Jupiter** will rise in the east. Wait a few hours and Jupiter will climb higher in the sky and you will easily spot this bright star-like object in the northeastern sky. The red planet **Mars** rises in the east around 1am. Again, wait a few hours for Mars to climb higher in the sky and it will be easy to locate.

Every year at this time people ask astronomers if they know what was the star of stars, the star which led the Wise Men to Bethlehem at the time of the birth of Jesus? Long ago people thought of everything that they saw in the night sky as a "star." Thus, the planets, the "fixed" stars, meteors, comets, etc. all were "stars." So what might have been "The Star?" Mete-



ors or shooting stars happen so quickly that if you see one, by the time you tell your friends to look, the flash will be gone. Certainly a meteor did not send the Wise Men to Bethlehem. Comets were well known, but were considered omens of bad tidings and thus a comet would not send the Wise Men in search of a great king. The fixed stars do not change from year to year, so they would not account for the search. For time to time a star may "explode" as a nova or supernova, and for a short time may even become visible in the daytime. But, our records show no "guest star" at the time of Christ's birth.

The Wise Men followed the motions of the planets as these "wandering stars" moved against the background of fixed stars, for they believed that the motions of these wandering stars could foretell the future. With their knowledge of the motions of the heavens they could calculate that Jupiter and **Saturn** would pass each other three times and then be joined by Mars. But, what of Herod and his advisors, why did they not see this "star?" Most of the event would not be visible because it would happen during the day. But, the Wise Men knew that it was happening. They knew that this event would take place in **Pisces, the Fish**, a star group which for them was symbolic of the Hebrews. Thus some great event would take place in the land of the Hebrews and the Wise Men were off on their search. Was this meeting of the planets really "The Star?" Astronomers do not know; the final decision is yours. ■ David Reneke



Looking Ahead

By Astrologer Michael Thiessen

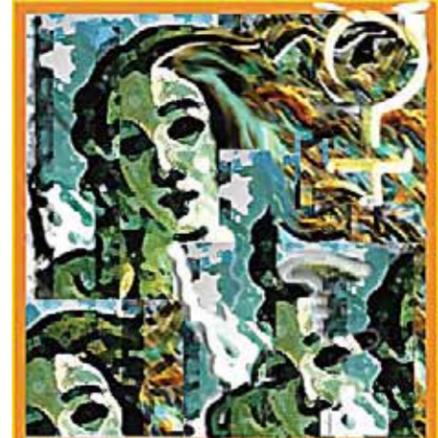
December 2013

In a departure from our usual Astrological column format in this edition we offer a different look at the upcoming month's astrological events;

Saddle up. The first two weeks of December are stellar for launching new endeavors or making changes around your home or office that will help you in the future. The main event in the Skywatch is expansive Jupiter lining up in a balanced trine to realistic Saturn on December 12. This marker usually sparks an uptick in optimism and hope in all of us and suggests a good time for business expansion and growth. This is also a good marker for dealing with the law, publishing, travel and foreign concerns, education and for sales and advertising your product.

A New Moon on December 2 in Sagittarius lines up in a trine to innovative Uranus in Aries in the heavens which feeds more good energy into this scenario. Plant seeds and get the ball rolling on a new project in the days between this New Moon and the next Full Moon on December 17. And put your original ideas out there—Uranus sparks the genius side in all of us and everybody has something important to contribute.

Complications. Venus turns Retrograde on December 21 and will remain in this cloudy state until January 31, 2014. Get your holiday shopping done before this Rx starts, although you may be able to find bargains during this part of Venus' cycle if you are a well-educated consumer. This Rx cycle makes it difficult to see the value, the real essence of a new person you meet at this time, and this turns on the caution lights regarding relationship decisions. So this is not a good time to propose marriage or to initiate a divorce. You may change your mind completely once Venus resumes direct motion and wish you had never gotten engaged. Established relationships usually go through a small test of fire as a new issue/challenge arises, but there are typically no lingering effects after the issue is discussed and the Rx cycle ends. Be patient with people and let this cycle pass without final judgment before you burn bridges in any of your important relationships.



