

The DDRC Current News

Newsletter of the Dallas Downriver Club—Visit our website at www.down-river.org

February 2004

FINE PRINT - The DDRC Current News is published monthly by the Dallas Downriver Club and is provided to its members either by First Class postage or by email. Opinions expressed herein are those of the individual authors and may or may not reflect the opinion of the club or its officers.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION of articles, announcements, events, trips, etc. is the 1st Thursday of the month. It is on a come first served basis therefore sooner is better.

DDRC BOARD MEETINGS are held every second Tuesday of the month - 6:30 PM @ Enchilada's (directions on back of newsletter). All members are welcome to attend to learn more about club business.

DDRC Welcomes New Members

Paul Bolling
Thomas Boylan
Matt & Jennifer Fritz

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lifetime Membership Awards Honor Bonnie Haskins and Hans Weichsel
Congratulations — you deserve it! [Hans currently lives in San Antonio. We understand from Lige that while Hans suffers from dementia, his long-term memory is good. Let Hans know he's remembered by writing him (short) letters recalling things he might remember. Contact Bryan Jackson for Hans' address and please gather photos that we could send him with a letter from the club.]

Meeting Location Change for February Only—see last page or website for map.

Most Miles Paddled in 2003

And the winners are..... Lige Balceszak and Sally Soldo — Congratulations!

Volunteers Needed

For the raffle and librarian roles, as well as someone to partner with Bryan Jackson to manage the next Trinity River Challenge. Al has done a tremendous job in years past and it's time to pass the torch.

Cheers to 2003 and Here's to 2004!

Many thanks to the outgoing and incoming club officers. Your time and effort on behalf of the club is much appreciated!

Upcoming & Ongoing Events & Trips

January 23 - April 9 (Fri.): Arnie Blatt's Fabulous Friday Flip Nights at The Colony Aquatic Park* (972) 624-2225 . Bring your own boat and practice those rolls. Cost is \$4 per drop-in OR \$15 for 5 visits.
*[5151 N. Colony, The Colony, TX 75056, email [Swim\(at\)TCPARD.Com](mailto:Swim(at)TCPARD.Com)]

February 13-15 (Fri.-Sun.): Upper Guadalupe River

Please note the date change to Fri.-Sun. from the original Sat.-Mon. Paddling sections of the Upper Guadalupe between FM3351 and US 281 near Spring Branch, TX on Sat. and Sun., camping at Guadalupe River State Park. For more info on the trip, contact Bryan Jackson at 972-979-2519 or email Hollowcreek@paddlinpals.com.

February 28 (Sat.): Urban Paddle and Potluck Adventure location TBD

10:00 A.M. every last Saturday of the month (will move to 9:00 A.M. in warmer temps.) Explore local paddle spots, make friends, share a meal and have a good time. A great way to spend a half day close to home! Contacts are Pat Chamberlain, pchamberlain29@hotmail.com, 972-727-3586, or Phil Lang, philip_lang@sbcglobal.net, 214-564-9628.

March 13, 14 (Sat.-Sun.): The Forney Water Safari

Put into the East Fork of the Trinity at US 80 in Forney, spend night on the river and take out Sun. Expect primitive conditions. This is an underused and undeveloped section of the Trinity — the going will be rugged with possible portages around log jams. The trip purpose is to scout the river to assess needed cleanup (if any) for day trip use and to locate additional access points. Pack light and bring food and water for one night. This trip will be postponed in the event of high water flows. For more info, contact Bryan Jackson 972-979-2519 or email hollowcreek@paddlinpals.com

March 27 (Sat.): Urban Paddle and Potluck Adventure

April 2-4 (Sat.-Sun.): Kiamichi River, Oklahoma

April 3 (Sat.): Brazos River Cleanup

April 9-10 (Fri. - Sun.): Easter Weekend on the Buffalo River in Arkansas

April 18 (Sun.): Hidalgo Falls River Festival

A Message from the Prez by Bryan Jackson

Well, the new year has just started and we already have quite a bit going on. Our events calendar is getting full, and more trips and activities are in the planning stages. Thanks in advance to everyone who works so hard to lead or put on these trips and events during the year.

