

# The DDRC Current News

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Volume 26, No. 2

The Official Newsletter of the Dallas Downriver Club

February 1999

## "Texas Whitewater" is now out!

### Seasoned Kayaker Shares Texas' Whitewater Secrets

When paddlers think of whitewater, they rarely think of Texas. But author Steve Daniel has spent years kayaking Texas rivers and streams and now provides a whitewater guide for Texas paddlers.



Steve Daniel

"Making the best of it is what this book is all about," Daniel writes. "It is about beautiful scenery, long-lasting friendships, and challenges to one's physical and mental abilities."

In "Texas Whitewater", Daniel describes more than seventy whitewater runs ranging from multi-day stretches to play spots for surfing or practicing squirt moves. Each description includes a map showing put-ins and takeouts, and an overview of the location, gradient, drainage, and difficulty of the run. Eighty-five photographs highlight whitewater features and showcase some of the state's best boater at play. Daniel also provides information on access, legal navigability, and safety issues.

The guide is arranged according to river drainages: Trinity, Brazos, Colorado, Guadalupe-San Antonio-Nueces, and Rio Grande. Drawing on his experiences and that of other whitewater enthusiasts, Daniel offers a detailed account of rivers and creeks with the greatest prospects for whitewater, encouraging paddlers to explore lesser-known runs. He includes tips on obtaining information on water levels via the Internet and stream-

flow data locations. And also many chapters conclude with "Lagniappe," a section detailing the best restaurant or tourist attraction to be found in the area.

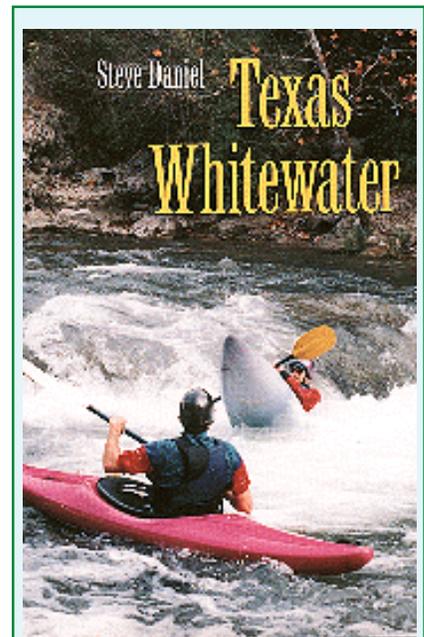
Also included is the first published legal summary on the navigability of state waterways, prepared by Texas Assistant Attorney General Joe Riddell. Well-written and informative, "Texas Whitewater" will become the standard reference for paddlers and for those coming to visit and explore the state.

Steve has spent more than eighteen years kayaking challenging rivers and creeks throughout the United States and Mexico. For the last fifteen years he has sought out the best whitewater paddling opportunities Texas has to offer. When he is not on the river, he teaches philosophy at Texas A&M University.

The book is now available through the Texas A&M Press. Those paddling and outdoor shops with arrangements directly with the Press or that handle A&M Press publications through distributors will have the book. Larger bookstores such as Barnes and Noble, B. Dalton, and BookStop already have a contract to distribute the book.

In addition, Steve will be making a presentation at the February DDRC meeting. He will present a program and slide show with highlights from his book. Steve will have copies of the book for sell at that time.

To get the book directly from the press, call 800-826-8911 (fax 888-617-



LC 98-41877 6" X 9"  
224 pages w/85 b&w photos  
70 maps and 3 appendices

2421). There is a \$4.50 postage and handling charge for the first book ordered and a \$0.75 charge for each additional book. Any order to a Texas address must add 8.25% sales tax to the total. You can also order the book from their web site on the Internet at:

[www.tamu.edu/upress/](http://www.tamu.edu/upress/).

The price of the book is \$14.95 for the paperback and \$25.95 for the cloth/hardcover.

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# 1999

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## President's Column

*by Jack Deatherage*

I would like to thank everyone for their vote of confidence in reelecting me. Also I want to thank all of last year's officers for their faithful service and dedication. Most of you don't realize what is involved in some of these duties and how much work is involved. I want to personally thank our newsletter editor, Steve Schleter for his long hours. He deserves our clubs highest praise for his dedication to detail. Call him or e-mail and let him know what your feelings are on the great job he has done. The newsletter can easily turn into a full time job and the pay is poor. Also, Rich Grayson for keeping the DDRC website among, if not the best in the paddling community.