Venus Retrograde

Caution lights are also up around making expensive, first time purchases. You may not really know what you are buying/selling and may be fooled by appearances during Venus Rx. If you bought a share of Facebook at \$38 when it first came out, during the last Venus Rx, you know what I mean. This same confusion will lead others to undervalue their boat or house for sale and thus someone who buys it gets a very good deal.

Christmas Day has a series of stressful markers that begin with Mars opposite Uranus early that morning. More grumpy aspects follow. And with Venus Rx complicating matters, you'll be better off simplifying your plans rather than trying to outdo past celebrations this year.

Explosive energy is coming in the final three days of the month as Mars squares Pluto and a giant Cardinal Grand Cross appears in the heavens New Year's Eve. As suddenly we look up and see five planets all bunched together in Capricorn with dangerous Pluto sitting next to the Sun and Moon—all lined up opposite to Jupiter in Cancer and all square to Uranus in Aries and Mars in Libra who are opposite each other. Accidents, arguments and much worse are the curse of Mars, Pluto and Uranus—think twice about where you celebrate and how you are getting home on New Year's Eve. ■

AMAZING MBO SUCCESS



Inside group (top)/
Outside group (bottom)



With a focus on "The Right to Play," *MBO students worked on a project that ended on November 20, the Day of Children's Rights.

The students are studying to be teachers and community workers, Levels 3 and 4 of MBO. They have been studying for three months in their first year and already they have surprised us teachers with their great organizational skills and their passion to educate children in a fun and safe environment.

Two groups were formed of each 11 or 12 students who had several meetings about this project during three weeks, under the supervision of Vanessa Daniel (me, their teacher). They did everything themselves - designing or selecting games, sending invitations, grocery shopping, preparing food and drinks, decoration, music, sound, guiding the games and the whole coordination of this day. They also worked together with other students from the media and technical sectors. So they also have skills to get other youth to spend their time in a good thing and helping each other.

One group organized inside activities for children between the ages of four to eight. This group made up all of the games themselves. Their names are: Mariana Cicilia, Leandra Janga, Cassandra Martijn, Neftely Martines, Christal Janga, Gilda Meilaan, Lubienske Dooper, Samantha Clarendra, Marivie Anthony, Shila Trom, Guillauma Coffie & Maria Fernanda Ortiz.

The daycare Kresh Bon Kwido participated in the activities along with our own day care in school, "Plan, Learn and Create Your Future" (run by third year students, Shourena Casseres and Perlita Trom, under supervision of Emily Kocks and Suzette Bergland).

The other group organized activities outside for children from six to 12 years. This group had a lot of fun activities outside. They thought of energetic things that were appropriate for their participants. Their names are: Kelsey Domacasse, Jocelyn Herrera, Herbertson Bernabela, Luthvienne Martines, Charissa Mercelina, Diandra Pietersz, Melissa Rendon, Desire Soliana, Monika Bernabela & Alciane Charmant.

Students from media who also helped out are Shaiky Engelhart, Dylan Robes, Nigel Trom, Elrick Thielman and Peter Haaiman.

One student of administration also assisted as our MC, Wintley Raven.

And I worked under supervision of Emily Kocks (coordinator of social sector) and Dinie Wijnmaalen (manager MBO Bonaire) ■ Vanessa Daniel, MBO teacher

* The MBO (*middelbaar beroepsonderwijs*; literally, "middle-level applied education") is oriented towards vocational training. Many pupils with a VMBO-diploma attend MBO. The MBO lasts 1 to 4 years. After MBO (4 years), pupils can enroll in HBO or the job market.

DID YOU KNOW?

Young corals have a lot to worry about before they can make it to adulthood, like hoping they don't become another animal's next meal? After reefs become damaged, it is important that new coral larvae can settle and grow to replace the damaged coral. Even after a coral larva finds a home to settle on, it is still in danger of being eaten by coral predators, also known as corallivores. One of these predators is a species of fire worm called *Hermodice carunculata*, which is found all over tropical and temperate reefs.