That being said, we need more people to be trip leaders. It doesn't have to be some huge expedition, just a trip to your favorite spot or someplace you have been meaning to try with a few friends along. The Urban Paddle and Potluck Adventure got started that way and was hugely successful last year. My first trips as a leader were all less than successful as far as I was concerned. We had horrible weather and on one, we didn't even get to paddle at all and probably shouldn't have on another, but everyone seemed to have a great time anyway. That's one of the really cool things that I have learned about the DDRC over the years, as a group we always make the best of any situation. So, don't be afraid to come forward and put something up on the calendar. Just be sure that you have scouted the area in advance for access and safety issues and read up on any literature available, especially if you are planning an overnight trip. If you need help getting started, you can contact the trip coordinators or me.

I also wanted to mention that the folks down in Glen Rose are planning a series of cleanups this year on the Brazos. The first one will be held April 3 and will be covering the area from US67 down to Brazos Point. That's a 15-mile stretch, so they will need a lot of volunteers. Tres Rios Resort is acting as the "command post" for the cleanup. They are offering free overnight camping and are providing a pavilion for a dinner to feed the volunteers on that Saturday night. Don't have a canoe? No problem! Low Water Canoes will provide rentals at no charge to cleanup volunteers. This stretch of the Brazos was my introduction to paddling here in Texas and it's good to see people getting together to take care of it. If you are not coming on the Kiamichi River trip that weekend, they could sure use your help. Contact Ed Lowe at Texas Water Trails (214) 358-0612 for more information.

Jason Kingston put a posting on our Bulletin Board a few weeks ago from our friends in the Arkansas Canoe Club. Lee Creek, a popular Class II whitewater run in NW Arkansas is in danger of ending up as part of a lake. The creek is designated as an "Extraordinary Resource Waterway" which prevents it from being dammed up, but the planners of the dam and subsequent lake are trying to get around it by claiming that the dam will "environmentally improve" the creek. We really don't have any voting power in Arkansas, but some of us do spend a buck or two there over the course of the year, mostly to paddle, camp and eat. I believe we would be referred to as "tourists". If you would like to express your displeasure with the plan to flood Lee Creek and explain to someone that not being able to visit and paddle whitewater streams in Arkansas will mean that you will be spending your "tourist dollars" elsewhere, here are a few email addresses: State Senator Blanche Lincoln. <http://lincoln.senate.gov/webform.html> or State Senator Mark Pryor. http://pryor.senate.gov/email_webform.htm The project that threatens Lee Creek is called Pine Mountain Dam. I'm sure that the Arkansas Canoe Club will appreciate your support.

Just a few more notes and I'll shut up:

Cathy Nelle is in need of contributors to the newsletter. Trip reports, camp recipes or equipment reviews, send them in. Closing date for article submission is the first Monday of the month.

If you have not paid your 2004 dues, this is your last newsletter. Please send your \$20 check to:

DDRC Membership, P.O. Box 820246, Dallas, TX 75382

Or just give it to Gail at the February meeting.

There are a few open committee chairs to fill at the February meeting, Librarian, Raffle and possibly a few others. Don't be shy; most of them are fun and easy to do. See you at the meeting.

**** Massages make great Valentine gifts * See page 6 for how to contact Marilyn Scholl ****

Cranberry Relish Recipe

Helen Livingston, a life member of this group now living in Idaho, used to make cranberry relish each Thanksgiving when she led a trip on the Rio Grande. Her recipe is easy, if you remember to buy the cranberries when they are in the stores between Thanksgiving and Christmas, and freeze a dozen bags.

- 1 Package frozen cranberries
12oz.
- 1 Seeded orange,
chunked-peel too
- 1 Apple, seeded, chunked,
same size as orange.
- 1 Handful of almonds
- 2 Tablespoons honey, or
3-4 Tablespoons Sugar

Put through food processor in batches, then blend together, should be gritty enough to tell it was once whole cranberries. Great with meat, on toast with cream cheese, or for dessert with chocolate bits.

Newsletter EMAIL Issues

Please keep us posted of any changes in your email address. If you'd like to get the newsletter electronically, or haven't been getting it and you're wondering why, we might not have your correct email. Send the editor your email address at cathy_nelle@hotmail.com

As a participant in any DDRC activity, an individual assumes the responsibility of evaluating all inherent risks before participating and assumes any risk of death or injury inherent in the sport. The participant waives claims that may arise against the club, its officers, members, servants, agents and/or trip coordinators, for death or injury to person or property, including claims of vicarious liability and claims arising from civil recklessness or any degree of negligence. Not waived are claims against an individual who causes injury intentionally or with criminal recklessness and claims among driver, owner and passengers of a motor vehicle for injuries.

