


Power Thought for the Day!



By PASTOR PHIL NORDIN
www.powerthought.ca

Be quick to encourage and comfort others. At times, we have all been hurt or discouraged – but others gave us comfort. Purpose to comfort others when they face difficulties. “He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When others are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.”
– 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (NLT)

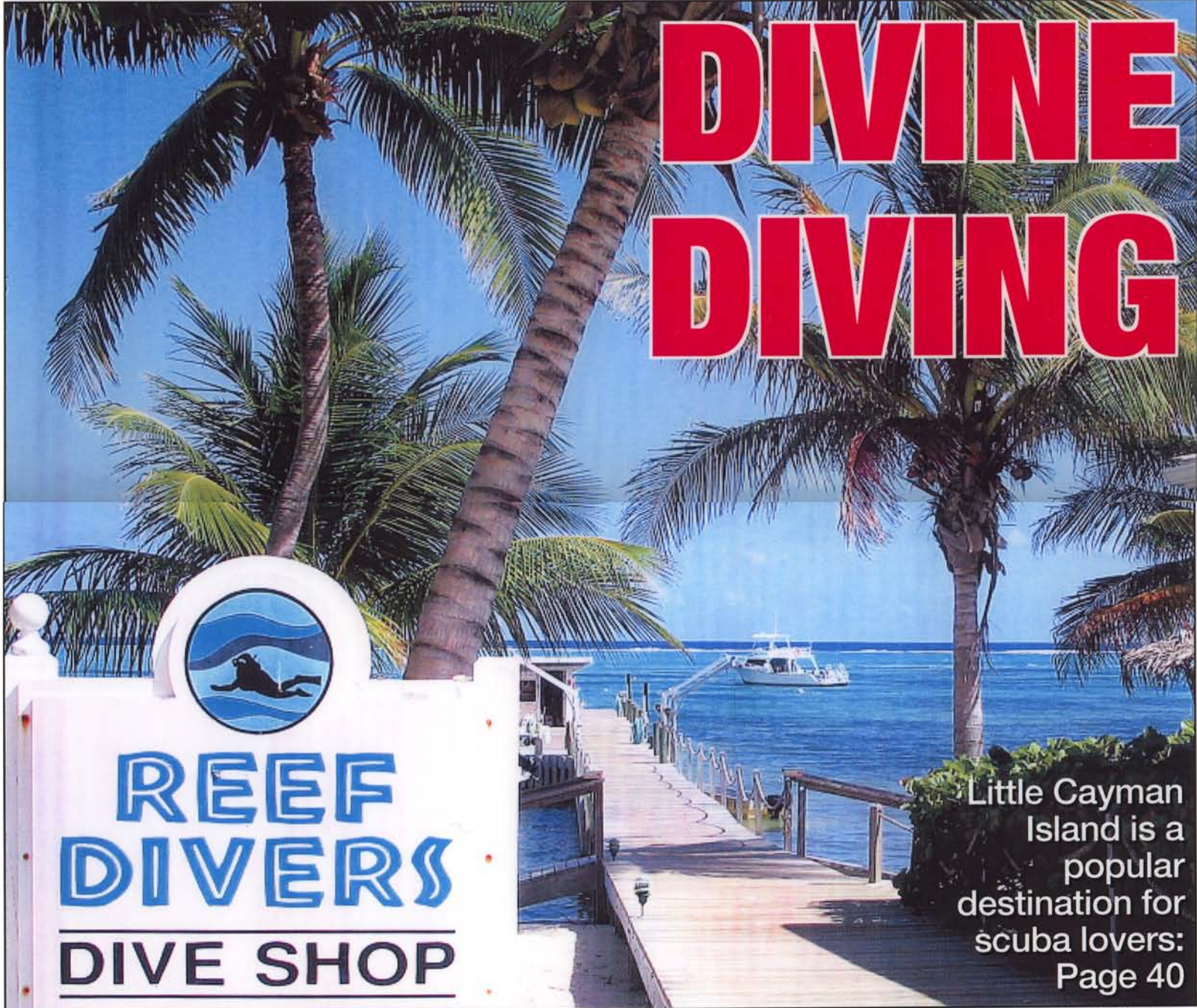
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Editor: ANIKA VAN WYK Phone: 250-4308 Fax: 250-4180 e-mail: cal-entertainment@calgarysun.com