<http://reefguide.org/caribbean.html#fireworm15.html>

Scientists recently conducted a study to see just how much fire worms affect coral settlers and adults. They discovered a strong relationship between the size of the fire worm and the amount of coral that was eaten. They found that the smaller the fire worm is, the more coral it will eat! Similarly, there was a connection between the size of the coral and its survival; adult corals were barely ever preyed upon compared to new settlers. It is important to understand the feeding habits of these corallivores because they are one of the reasons for the death of young corals. If coral settlers are unable to make it to adulthood, the recovery of the coral colony may not be possible, threatening the survival of some coral species. ■ Jennifer Shaffer

Jennifer Shaffer is an Aquatic and Fishery Sciences major and Marine Biology minor at the University of Washington. She is currently studying on Bonaire at the CIEE Research Station.



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WHAT'S HAPPENING

CLOSE-IN EVENTS

Friday, Saturday, Dec. 6, 7—X-mas Car Show, Auto City, more on page 12

Friday, Dec. 6- Art in Fashion
Exhibition and sale of antique and vintage costume jewelry from the collection of Alix van Hees 9:30am to 7pm. Also on Sat., Dec. 7, 9:30am-5:30pm, at Image Women, Kaya L.D. Gerhardt's 4

Saturday Dec. 7- Christmas Farmers' Market at Kriabon, 8 am to 1 pm, at Kriabon, Kaminda Yatu Bako #55, next to Aquamarin School. More on page 14

-Annual Animal Shelter Art Auction and Indonesian Dinner, Hotel Roomer. See page 23. More information on www.BonaireAnimalShelter.com, their [facebook page](http://facebook.com/auctionbonaire) or <http://http://auctionbonaire.tumblr.com>.

Friday, Saturday, Dec. 13-14-Geminids Meteor Shower. More on page 19

Saturday, Dec. 14-Holiday Concert, Classical Music Board Bonaire, Plaza Hotel, 8 pm. More page 3

SATURDAY December 14, 2013 at 8 P.M.
* Caciqou Hall Plaza Resort Bonaire
classicalmusicboardbonaire
Bonaire plays for Bonaire
Childrens Choir San Bernardo Church
Anne Marie Kors (vocals)
Sylvia Ploos (flute & sax)
Anne Hoemakers (piano)
Hans Faassen (piano)
plus others to be announced
Listen to classical music, jazz ballads, soul music, Christmas songs.
After show party with CREME DE LA CREME
DECEMBER HOLIDAY CONCERT

Sunday, Dec. 15—Kaminda di Arte. More on page 6.

3e zondag van de maand 2013-2014
Kaminda di Arte
Kaminda di Arte is the largest cultural platform for the island of Bonaire.
Dinsdag 11.00 - 18.00 uur
Kunstuurde te bekijken tot
K3 - Bonaire
Kunstuurde - Bonaire
Data kunstuurde:
17 november 2013 - 15 december 2013
19 januari 2014 - 16 februari - 16 maart 2014
Artists: Jose Smit, Margriet Faassen Ploos, Ulliko Klein, Josabbe Spring, Alencio Roume, Jansje Huisman, The Reporter - Spoorlijn, Angique, Antillani Douglas, Suzy's Creative Bonaire

Sunday, Dec. 15—Skol di Musika Free Musical Performance, 1:30-4:30pm, Caciqou Hall, Plaza Resort. Skol di Musika students and teachers perform a varied program, ranging from pop to classical music. More information: Hans Faassen, 796-2067 / hansfaassen@gmail.com

REGULAR EVENTS

Rooi Lamoenchi Kunuku Park Tours \$21 (includes tax). Discounts for residents and local people. Tel. 717-8489, 540-9800.

Saturdays

• **Last Saturday of the month** – donate foods and household items to Food Bank (*Stichting voedselbank Bonaire*) from 10 am-4 pm, in front of Van den Tweel Supermarket

• **Open House at Semper Kontentu milk goat farm. Second Saturday of the month**, 8 am to 12 noon. 786-6950

• **Marshe di Kunukeru (Farmers' Market) 1st Saturday of the month**, at Kriabon, Kaminda Jatu Baco #55, next to Aquamarin School, 8 am to 1 pm.