Whitewater 101 by Phil Lang

My parents didn't realize the can of worms they were opening when they took my brother, sister and I down to Garner State Park back in the early '60s. This was the first time I had ever seen clear running water anywhere other than the bathtub. I could hardly be torn away from the edge of the Rio Frio the entire weekend. Around the same time we visited Aquarena Springs. More clear water! But this stuff had Mermaids and clowns and swimming pigs.

Growing up I had lots of chances to canoe in the Hill Country, mostly on the Guadalupe in the middle of summer with the college kid masses. Once in the mid '80s I saw a bunch of people in whitewater kayaks playing in the rapids. I decided right then I was going to do that "some day."

So a few months ago my buddy Tom Streety was grumbling about getting a whitewater certification for the PrimalQuest adventure race next October. I told him I would take a class with him and that I had a few connections we could explore. After a few phone calls and a whole bunch of good luck we were signed up for one of Dave Holl's famous "Intro to Whitewater Kayaking" clinics. I say good luck because Dave decided to hold an unscheduled class in January to jump start some of his instructors, and Tom and I were to be their guinea pigs (or perhaps I should say wet lab rats).

That weekend, Tom and I set out for San Marcos with the threat of severe thunderstorms and hail in the forecast. Perfect! A bad forecast always clears out the weenies, and the weatherman often gets it wrong, as he did this particular weekend.

The clinic started Friday night at the Power Olympic Center on the San Marcos River. After a few introductions and some legal mumbo jumbo Tom, Al Kaufmann (the 3rd lab rat and new river buddy from New Braunfels) and I hit the river. Right behind the Center, Ben Kvanli, who was hosting the event, had set up several gates in the calm, but moving, river. The first thing I discovered trying to negotiate these obstacles is my girlfriend is right, my paddling skills need some work. We did several paddling drills, all in the dark. This is the same way the Grateful Dead recorded their last several albums, in the dark. Jerry Garcia claimed it heightened all the other senses. Yes, my sense of terror was heightened.

Saturday we all met up about 10 am (I like Dave's scheduling) and headed to the San Marcos River headwaters. The first drill was river rescue. All the instructors (Dave, Ben, Todd Allen and Alan Tittle) pitched in with great advice, hands on instruction and drills. The day continued with a long sequence of events that gradually tested our new skills and pushed us to levels we never dreamed of as beginners.

(Continued on page 4)

(Whitewater 101 by Phil Lang)

(Continued from page 3)

All this was in a controlled, safe environment with a host of instructors around that at any given moment would pluck us out of the river when we just totally blew it (which happened to me quite often). We ran the Rio Vista Dam, then did a little "play-boating" and ended with a trip over a waterfall and a little surfing down river.

Sunday was sunny and 70 with a slight breeze. We spent the day on the Comal River right in New Braunfels. If you try to navigate this river in the summer, you know it looks like a huge stream of black Cheerios with all the "toobers." We had the entire river to ourselves! The "Chute" was running like a mutant fire hose as usual and we all took turns getting flushed down the toilet. A few more rapids and we were through for the weekend.

I haven't had this much of an adrenaline rush since I decided to take up ramp skating on my roller-blades! I haven't been that sore either. Getting old sucks, but at least now I know which muscles to work out at the gym.

The San Marcus and Comal Rivers are a great place to start your whitewater adventure. It's beautiful, the water is warm and the rivers are relatively safe for the amount of water flow. Dave and his crew are extremely competent, helpful and encouraging to the new boater. I'd recommend this class to anyone wanting to try the sport. Make sure you take a roll class first though. That will give you tons of confidence, and save you lots of energy for playing instead of swimming!

After all those years I finally reached "one of these days" where I fulfilled a dream. Now all I have to do is let my shoulders heal so I can do it again!