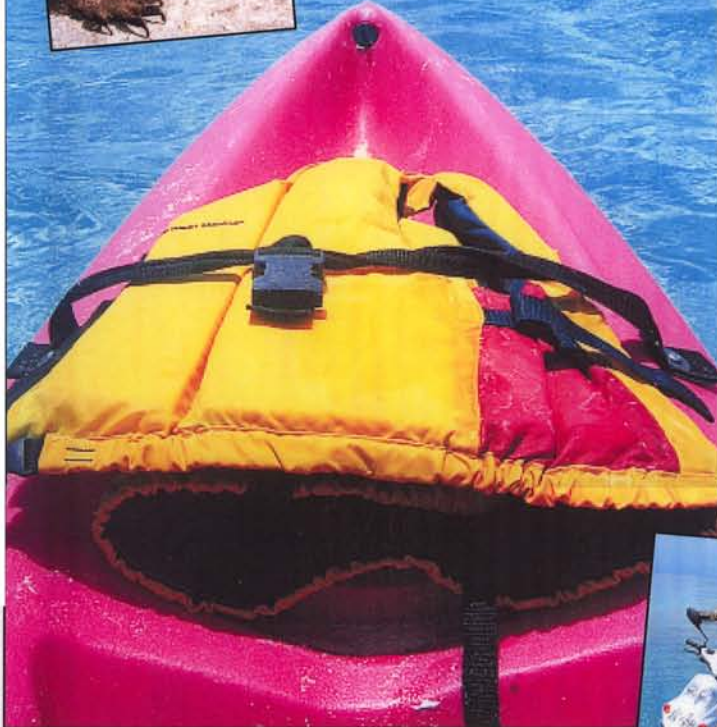
DIVINE DIVING

REEF DIVERS DIVE SHOP

Little Cayman Island is a popular destination for scuba lovers: Page 40

– AL CHAREST, Calgary Sun

Little Cayman perfect size



DEEP BLUE PARADISE ... Above: Little Cayman Island comes into view while kayaking. Top inset: Rock iguanas outnumber people 100 to one. Right inset: Scooters are a great way to explore this picturesque island. Far right: The Bloody Bay Wall is a main attraction for scuba lovers.

■ Air Canada offers year-round service between Canada and the Cayman Islands with up to four weekly non-stop flights during the winter.

Whoever said you can't please all of the people all of the time has never visited Little Cayman Beach Resort.

The Caribbean resort, with its 80 guest rooms painted in pastels, is quickly becoming one of the most sought after scuba destinations in the western hemisphere.

Little Cayman is the smallest and least developed of the three Cayman Islands. Located 770 km from Miami and 150 km south of Havana, Cuba.

I arrive at this celebrated dive resort after a 35-minute flight from Grand Cayman and meet up with Andy Murrant, who is buzzing with excitement and has a smile that stretches across his face like a tropical sunrise. Andy is an ex-pat who has recently moved to the Island to become resident manager of Little Cayman Beach Resort. Our conversation quickly turns to diving.

According to Andy, *Rodales Scuba Diving Magazine* readers voted little Cayman Beach Resort the best place for wall diving in the Caribbean and the second best place for reef diving, photography and sea life. My appetite for diving was definitely whetted.

The next day the adventure begins watching the blue and green colours of the water race by as we boat to Little Cayman's north shore.

We were off to explore the Bloody Bay Wall, named after an ugly battle in the 17th century.

The dive site is part of an underwater mountain range where the walls plummet from a shallow shelf of eight metres to a depth of nearly 2,000 m. Without the water it would look like the Grand Canyon.

The first dive is magic. I plunge into the warm turquoise water and within minutes I am greeted by a black tip reef shark, a southern stingray, two sea turtles and thousands of darting fish.

I can easily see why *National Geographic* photographer David Doubilet calls it the best diving in the Caribbean. The Wall is home to 500 types of fish and 100 species of coral.

Like Jeff O'Connor, a diver from Rock Island, Ill., says, a bad day on the wall is better than a good day anywhere else.

The first-rate Reef Divers runs the valet-style diving operation at Little Cayman Beach Resort. The diving boats are limited to a maximum of 20 guests and divers don't even have to lug their gear. Upon checking in to the dive shop, divers simply place their gear outside their door and the dive staff



Al
Charest
Story & Photos

will place it on the boat. Divers are responsible for getting their gear assembled for the first dive. After that, Reef Divers will change tanks after every dive and at the end of the day will take care of rinsing buoyancy compensators and air regulators.

Little Cayman's diving is its main attraction, but you don't have to strap a tank to your back to enjoy the Islands' tranquil environment.

The island is the closest thing to a private paradise — the tiny 18 km stretch of land is dotted with mangrove forests and salt ponds. It

boasts the third largest bird sanctuary in the Caribbean. Or you can spend the day snoozing on a white-sand beach or lounging in a hammock with a good drink.

The best way I found to explore the island is by motorized scooter, which I rented from the airport. Driving British-style on the left-hand side of the road and swerving to avoid iguanas took a little getting used to.

The rock iguanas, which outnumber humans by more than 100 to one, are so abundant iguana-crossing road signs have been posted.

Travellers that remember last year's vicious hurricane season can take heart, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman Islands were relatively unscathed.

Little Cayman Beach Resort offers packages from \$1,500. Dive/meals packages are more. Visit www.littlecayman.com or call 1-800-327-3835.

al.charest@calgarysun.com

