

Two months ago I asked the dive shops, restaurants, supermarkets, the gym, bars, municipality and friends for financial help. I would like to thank everybody who was so kind to help me:

La Pirata, La Sirena, Big Mama Café, the personnel at Banco Atlántida and Upco, Rental Scooter Lance Bodden, Parrot Dive Center, Margarita Ville Hotel, Deep Blue Dive Center, Bay View Hotel, Fidis Restaurant, Tienda del Pueblo, El Paisano, Morgans Travel, Hellen Macnab, Johnnys Purified Water, Angel Pinto, Neyti Bar, Tienda Sammanta, Rosa Cooper, Kate la Piccola, Father Wilson.

With their help I was able to buy ten second hand windows from Xiomara Whitefield for a total of four thousand Lempiras.

Thank you very much. Delmira Varela.

Hace dos meses solicite la ayuda económica en los centros de buceos, restaurantes, supermercados, gimnasio, bares, alcaldía, y amigos. Gracias a las personas que me colaboraron muy amablemente:

La Pirata, La Sirena, Big Mama Café, a los Trabajadores de Banco Atlántida y Upco, Rental Scooter Lance Bodden, Parrot Dive Center, Margarita Ville Hotel, Deep Blue Dive Center, Bay View Hotel, Fidis Restaurant, Tienda del Pueblo, El Paisano, Morgans Travel, Hellen Macnab, Johnnys Purified Water, Angel Pinto, Neyti Bar, Tienda Sammanta, Rosa Cooper, Kate la Piccola, Padre Wilson.

Con lo recaudado compre diez ventanas de segunda mano a la señora Xiomara Whitefield por un total de Cuatro Mil Doscientos Lempiras.

Atentamente. Delmirra Varela.

Notes from a divemaster

I'd like to tell of a couple of dive stories that people should know about. On the weekend of Sunjam, I was diving with two divers. One had just finished Open Water, the other one is a friend of mine, a rescue diver, who was using his camera. We were on the afternoon boat and went to Little Bight for the first dive. I explained to them about looking for the seahorses, pipefish and batfish and the importance of buoyancy. We found the pipefish right off, then I got them on one seahorse and the batfish. My camera diver was taking pictures using a 'one hand on sand' technique. My other diver's buoyancy was not good so I motioned for him to hover farther off the sand. When we were done I noticed an instructor with two students and maybe a DM (couldn't be sure) coming down to check it out. As they were swimming down the students were too close to the sand and kicking up clouds of silt. He then got them to kneel to look at the seahorse. He did not look for anything he might be kneeling on (did he know the batfish was there?) and not caring about causing the seahorse any stress. I used my shaker and got his attention asking him to get off the sand. Not seeing him react, I shakered again and gave him a hover signal. He started writing on his slate and showed it to me. It read, 'they're just beginners'.

The second story concerns Little Bight too. While with

divers I noticed two groups doing their IDC. There were between 14-18 divers, all from the same shop. Staff instructors were using their scoring slates for skills such as no-mask swim or horizontal cesa. They were going right over where the two pipefish and seahorse live on the edge of the slope. Since then there have been two other things I'd like to say that happened. I came upon an instructor and one student who had just finished looking at the pipefish and started moving again. The student started sinking and kicking badly over sand, only seven meters from the pipefish but right over a seahorse area. I noticed this and started to go over to help them. The instructor saw me coming and immediately gave me the finger which he than waved off and it looked like he was apologizing. The same boat was also using their stern rope as a float. It was long enough so that they had it hanging over the port side onto the coral then wedged up underneath a coral head so it was taunt going to the surface. Maybe they were being used for vertical cesa's or ascents? What I'm trying to say is that we have some areas, which have some creatures, which are more susceptible to bad diving techniques. With new juvenile seahorses on this site, it is even more important to dive correctly. Is there any way we can have IDC's or classes done in places where nothing can be disturbed? There are some of us who really try to make sure that students and fun divers obey and respect common sense rules. Maybe the UDSEC should, instead of making rules that diveshops are supposed to follow and which get broken within weeks by most schools, be making rules that all course directors, instructors and divemasters should follow to protect the natural resources that we have.

Sincerely, John Fraser

Role Model Parents

Growing up my mother used to always say I swam against the current and how

right she was. Since I can remember she always fought for what she wanted, teaching me many values that I would one day need in life. She never showed one day of narcissism and always made my brother and I her #1 priority. She was our biggest fan. She always found that extra money for the new pair of shoes I wanted and had a sense of humor about it saying that I have more shoes than Emilia Marcos! She has compassion for those in need, but most of all she can see the beauty in life. Because of her I yearn to and wish that maybe one day I can be as great a mother as she is to me. To my wonderful Father who started working at a young age, thus becoming a man at a young age. Missing most of his childhood in order to be able to send home money to his beloved mother. Leaving grade school at fourth grade level, and then teaching himself how to read and write. To this day I haven't found anyone that can spell as well as him. Having to give up many baby memories of my brother and I when we were babies so he could offer us the wonderful life we had growing up as kids. I don't know how Papa, but somehow I can see you rocking me in the rocking chair as a baby, singing Born Free to me. May you know "Ma" and "Papa" that the many times you made me do what was right, even if it didn't see it at the time, I thank you dearly for it. Because of you both I am able to see the beauty of this World, which can sometimes be so complex but unique at the same time. I am able to look back and remember all the laughs we had together and it brings a smile to my face as I know we shall have many more to come. Most of all "ma" and "papa" I am able to get out of bed everyday and live life to its fullest because two wonderful people gave me something that only God himself can take away. LIFE I love you "ma and "papa" may you know that my heart lives for you both.