• **Bonaire Animal Shelter's "Garage Sale" Pakus di Pruga—every Saturday**, 8am-5pm. At Kaminda Liberador Simon Bolivar, across from Brandaris Café. Tel. 717-4989. Drop off cast offs on Saturdays or at the Shelter on the Lagoen Road weekdays. 717-4989

• **Wine Tasting at Antillean Wine Company's warehouse** on Kaya Industria, **Second Saturday of the month**, 7-9 pm. (*Always call to make sure it's on: Tel. +5999-560-7539.*) Snacks and tasting of six wines for \$10 per person.

• **Soldachi Tours—See the real Bonaire and be transported back in time.** Learn about the history, culture and nature by Bonaireans from Rincon. Call Maria Koeks for more information—796-7870.

• **Petanque- Jeu de Boules**, Saturdays 2:30 pm Tera Cora Ranch. Info: 786-0150

Sundays

• **Kunuku Arawak** - Music, drinks, local food, dancing, 10 am—6 pm. Live music starts at 4 pm. Tel.786-7210

Mondays

• **Soldachi Tours of Rincon, the heart of Bonaire, 9 am-noon. \$20-Call Maria, 717-6435– Bonaire's best island tour value**

• **Meet the Captain Night at Captain Don's Habitat Bar**– Get up close and personal with Bonaire's dive pioneer. The Captain will autograph your copy of his newest book *Reef Windows*.

Wednesdays

Divemaster's Night at Bistro de Paris Restaurant at Harbour Village Marina. Free house rum when you buy a coke.

30-minute Meditation at Yoga Bonaire, 12 noon, Bonaire Basics. Donation. 786-6416 or info@bonaireyoga.com

Fridays

Happy Hour party at Bistro Di Paris. Ricky Thomas performs Reggae, Soul, Latin and more 6- 9pm.

FREE SLIDE/VIDEO SHOWS

Monday - Touch the Sea -- Will resume in November- Dee Scarr, honored as a member of the Women Divers Hall of Fame, conducts Bonaire's Touch the Sea programs of personalized dive guiding. She presents a unique perspective on critters and corals, plus an up-

dated Bonaire lionfish report, **every Monday when she's on-island** at 8:30 pm in the Aquarius Conference Center at Captain Don's Habitat, Call 717-8290.

Wednesday - Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB) presents an informative slide show: *Sea Turtles of Bonaire*, at 8pm, every **2nd and 4th Wednesday** in the conference room at Captain Don's Habitat (717-8290)

BONAIRE'S TRADITIONS

Mangasina di Rei, Rincon. Enjoy the view from "The King's Storehouse." Learn about Bonaire's culture. Visit homes from the 17th century. Daily. Call 717-4060 / 790-2018

Museo Sentro Chichi'Tan, historical home, behind Rose Inn, Rincon, open 10am-4pm daily. Tel. 786-6420

Washington-Slagbaai National Park Museum and Visitors' Center. Open daily 8 am-5 pm. Closed on December 25th and January 1st. **Call 788 - 9015 or 796 - 5681**

CLUBS and MEETINGS

Bridge Club - Every Wednesday, Bridge Club on Bonaire. 19:15, contact Jeroen Seegers for information tel. 717-4200 or 788-2819 or jeroen@telbonet.an

Darts Club plays every other Sunday at City Café. Registration at 4, games at 5. Tel. 717-2950, 560-7539.

Lions Club meets every **2nd and 4th Thursday** of the month at 8 pm at Kaya Sabana #1. All Lions welcome. For more information call 510-0710.

Rotary lunch meetings Wednesdays, 12:15-2 pm - Divi Flamingo Beach Resort in Peter Hughes meeting room upstairs above the dive shop. All Rotarians welcome. Call Gregory Obersi 785-9446.