I'm starting to watch the mailbox for river permits. Ready to plan a big trip somewhere! It may be a dry year unless the snowpack starts building up out west. Now there is some water in Texas, the Sabine hit over 90,000 cfs a few days ago. 15,000 cfs will flood most of the sand bars there, 90,000 cfs will change the scenery a lot. This years Labor Day trip will see a lot less houses along the river.

Since the water is low elsewhere and there is not much paddling going on, it is a good time to inspect all of your gear. Look at those PFDs carefully for rips and tears. The minor things can be sewn or patched but if it's getting weak then retire it and purchase a new one. Your PFD should be able to support your entire body weight, in my opinion

and if the sun has faded the fabric, then it has also weakened it to the point of failure. I know some of us will spend a lot of money on a new boat but refuse to buy a decent PFD. Your choice of style should depend on what kind of water you do. If you regularly do class 4 and 5 white water, then Walmart is probably not the place to shop for your next PFD. While I'm harping on PFDs, I will remind everyone to wear them at all times. Even scouting a rapid, lining, or portaging around one it can save your life. We were lining canoes around Madison, a class 4 on the Rio Grande, and Yolanda slipped into a little puddle that turned out to be really deep. She had a line in her hand and was focusing on getting the rope around a boulder and took one step to many. She went down down down, at least up to her shoulders until the her PFD popped her back up like a cork. It was a undercut crag that no one would want to be swimming in.

It's also a good time to take your sleeping bags down to a laundry mat that has a front load washing machine to give them a bath. They will not only smell better but will restore the loft and make them warmer also!

Let's not forget to inspect our ropes. They get packed in mud and sand that eat through the fibers. They get stored wet and mildew weakens the fibers. If your throw bag rope looks like it needs a haircut and shave, retire it. The good sections can be cut out and used for other river chores, but buy some new rope or a new throw bag. The life it saves might be yours!

How about seam sealing and waterproofing our tents? I have witnessed a club member who will go unidentified, bailing their tent out after a good rain.

Last but not least, vehicle and trailer maintenance. Greased those bearings lately? Is that steel showing through where there used to be tread? I know some of us saw enough flats last year to last a lifetime!

**Newsletter:** The DDRC newsletter, Current News, is a monthly publication distributed to club members and affiliated paddling organizations nationwide. The deadline for submissions is the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month. Information may be submitted via e-mail, at [schleter@dallas.net](mailto:schleter@dallas.net), or fax/phone to Steve Schleter, at (972) 329-0729. Articles about and of direct interest to DDRC members will receive first priority, paid advertising will be given second priority, and other materials will be included on a space-available basis. Unless otherwise specified, all information about river trips will be added to the DDRC Internet website trip calendar.

**Change of Address:** Please contact Chris Cockrell, Treasurer, if you need to report a change of mailing address. If you fail to get a newsletter, it will be because we do not have a current address or your membership has expired. Chris will be happy to correct wrong addresses, and take your dues if you are in arrears.

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## The Environment Section

by David Lamb

Cleanup was worked in January on White Rock Lake at Sunset Bay and under the Mockingbird bridge. Cleanup was also worked on the Elm Fork of the Trinity from McInnish Park up past Furneaux Creek. 22 bags of trash were picked up.

Working cleanup were:

**Alan Lamb**

**David Lamb**

There will be a level 1 sprint paddling coaching clinic at Tarrant County Junior College, NW (Marine Creek Lake) on February 27-28.

Beginning coaching for beginner paddlers will be taught. Club building will be a topic. The clinician will be Tony Hall, head coach of the Lanier Canoe and Kayak Club. He is a past coach for the Canadian National team.

Cost will be for materials and classroom rental.

If interested, please call David Lamb at 972-931-3068.

## The October Flood what went wrong & how to fix it

by Tom Goynes

Where were you on the night of October 17, 1998? A lot of us will remember that date for a long time. I spent the night in my truck on a little island just upstream of my house. My house, which was surveyed to be several feet above the 100 year floodplain and just below the 500 year floodplain, was part of the river. Or at least there was about 10 inches of river inside it.