Love your daughter Shakira Williams

En la época cuando yo estaba creciendo mi madre siempre solía decirme que yo nado contra la corriente y cuanta razón tenía. Desde que yo recuerdo siempre ha luchado por lo que quiere, y enseñándome muchos valores los cuales yo necesitare en la vida. Ella nunca enseño ni un día de narcisismo su más grande prioridad siempre fuimos mi hermano y yo. Ella siempre ha sido nuestra más grande admiración. Ella siempre encontraba la manera de darme ese par de zapatos que yo quería y con un muy buen humor decía que yo tenía mas zapatos que Emilia Marcos. Ella siempre ha

tenido compasión para los necesitados, pero sobre todo ella ve las cosas bellas de la vida. Por ella yo añoro ser algún día tan buena madre como lo es ella para mí. Para mi maravilloso padre quien empezó a trabajar cuando era muy joven, convirtiéndose así mismo en un hombre a temprana edad. Perdiéndose casi toda su niñez para poder hacer dinero para darle a su amada madre. Dejando la escuela en el nivel de cuarto grado, enseñándose así mismo a leer y escribir. Hasta este día todavía no e visto a nadie que escriba o lea mejor que el. Teniendo que perderse muchos momentos bonitos de mi hermano y yo cuando herramos bebes para poder ofrecerlos una mejor vida mientras crecíamos. Yo no se como papa pero de una u otra manera te puedo ver meciéndome en una silla mecedora cuando yo era bebe y cantándome una canción. Saben ustedes mama y papa que muchas veces me hicieron hacer lo correcto, aunque yo no lo veía al momento, yo les doy las gracias por eso. Por ustedes dos yo puedo ver las bellezas que tiene este mundo, lo cual muchas veces puede ser tan complejo pero único al mismo tiempo. Yo puedo mirar atrás y recordar todos los buenos momentos que vivimos juntos y una sonrisa aparece en mis labios yo se que vendrán muchos mas. Muchos de esos con M^a, y papa yo me levanto todos los días de la cama y vivo porque dos seres maravillosos me dieron lo que solo dios me puede quitar la VIDA. Yo los amo a ti papa y a ti mama y quiero que sepan que mi corazón vive por ustedes dos su hija que los ama Shakira Williams.

We all know how much better the island people feel when we know that the police are patrolling the streets are our own. We all felt the strain when they were disbanded due to lack of funds. It is these funds I would like to address. We know nothing is free and if it is it has no value. In the past the Dive centers picked up the tab on the municipal police and when they pulled the funds we lost the sense of security the municipal police gave us. They are needed for the island and the tourists like to see and deal with them more than they do with the civil police simply because of the language.

We, as an island, have to protect our tourists which means we have to find ways to raise the funds needed to keep the municipal police on the street daily. Since they are here to protect our tourists the revenue for their budget should come from those primarily in the tourist trade. Right off the bat we all think of the dive centers but they are not the only ones who should be footing the budget. We have hotels, bars, and restaurants, which cater directly to the tourists. When the bad elements of the island hit they usually do so directly or indirectly to one or more of these sources. When a butane tank is stolen it is usually from a hotel or restaurant. We all know how the bad elements lay and wait for their prey at the bars which stay open late.

I feel those affected the most should be a part of supporting the municipal police budget. Not all hotels are part of a dive center but everyone feels the effects. It is not fair for only one part of the island to support our municipal police force. Sure we can point our finger at the dive centers but they should only be paying their portion and not the entire budget like they did in the past. In some parts of the States along the Gulf Coast they imposed a bed tax to help cover many of the costs associated with tourists. Think about how a bed tax would affect the revenues for the budget. The dive centers have beds and so do all the hotels and apartments. The tourists have to sleep in beds and for those that come here and camp out on the beach also charge them in some form. It has works in other places so why not let it work here for us. This way we all pay for the security we all want and should have here on the island. Our security is what makes the tourists want to keep coming back to our island.

Keep in mind the problems Roatan has with crime. It would take an accountant a short time to set up a budget for the municipal police once they know the overall budget and how many beds are available on the island. This bed tax would have to be enforced all year round if we are to keep the civil police on duty all year round. The safer we make our tourists feel only the more money they will spend on the island. I did not say a room tax but a bed tax. We know some rooms have 4 beds and such so the tax has to be imposed per bed not per room.

Patrick Flynn

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