Toastmasters Club meets every two weeks. For more information call Crusita de Palm at 786-3827 or Lucia Martinez Beck, at 786-2953.

CHURCH SERVICES

Protestant Congregation of Bonaire: (VPGB), Kralendijk, Plaza Wilhelmina; Sunday service-10 am in Dutch.

Rincon, Kaya C.D. Crestian; Sunday service-8:30 am in Papiamentu/Dutch.

Children's club-every Saturday from 4:30-6 pm in Kralendijk, (annex of the church.) Contact; Marytjin@gmail.com or Daisycoffie@hotmail.com

International Bible Church, Kaya Papago 104, Hato, behind Bon Fysio/Bon Bida Spa & Gym on Kaya Gob. N. De-

brot. Sunday 9am-Worship service in English; 10:45am-Sunday school for all ages. Tuesday 7:30 pm-Adult Bible study class. 717-8377 for more info or ride bonaireibc@yahoo.com

Catholic: San Bernardus in Kralendijk – Services, Sunday at 8 am and 7 pm in Papiamentu, 717-8304.

Our Lady of Coromoto in Antriol, Saturday at 6 pm in English. Mass in Papiamentu on Sunday at 9 am and 6 pm. 717-4211.

Assembly of God (Asemblea di Dios): Kaya Triton (Den Cheffi). In English, Dutch & Papiamentu on Sunday at 10 am. Wed. Prayer Meeting at 7:30 pm. 717-2194

Ministerio di Kristu Hesus Services Sunday mornings at 10 am at Jong Bonaire Youth Center in English, Dutch and Papiamentu. Preaching the full gospel. Contact: 786-2557.

Prayer and Intercession Church, in English. A full Gospel Church located temporarily at Kaya Alexandrit # 20, Santa Barbara, Republiek. Services are held Sunday mornings 10am-11:30am. Bible studies in English on Monday nights from 7-8 pm. Contact: 717-3322

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: Kaya Sabana #26, Sundays: 9 am Sacrament Services (Translation to English and Papiamentu upon request) 10:20am- Sunday School, 11:15 RS/YM/YW/PH Primary held from 10:20-12 noon Visitors welcome: Information: Call 701-9522 .

Foundation Fountain of Living Waters, Centro Fuente, Service Sunday at Kaya Aruaco 4 at 6 pm, in Papiamentu and Spanish. For Marriage Counseling, contact 717-2161.

Iglesia di Cristo (Church of Christ) Sunday: 10:30am & 7pm; Wednesday: 7pm. Services in Papiamentu (English also if needed) Address: Kaya Msgr. Nieuwindt 25 (same street as Dr. Dorvil) Cell: 796-0721 email: iglesiadicristobonaire@gmail.com

Call The Reporter at 786-6518 if you have something HAPPENING

Cruise Ship Tentative Schedule

DAY	DATE	NAME	ARR/DEP	PAX	Cruise Line
Tuesday	03---Dec--	<i>Ventura</i>	0800---1800	3080	P&O Cruises
Tuesday	03---Dec--	<i>Vision of the Seas</i>	0800---1800	2446	Celebrity/RCCL
Wednesday	04---Dec--	<i>Rotterdam</i>	0800---2359	1920	HAL
Tuesday	10---Dec--	<i>Vision of the Seas</i>	0800---1800	2446	Celebrity/RCCL
Wednesday	11---Dec--	<i>Aida Luna</i>	0800---1800	2194	Aida Cruises
Wednesday	11---Dec--	<i>Noordam</i>	0800---1700	1920	HAL
Sunday	15---Dec--	<i>Emerald Princess</i>	1200---1900	3200	Princess Cruises
Monday	16---Dec--	<i>Maasdam</i>	0700---1700	1258	HAL
Monday	16---Dec--	<i>Legend of the Seas</i>	0700---1400	2435	Celebrity/RCCL

No More Power Failures

ContourGlobal, the newly contracted operator of Bonaire's electric power plant, wants to expand its power production capacity on the island.