Now before I go on, let me explain, to the best of my ability, what a 100 year flood is. The experts have studied the situation and decided that every year we have a one percent chance of having a certain magnitude of flood. One chance in a hundred. That elevation in the river is known as a 100 year flood. In the same way, every year we've got one chance in 500 of having a 500 year flood. So for those folks who say that it will be another 500 years until we see another flood like this, let me say, don't bank on it. In my humble opinion, we just haven't been studying these sort of things long

### Most miles award

Get out your log sheets and count up those miles. The man and woman with the most miles paddled in 1998 get to keep the trophy for the year. Bring your log to the February meeting.

enough to have it down to an exact science. I suspect that we have a pretty good chance of having an even bigger flood than this past one within our lifetime.

The island, which provided this safe haven, had been created sometime after the 1952 flood (which some have called the previous flood of record). It seems that the man who owned this property at the time of that flood, decided that he needed to build a hill on this spot before he built his home here. The '52 flood hadn't quite flooded his property, but it had come mighty close. He finished the hill, but never got around to building the house. Unfortunately, the next owners decided to build a cabin just downstream of the hill. Even more unfortunately, I choose to add on to this cabin rather than to start over on top of the hill. The hill looked mighty tempting, but after all, why would anyone build higher than the 500 year flood level?

So what's my point? Rivers flood. Sometimes they flood bigger than they are supposed to. After the 1936 flood on

*continued on page 4*

### Group Buy of ICF K-1s and Downriver K-1s

Start saving your change, mowing lawns, throwing papers, babysitting.

I am ordering a container of ICF K-1s and ICF Downriver K-1 racing boats in March, 1999.

ICF K-1 \$370 + \$100 shipping

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ICF K-1s are available in high volume stable, medium volume unstable and high volume very unstable hulls.

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ICF K-1 layup - Polyester/Glass/Nylon

DR K-1 layup - Polyester/Vinylester

Other hulls and layups are available at additional cost

Let me know if you are interested.

David Lamb (972)931-3068  
[dlamb@adventureteam.com](mailto:dlamb@adventureteam.com)

The container costs \$2350 to ship here. I am covering any extra cost in shipping that these prices do not pay.

Thanks

### DDRC Annual Membership

**\$20.00/year - Individual or Family**  
**\$200.00 – Lifetime Membership**

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*continued from page 3*

the Guadalupe the experts called for a dam to save New Braunfels. Canyon lake was constructed in the 60's. Then came the '71 flood and New Braunfels got hammered again. This time the experts called for flood control and recharge dams on the creeks that were downstream of Canyon Lake. Now, surely, New Braunfels was safe. Nonetheless, this past flood was higher than either of those previous floods. Places on River Road flooded that were just below the dam even though no water ever came over the spillway. The experts assure us that this flood would have been even worse without all of our flood control measures. And I'm sure they're right. But the fact remains that we experienced a disaster of incredible proportions mostly because we simply built too close to our rivers.

The older I get the more I realize that we will never control nature. Flood control is a pipe dream for engineers. Hurricanes, tornadoes, and other "disasters" happen when the conditions are right, regardless of any of man's puny efforts to control them.

I suspect that we will soon be hearing a cry for more flood control projects for Texas. The experts will tell us that if we had just had another dam; just had another channelization project, we could have avoided so much disaster. But the real disaster is that we have built our houses too close to our rivers. Instead of a beautiful river valley we have turned the Guadalupe from Canyon Lake to New Braunfels into a nightmare of too many houses and too much traffic. The San Marcos River, possibly because it hasn't experienced the "flood control" that the Guadalupe has, seen a little less development, but the problems are here as well.

How did we get into this mess in the first place? I think our flood insurance program is largely to blame. If flood insurance was handled in the same manner as other insurance, and not underwritten by the federal government, insurance on homes close to our rivers (and oceans) would be so expensive that few could be built. But because the experts have de-

finied a 100 year flood, and because they have decided that is the magnitude of flood for which we need to prepare, many homes are built very close to our rivers and we taxpayers pay the price.

And it's not just the price we pay in higher taxes. We also pay the price of more trash in our rivers. The amount of glass and tin in the Guadalupe is staggering. The clean-up may take years.