January Meeting Minutes by Marilyn Scholl

- New officers for the DDRC were introduced at the Jan. 4 meeting: President / Bryan Jackson; Vice President / Sam Sloan; Treasurer / Gail Shipley; Secretary / Marilyn Scholl; and Newsletter Editor / Cathy Nelle.
- Phil Lang talked about the 1/31/04 Urban Paddle on Denton Creek near Trophy Club, Sally Soldo introduced the guests, and Bryan Jackson announced a trip on the Guadalupe River with camping at Guadalupe State Park. Camping is limited, so reservations needed early. There will be one of Bryan's culinary marvels for Saturday night, so please make sure he knows you are coming and what you'll contribute towards the potluck.
- Marilyn Scholl announced a trip to the Buffalo River over Easter. Camping at the Tyler Bend National Park, St. Joe, Arkansas. Put in Friday A.M., leave Sunday A.M. Camping in the group camp area. Showers are available. Nearby restaurants if camp food is not your thing. Potluck Friday and Saturday nights usually happen. Call Marilyn if interested, 214-208-3528 or 972-370-5844. Please look at links to see pictures of the river, and at Rivers and Rapids to get an idea of the water. Even when the park says "Barely floatable," we had three adults in a canoe last year.
- Bonnie Haskins and Hans Weichsel were voted to receive lifetime memberships in the DDRC. Notification will be sent to both.
- Lige Balceszak and Sally Soldo won the trophies for the most miles paddled.
- Al Currie again mentioned that Bryan will need help with the Trinity River Challenge. Al will be in Greece during the race.

TREASURER'S REPORT

| | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| Total Collections | <u>\$638.00</u> | |
| Disbursements | | |
| Christmas Party Expenses | | \$268.40 |
| January Newsletter | | \$47.09 |
| Postage | | \$37.00 |
| ACA Dues Paid Out | | \$30.00 |
| Bank Service charges (Dec and new checks) | | \$12.00 |
| Total Expenses | | <u>\$394.49</u> |
| | | |
| Sub Total | \$3,989.23 | \$394.49 |
| Ending Balance 1/31/04 | \$3,594.74 | |

Check out the Backpacker Magazine March 2004 issue for their latest Gear Guide. See www.gearfinder.com for online product reviews.

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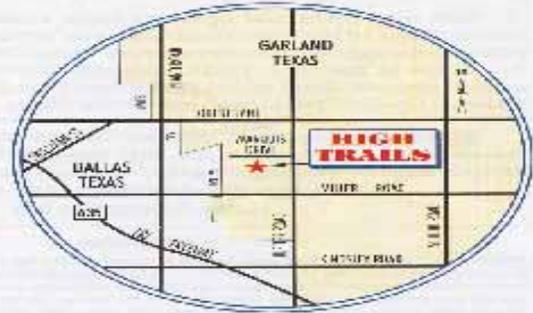
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Paddler Needed for Mississippi

I am looking for someone to accompany me down the Mississippi River this summer. We will travel by canoe, starting at Lake Itaska, Minnesota and end at the mile Zero marker in the Gulf of Mexico.

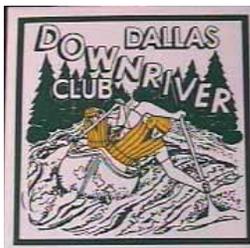
Allow 75 - 100 days. I want to take time to look around and stop at places of interest. Anyone interested, contact me via e-mail (hweiss02@comcast.net) or call me at 972-422-7000.

Henry Weiss, Plano, TX

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(get them at the DDRC meetings)



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Call for Submissions

Editor Laurel Archer is looking for stories written by women paddlers for the book Waterways Her Way: An Anthology of Women's Paddling Adventures Raincoast Publishing, Spring 2005. Contact Laurel or newsletter editor Cathy Nelle (cathy_nelle@hotmail.com) for guidelines.

Send submissions by March 15 to:
Laurel Archer, 364 Morland Road, Co-mox, B.C. CANADA V9M 3W2
or laurel.archer@telus.net (For questions call 250-890-0989 or e-mail .)

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The First Great Wayne Robinson Memorial San Juan River Trip

By Ronnie Ash [Installment 2 of 3]

[Continued...]

The morning of day two (Manny's birthday!) rewarded us with sightings of mule deer, prairie chickens, and Canadian geese. Then we navigated the Goosenecks. Peering up towards the overlook, we could see a single individual silhouetted against the sky, looking incredibly tiny and distant. After transiting the Goosenecks, we eddied out for a short scramble up a dramatic side wash, then the canoes forged ahead to scout the location of the Honaker trail, another legacy of the short lived "gold rush" of the 1890's. Curtis' sharp eyes spotted an unnatural stack of rocks, and the trail's location was a mystery no more. The group stopped near the trail base for lunch, and, as it was a very acceptable campsite, we determined to remain there for the duration of the day.