The number of outages on Bonaire since the acquisition of the electric power plant from Eco Power by Contour Global - six months ago - have declined sharply. The question that everyone is asking is: will blackouts be no more?

In a speech, Stefan Dijkers, Managing Director for the Caribbean Region explained, "We've made a lot of effort to bring production to a stable level. If we had not, really serious things might have happened. The situation that we saw can be compared best with a car that has not been serviced for three years. I do not mean that as a criticism. During all those years some people were working hard to maintain operation when there was no money for maintenance.

What we have done in those six months is not immediately noticeable to the consumer. But I can assure you that we are avoiding complications. Attention has also been paid to safety. Such a plant can be a dangerous thing. There is, therefore, a lot of training. We've gone through the million dollars we had set aside for that.

Now we are in the first stage - making the production process more stable - by expanding the diesel plant. This is necessary in order to meet demand as the wind drops, but also to have spare capacity and for maintenance (as when a generator is down for maintenance).

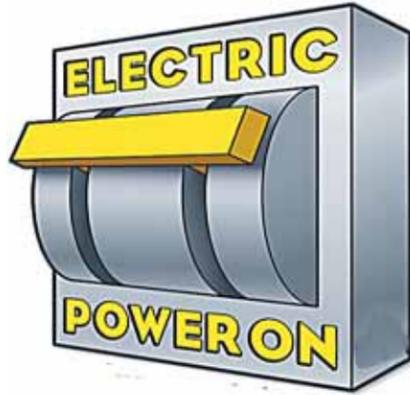
Step 2 is the development of a solar farm.

While we are originally an American company headquartered in New York state, it's not our style to come in somewhere and say they must do it our way. We are guests in a country and we want to behave well."

The upcoming expansion involves an investment of around \$10 million.

ContourGlobal, established in 2005, operates 33 power plants in 17 countries and has a turnover of \$1 billion with a total output of 3,000 megawatts. Bonaire contributes 24 megawatts to that total.

"We were interested in taking over from Eco Power earlier than we did," Dijkers went on, "but for a foreign company like ours it was too complicated to be able to see what would happen with the political climate." But in December 2012, we came back. We saw a situation that was a lot healthier and clearer than in 2010. WEB was also put in order. We had to re-



research the situation and that took until May 15 this year. We always consider the political risks and the fact that Bonaire is integrated with The Netherlands has certainly played a role in our decision.

To answer the question of whether Bonaire is too small for ContourGlobal, we are in business to provide people energy. We do that in Africa, Latin America, Europe and former Soviet countries. In late 2010, we acquired two small plants in French St. Martin and Guadeloupe."

About electric rates Dijkers says, "It's very difficult to change the past. Our predecessors chose to build a very beautiful plant, but it was at a price which is more expensive than if you would have built a conventional plant. The largest component in the rates are the fuel costs." Dijkers believes that the islands should go fuel shopping to have a stronger negotiating position when buying expensive oil.

He added that they are trying for better efficiency. "We are doing so already, including improving the output of the diesel generators which was gradually decreased by the lack of maintenance. The construction of a solar park is also intended to prevent an immediate start of the diesels when the wind drops.

We think about letting the people of the island participate in the solar park, perhaps through shares. A central solar park works better than any individual solar on a roof."

Priority number one for Dijkers is to ensure that there are no power interruptions. "ContourGlobal finds outages unacceptable. Each of our more than 1,500 employees is firmly convinced how much it affects the lives of people when the lights go out. Aside from the possibility of lightning strikes we want no interruptions in 2014." ■ G.D.

Pet of the Week

Sweet "Juny" is enjoying the company of Bonaire Animal Shelter volunteers, Floor and Lilian. What a happy pup! Juny was found on the streets when he was only six weeks old and has now become, at the age of one year and two months, one of the longest residents at the Shelter.

This handsome brindle colored male is considered one of the top adoptees because he has such a fine character - calm and self assured; he gets along well with people as well as other dogs. Once settled into his new home he can become be a vigilant and reliable watch dog.