Have we learned anything from this recent disaster? I suspect not. I heard of a family who lost their home which had been on River Road in New Braunfels. They decided that it wasn't smart to rebuild the home where it had stood. Since the house was completely destroyed and since they had insurance, they asked for a settlement so they could build elsewhere. They were told that the only way they could get their money was to rebuild the house in the same spot.

Being several feet above the 100 year floodplain, I had decided that I was pretty safe. And since I've built my house without having to borrow money, I've never invested in flood insurance. In retrospect, the best insurance for me would have been to build on that little hill. The next best thing will be for me to elevate my house a foot or two.

Ultimately, we need to reserve our river valleys for future floods. We need to leave them alone. Let them be natural; not cluttered with houses and other developments. The big question is how do we get there from here. I suggest that we begin with the folks like that family in New Braunfels who want out. Rather than forcing people to rebuild homes in the floodplain, let's let em build elsewhere. Let's use our federal money to buy some floodplain rather than to rebuild houses that are just doomed to flood again. In the long run we'll save a bundle, and save some rivers while we're at it.



## Kayak & Canoe Roll Clinic Fridays

It's in an indoor heated pool!  
 Dates: Jan 22 through April 9 (closed  
 March 5, 12, 19 for repairs)  
 Where: The Colony Aquatic Center  
 in The Colony, TX.  
 Take Plano Pkwy. to Hwy. 121, then  
 north on Paige Rd. to North  
 Colony Blvd. Go east (right) about 3  
 blocks, look for Aquatic Center  
 near fire station on north side of  
 road. Mapsco 554-G  
 Cost: \$3 per person per evening  
 Contact Arnie Blatt for more details:  
 W) 972/250-7158; H) 972/416-9194



*by Robert Gray*

Slow to don his drysuit, Mr. Pettinger  
 feels life is passing him by...



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## THE 14TH ANNUAL GREAT TEXAS RIVER CLEAN-UP February 27, 1999

On Saturday, February 27, 1999, folks from all over Texas will be participating in the world's longest river clean-up. We will be picking up trash along the entire length of the San Marcos River (approximately 90 miles).

### BANK CREWS

Everyone is urged to help. If you are unable to participate in the water, we need volunteers to work the banks of the river, especially at parks and highway crossings. Bring some trash bags (we will supply as many as possible) and perhaps a flounder gig to snag some goodies. Scuba divers and snorkelers are also urged to participate.

### RECREATIONAL PADDLERS

We are asking recreational paddlers and canoe clubs to accept the challenge and volunteer for a section of river. If your group or club has not already been assigned a section, be sure to contact Tom Goynes and tell him what stretch you would like. The upper sections of the San Marcos River, particularly just downstream of the City of San Marcos, will require the most attention, and the short mileages set for these sections reflect this. Furthermore, the river becomes less accessible and more hazardous as one goes downstream. For that reason, novice boaters should volunteer for either sections 1 or 2 and more experienced boaters for the other sections.

### SAFARI TEAMS AND CANOE RACING ENTHUSIASTS

The lower river, from Luling to Gonzales, has several long sections with few bridge crossings and for that reason, we are asking canoe racers and especially teams that have competed in the Texas Water Safari in the past to volunteer for sections 9 - 11.

### CAMPOUT AND GET-TO-GETHER

Everyone participating in this event is invited to camp free at either Shady Grove Campground/ Spencer Canoes or at Pecan Park Retreat for the weekend. Starting at 6 p.m. on Saturday evening there will be a free barbecue provided by the San Marcos River Foundation at Shady Grove/Spencer Canoes. It should be noted that the party will terminate by midnight to allow the rest of the workers some time to sleep.

### STATEWIDE CANOE MEETINGS

We expect a large contingent of paddlers from all over Texas to participate. To take advantage of this opportunity, there will be several meetings of statewide canoeing organizations the weekend of the clean-up. After the meal Saturday night, there will be a meeting of the Texas Canoe Racing Association at Shady Grove Campground/Spencer Canoes. Anyone interested in participating in the sport of canoe racing is invited to attend. Then on Sunday morning at 10 a.m. at Pecan Park, the Texas Rivers Protection Association will hold its annual meeting. Then, beginning at 1 p.m. at Pecan Park, the Texas River Recreation Association will have its annual meeting and election. The TRRA is a federation of most of the canoe clubs of Texas. All club presidents or their representatives are urged to attend. Everyone is invited to attend any of these meetings.