After a refreshing swim that turned into a river rapid swimming and throw rope school for Caitlin, some of us gathered for an assault on the trail, a treacherous path rising 1200 vertical feet from the river up to the rim. (I must note that Caitlin is a really good sport, graciously enduring the endless efforts of all the adults to educate and advise her!) I made it up about 200 vertical feet before the 10 inch wide trail on the crumbling edge of a 200 foot drop engaged my phobias so fully that I could not carry on! (We all know that visualization can help us improve our skills and chances of success, but the only image my mind's eye could conjure up was of me falling off that foolish trail!) I suspect that the apparently fearless Caitlin later told her parents that grown men turned back in tears but she carried on!

For dinner that evening we had thick grilled pork chops, maple syrup spiced apples, fancy potatoes, bread sticks, Cole slaw, and peach cobbler. These rafters make Martha Stewart look like a piker! (I discovered the downside of this opulent lifestyle when I volunteered to help wash dishes – we had a pile of dirty dishes that could surely have been seen from outer space!)

The radio "active" Dr. Drake (W5TB) was busy that evening as well, stringing a simple wire antenna and setting up a tiny ham radio station on the bank of the San Juan. Sporting his headphones, tapping on his Morse key, and surrounded by a swirl of dits and dahs, he presented a picture that Norman Rockwell himself would have been pleased to paint.

On day 3 we determined to push along for 14 miles in order to accommodate a layover day tomorrow. The rafting gals all commandeered one raft, and their progress was accompanied by constant giggling laughter. Yolanda ascribed their laughter to "rippling humor," a description which tickled me for the rest of the trip.

We all stopped above Ross rapid for a short walk up the wash whose debris outflow creates the rapid to examine a little rock structure. Some thought it might be a granary, while others suspected a practical joke by a bunch of bored boy scouts! Then we set about scouting the rapid. Under other circumstances, this rapid would have been a lark, but with our laden boats in such a remote location, we were all seriousness, searching for the driest and most conservative route. Although Ted elected to fill his canoe up with water and run it backwards, we all emerged upright and smiling!

That afternoon Caitlin acquired her first command when she soloed in Manny's little rubber ducky. Showing superior intelligence and excellent boat control, she faithfully followed Diana and Curtis' line through several marked rapids. From upstream, the upturned and pointed stern of that ducky does look just like a 60lb duck going down the river! We were all very impressed with Caitlin on this trip. She exhibited excellent mechanics in her canoeing strokes (of course, she was taught by one of the most skillful females ever to grasp a T-grip!), paddled on her knees like a higher life form should, kept her map constantly at hand, always knew where she was, and studied Dutch oven desert cooking with Rich and Jack. (Sheesh, if I could find a 40 year old like that, I'd probably propose!)

While Caitlin conned the ducky, Ester joined me in the canoe. We had a grand little float trip, polishing her long dormant canoeing strokes and chatting amiably. That evening in camp, Ester announced that she now found it embarrassing to have to ride around in a raft. That comment caused the rafters to good naturedly accuse the single bladers of elitism!

(Continued on page 8)

Thankfully, our desired campsite at John's Canyon was unoccupied and we established ourselves in the most wonderful of surroundings, with a little rapid just down stream for comforting white noise, and numerous secluded tent sights within the tamarisk groves. I pitched my little Eureka Gossamer in a beautiful spot, a hollowed amphitheater just at the mouth of John's Canyon. I'd be in trouble if it rained though, for I was right at the base of a potential 200 foot waterfall!

Mindful of the old proverb that "Many hands make light work," a whole gang of us now grappled with the dishwashing chores, our efforts accomplished with "rippling humor!" We had made such an entertaining sport of it that there was now a waiting list to get on the dishwashing crew!

On day 4 a bunch of us decided to tackle John's Canyon. The first obstacle we faced was that 200 foot dry waterfall! As we puttered around at river level preparing to depart, we heard a shout from overhead. It was Rich, already at the top of the fall! (I believe that Rich could teach Spiderman a few things about scampering up rocks!) "There's a swimming hole up here, but you'd better bring a couple of ropes!" Uh oh, that sounded foreboding.