As are the other adoptees at the Shelter Juny is in excellent health, has been examined by the vet, had his shots, been wormed and neutered, and most of all, is totally socialized. You may see Juny and the other cats and dogs up for adoption at the Shelter on the Lagoen Road, open Monday through Saturday, 9 am to 1 pm and 3 to 5 pm. Tel. 717-4989. There is a



Floor, Lilian and Juny

great website at www.BonaireAnimalShelter.com. See them on Facebook too.

Good news:

Our Pet of the Week in the last edition, Victoria the cat, has been adopted right after her photo and story appeared in *The Reporter*. We wish lots of love and happiness to Victoria and her new family. ■

Laura DeSalvo

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Who'll Stop The Rain?.....The Shelter Auction Can!



Despite routine maintenance, repairs and modifications, the cat compound can barely survive another rainy season. When the rain finally stops, the compound remains wet and damp for hours. But it is a space that the shelter cannot afford to lose until something else is available.

Rainy season is just beginning, and that's not good news for the cats at the Bonaire Animal Shelter cat compound. Every big downpour conjures up images of Noah's Ark....cats and kittens lined up on the highest available shelf to be rescued from the deluge. Yes, it's THAT bad! Between the leaking roof, the blowing rain, the lack of gutters and the rotting wood there is not a single floor level dry space in the entire compound when it rains. And to make matters worse, if the litter boxes are not precisely and strategically positioned in expectation of rain, they become giant bowls of wet concrete or really nasty soup. If there is one thing a cat hates more than being wet....it's not having a nice, clean bathroom!

More than 15 years ago the communal cat compound was built to accommodate the increasing number of cats and kittens arriving at the shelter. That space allowed the shelter to increase its "residential" facility to accommodate a maximum of 20 adults or up to 25 if it is a mix of adults and kittens. It served its purpose well but has definitely outlived its usefulness, for reasons other than just its structural integrity.

Based on shelter statistics, since 2008 cat intake has increased more than 64%! (During that same period the average dog intake increase was less than 10%.) Despite increased adoption numbers and the shelter's free sterilization campaign, each year the number of abandoned or unwanted cats increases. Whatever the cause, the shelter is determined to attempt to meet the increased demand with a safe, dry and healthy cat facility.

Proceeds from the last shelter auction in 2011 funded the building of replacement kennels for the dilapidated dog quarantine area used for housing new arrivals. The new kennels are big, bright, cheery...and DRY! This year, the cats get the last meow! Shelter board president, and office manager for Jacobs Architects, Paul Wichers listened to the "wish-kers list" and came up with a dream design for a new cat compound, which will be built if this year's auction raises enough funds.

The kitten/new arrival area is an especially needed improvement. New arrivals can be segregated from the current residents, while still being able to see and smell them, until they are accustomed to the new space. A "feeding station" in the living/dining area will provide ant-free food (another recur-



The new cat care facility will not only increase the size of the cat compound but its design will be a much healthier and safer environment. The space will be divided into three separate areas which can be closed off from the others as the need arises: a "living/dining area", a litter box area and a kitten/new arrival area which will include an exam station for veterinary services

ring problem) and perches and play areas will be made from concrete or other water resistant material to prevent deterioration due to daily cleaning with bleach and water (a must to maintain a sanitary environment).

This "dream" space will be a bright, dry, and healthy environment for the feline residents of the shelter. However, it can only "come true" with your help. Please attend the auction and bid your highest to help raise the funds to accomplish this goal. As with the 2011 auction, it is highly probable that a Dutch foundation will donate funding equal to the amount raised at this year's auction. So please come to the auction and participate as every dollar you spend will double in value. Please be one of those people "who'll stop the rain" and contribute to a new and healthier environment for the shelter cats. **The auction is this Saturday, December 7, 8pm at Hotel Roomer in Belnem. Admission is free. Tickets are also available (\$35) for an Indonesian Dinner prepared by master chefs and served prior to the auction (6-7:30pm). For more information, call the Shelter at 717-4989. ■ Jane Mad-den-Disko**



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