### WHAT YOU CAN DO

First of all, mark February 27th on your calendar. Secondly, look over the enclosed river section listing, and choose a stretch that you can help cover. Next, call me at 512-392-6171, and I will put you in contact with the group leader of the section you have chosen. Each leader will be able to help arrange shuttles and will be given logistical info regarding trash deposit locations as the clean-up nears.

### MEETING TIMES AND SHUTTLES

A group meeting will be held for everyone working sections 3 through 7 at 9:00 a.m. Saturday morning at Spencer Canoes. Groups working sections 8 - 11 will arrange their shuttles as early as possible Saturday morning and try to put in the river by 9:00 a.m. Persons working sections 1 and 2 will meet at City Park in San Marcos at 10:00a.m.

### LET'S DO IT

Communities along the river are being urged to help in any way they can. If you can offer any service, such as trash hauling, shuttle driving, trash bags or food donations - anything - please give us a call.

Together we can clean-up the whole river and make a strong statement to the public about our love for free flowing streams.

Please help us out,

Tom Goynes (coordinator) 512-392-6171

Statewide Sponsors: Texas Rivers Protection Association; Texas River Recreation Association; Texas Canoe Racing Association

Local Sponsors: San Marcos River Foundation; Green Guys Recycling; Pecan Park Retreat; Spencer Canoes : 512- 357-6113; TG Canoe Livery: 512-353-3946

### RIVER SECTION LISTINGS

- 1 San Marcos City Park to Thompson's Island (2 miles)
- 2 Thompson's Island to Pecan Park Retreat (3.5 miles)
- 3 Pecan Park Retreat to Spencer Canoes (6 mi.) Houston Canoe Club
- 4 Spencer Canoes to Staples - Hwy 1977 (5 miles)
- 5 Staples to Fentress - Hwy 20 (9 miles) Austin Paddling Club
- 6 Fentress to Stairtown (7 miles) Bayou City Whitewater Club
- 7 Stairtown to Luling - Hwy 90 (6.5 miles)
- 8 Luling 90 to Luling City Park (6 mi.) Alamo City Rivermen
- 9 Luling City Park to Palmetto State Park (14.4 mi.) Texas Canoe Racing Association
- 10 Palmetto State Park to Gonzales Hwy 90A (14.8 miles) Texas Canoe Racing Association
- 11 Gonzales 90A to Gonzales 183 (10 mi.) TCRA

## Public's Right of Way on Rivers Expanded

by Gary Spencer

*New York Law Journal*

*Friday, December 18, 1998*

ALBANY - In a landmark ruling that could vastly expand the public's right of access to rivers on private land, the Court of Appeals yesterday adopted a new "recreational use" test for determining when waterways are navigable and therefore beyond the power of private landowners to close.

Although the age-old common law standard was based on a river's capacity for commercial use in carrying goods to market, the Court held that changing times and changing attitudes toward environmental preservation called for a new test in which recreational boating alone will be enough to establish a public easement. "Rivers, long-recognized as unique natural resources, are no longer primarily subjects of commercial exploitation and gain but instead are valued in their own right as a means of travel," Judge Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick wrote in *The Adirondack League Club Inc. v. Sierra Club*, No. 170.

The case focused on a 12-mile stretch of the South Branch of the Moose River that crosses a 58,000-acre private preserve owned by the 400-member Adirondack League Club, which has barred non-members from using the stream for more than a century. But it should give canoeist and other recreational boaters greater access to streams throughout the state. State conservation officials, who supported the recreational use test, estimated it could affect 20,000 miles of waterways in New York.

Sierra Club attorney Philip H. Gitlen, of Whiteman Osterman & Hanna in Albany, said, "This will have a huge impact on the recreational resources that are available to the public," particularly in the six-million-acre Adirondack Park, which

is "a patchwork of public and private landholdings." >All major rivers in the park cross private land at some point, most of them repeatedly, and he said the ruling can be used to open the rivers' full lengths to the public for the first time.