We set off along the trail which led us away from John's Canyon as it gradually ascended the wall of the main canyon. About a quarter of a mile along, we found Rich perched on a ledge some 15 feet above us. "This is where the rock climbers fish or cut bait," he grinned. (Oh God, give me a knife and a bucket of squid!) Curtis and George, mountain goats that walk upright, scampered up effortlessly, then rigged an under the armpits belay line to protect the rest of us duffers as we nervously ascended the vertical to slightly overhanging wall.

From there, the trail took us back toward John's Canyon. As we entered John's Canyon, we were confronted by a 25 foot vertical descent to reach the overhanging shelf which formed the roof of the river level amphitheater. Rich had already rigged a line there, and Curtis somehow convinced Diana and Caitlin to descend using a rope around the backside-- friction across the buttocks rappel. We older guys with our greater respect for the forces of gravity weren't having any of that! We tied loops in the line to form secure hand holds and descended in relative confidence!

We then found ourselves in yet another grand amphitheater, with a "tinaja" at the base of it's curved and hollowed out overhanging back wall. A tinaja is a pool of water, literally a "bowl of earth," according to our free climbing linguist, Rich. It was a lovely setting, but the dark green water and the ominous bubbles which arose from its depths dissuaded us from diving in! The view outward was tremendous, and we exposed many a frame of film on the main canyon and our campsite far below. As thrilling as it was, some of us were unable to fully savor the experience, preoccupied as we were with the unsettling thought that we still had to get back down!

Going out, even the imperturbable mountaineers took advantage of our loops to ascend the first hurdle. At the dreaded descent, there was no available rock to which we could make fast a line, so Curtis rigged up a seat harness to belay his increasingly anxious shipmates while George directed our trembling appendages to hand and foot holds from below. Poor George even got clobbered by a rock dislodged by one of us awkward amateurs. He and Curtis certainly earned the eternal gratitude of the John's Canyon expeditioners, though. Heck – I'm now afraid to step off the curb without George standing in the street to tell me where to put my foot!

With great relief, the triumphant expedition returned to camp and went for a swim to cool off. It's amazing how quickly one can go from hyper to hypothermia around here! As we were having lunch, Yolanda said, "Ronnie, I've got a proposition for you." "Uh oh," Jack muttered, "Run!" She wanted me to play my recorder for the group that evening. Vainly attempting to suppress premonitions of embarrassing and/or potentially terminal stage fright, I alleged that I might be able to do such a thing.

After lunch I snuck off to the most remote end of the camp, where John, Ted, and I had established our lairs, lashed together a tripod of paddles for a music stand, and spent the afternoon practicing. That evening I established an "orchestra pit" behind a tamarisk tree, so nobody could see my quivering digits (!), and played at length while the group socialized and prepared dinner. After the first few shaky songs my fingers and my heart rate settled down, and I rather enjoyed dribbling spit in my lap for the entertainment of the crowd! Nonetheless, I was glad when I could put down the recorder and pick up a dishrag, returning to a task for which I'm much better qualified!

[To Be Continued...Tune in again in March for the conclusion of the seven day journey.]

Trouble with mildewed tents? Check out McNett's Mirazyme at www.mcnett.com or call 360-671-2227.

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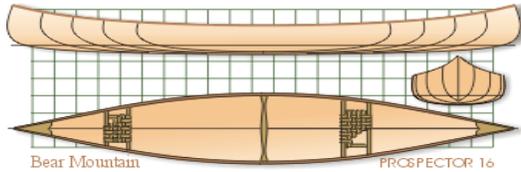
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DALLAS DOWNRIVER CLUB

P.O. Box 820246
Dallas, Texas 75382

Postage

*The Official Newsletter of the Dallas
Downriver Club*

**DDRC
February
2004 Meeting**

**Thursday
7:00 PM
Feb. 19, 2004**

**Enchilada's
Restaurant
7050 Greenville
Ave., Dallas, TX
75231**

**214-363-8969
(Interactive map on
DDRC website.)**

**FEBRUARY MEETING ONLY WILL BE IN A DIFFERENT LOCATION
— RESUME REGULAR MEETING LOCATION IN MARCH**