The case has been watched closely by landowners and conservation groups throughout the nation, he said, and he predicted it will serve as a model for other states.

Neil F. Woodworth, counsel for the Adirondack Mountain Club, said the ruling recognizes the importance of rivers in modern society. "New Yorkers own about 450,000 canoes and kayaks," he said. "The predominant use of rivers today and going into the next century is recreational." He said another important aspect of the ruling is its recognition of the public's right to portage around obstacles in a stream, the first time the Court of Appeals has ruled on the issue. "That is a huge victory for the recreational paddler," he said.

The case began in June 1991 with a trip down the Moose River by five Sierra Club members in two canoes and a kayak. The Sierra Club was looking for a test case and it informed the Adirondack League Club (ALC) of the trip in advance. When the trip was over, the ALC sued the Sierra Club and the five paddlers for trespass and sought a declaration that the river was not navigable, which would permit it to keep the stream closed. New York State and Adirondack Mountain Club intervened as defendants in support of public access.

The Appellate Division, Third Department, ruled on summary judgement that the river was navigable, holding that use of a waterway by

recreational boaters was relevant evidence of its capacity for commercial use. Environmental groups hailed that ruling as a major victory.

The Court of Appeals went further yesterday, holding that recreational use alone is sufficient to establish a river's navigability. "[E]vidence of a river's practical utility for transport need not be limited to evidence of its capacity for the movement of commercial goods," it said.

The Court was unanimous in adopting the new standard, but split 4-1 in reversing the award of summary judgement. The majority found there was conflicting evidence regarding the Moose River's suitability for recreational use. Dissenting Judge Joseph W. Bellacosa argued that the river's navigability was clearly established and that the ALC's suit should be dismissed.

In the majority opinion, Judge Ciparick said adoption of the recreational use test was consistent with the Navigation Law and with the Court's common law precedents, which "have as their touchstone the idea that a river must have 'practical usefulness to the public as a highway for transportation.'" She said the "paramount concern is the capacity of the river for transport, whether for trade or travel."

The ALC was represented by John S. Marwell of Shamburg Marwell Hocherman Davis & Hollis in Mt. Kisco. The state was represented by Assistant Attorney General William S. Helmer; the Adirondack Mountain Club by John W. Caffry of Glens Falls; the Sierra Club by Mr. Gitlen and the individual defendants by Robert J. Kafin of Proskauer Rose Goetz & Mendelsohn in Manhattan.



Valerie Parrish



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(972)889-8989  
VoiceMail/Pager: (214) 362-3334  
Fax: (972)889-8060

The DDRC Safety Committee has scheduled a CPR/First Aid class with the American Red Cross. The class is broken up into two evenings, March 2 from 6:00pm - 10:00pm and March 4 from 6:00pm to 9:00pm. The classes will be located in downtown Dallas, across from the Crescent Hotel. To register, please contact Ken Lock at: 214-823-5263



Don Greene (Whitewater Experience) is again sponsoring two EXCELLENT first aid classes this year, taught by the professionals at Wilderness Medical Associates. To be an official Texas paddler, you have to be certified in at least one of these:

- 1) Wilderness First Aid - 16 hour course on Feb 27 and Feb 28
- 2) Wilderness Advanced First Aid - 36 hour course on Feb 20 through Feb 23

I'm not sure, but I think both of these will be taught by Jamie Butler, a walking (and paddling) encyclopedia of backcountry medicine. These are the best outdoor-oriented first aid courses anywhere and worth every penny of the enrollment fee, honest! Please note that CPR is a prerequisite for these classes.

For further info, contact Don Greene at 713.774.1028.

**DDRC Newsletter Ad Rates**

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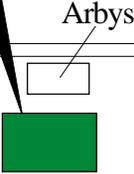


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**DALLAS DOWNRIVER CLUB  
FEBUARY MEETING**

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Thur. 18th, 7:00 PM  
Enchilada's Restaurant  
6526 E. Northwest Hwy.

**DALLAS DOWNRIVER CLUB**  
**PO BOX 820246**  
**DALLAS, TEXAS 75382**

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

**Club Dues**  
Just a reminder that if you have not paid  
your 1999 dues, that it is time again.  
After March if you have not paid you  
will not receive the newsletter!