

The DDRC Current News

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The Official Newsletter of the Dallas Downriver Club

May 1999

Illinois River, Oklahoma

by Marge Mitchell and Diane Northcutt

We had done some local paddling – even had some refresher lessons, so we weren't rank amateurs, but we hadn't camped in decades, we hadn't paddled any distance, and we weren't very familiar with moving water. Needless to say,

we were a bit anxious about a trip to the Illinois River with a group of avid, experienced paddlers. We were fearful of dampening their paddling fun, and worried that we might get in over our heads (puns intended) !!

April 24th dawned clear, cool and crisp ... at least somewhere ... but not in Tahlequah, Oklahoma !! The day for our first "real" paddling trip was cool, all right, but it was dark and overcast, with a thick, heavy sky ... a perfect day for paddling !! (Aren't they all ??)

After spending the night in sleeping bags and a tent, we woke refreshed (?) and excited, ready to get on the river !! We were greeted by the "old hands" of the experienced, among them our fearless leaders: Jerry Johnson and Bonnie Haskins. Hot water was ready for our much needed coffee; there were smiles of anticipation all around; and the enthusiasm was contagious !! We ate breakfast while discussing the best put-ins and take-outs ... the recent torrential rains had left many sites extremely muddy. The decision was made to put in at Peyton's Place (where we had camped) and take out at Sparrow Hawk Camp, some 17 miles down the river.

Our group had grown overnight. In the daylight, we found that we had 21 folks ready to go ... there were seven tandem canoes and six solo kayaks. What a beautiful sight they made as they were all brought down to the put-in. Before moving the cars for the shuttle, Bonnie

checked our canoe, made sure we had bow and stern painters, verified that we had whistles on our PFDs, and helped us stow and tie in our gear. We gratefully received Bonnie's river reading lessons, as well !! While Marge was moving the Jeep to the shuttle, Jerry took Diane for a "test" run ... supposedly to see how well she could paddle on moving water, but I think it was really to get a chance to paddle our beautiful, new Mad River Eclipse !!! (They both passed !!)

Back at the put-in, after moving the cars, we excitedly donned our PFDs, double-checked everything in and about the canoe, shoved off, jumped in, headed upstream and executed the turn to go downstream in the center of the river ... a perfect start to the perfect day !!

The river level was just right, the rains having added enough water for us to float above most obstacles. Birds were in abundance. The current was swift enough that we didn't have to work very hard, but slow enough that we had plenty of control. The cloud cover kept the sun and glare out of our eyes. The temperature was cool enough for a jacket, but not so cool that we were uncomfortable. The people were the best: friendly, fun, funny. They watched the "beginners" carefully, but without hovering ... ready to offer assistance or advice, if needed, but never treated us as "newbies" or "outsiders." We felt

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Illinois River Trip

by Jerry Johnson

A group of 22 enjoyed some good water flow on the Illinois River April 24th with the rain holding off until we had paddled 16 miles Saturday and gotten off the water. Most of the group enjoyed The Echota House restaurant north of Tahlequah for buffalo and quail after the day on the river. Some of the group paddled 4 miles on Sunday morning with others opting for a 9-mile stretch. The group included 4 new members to the DDRC, 2 guests and 12 first timers to this river. The rain started again before noon on Sunday and most of us got to drive halfway back to DFW in rain.

**The May Meeting of
The Dallas DownRiver
Club will meet at the
Bath House & Cultural
Center on White Rock
Lake**

(See map on page 8)



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1999

DDRC OFFICERS

President:

Jack Deatherage 972-222-1407

Vice President:

Debbie Meller 972-727-9290

Secretary:

Eric Rounsefell 972-370-5844

Treasurer:

Chris Cockrell 214-340-3181

Newsletter Editor:

Steve Schleter 972-329-5502

Internet Webmaster:

Rich Grayson 214-827-0144

Environmental:

David Lamb 214-931-3068

Librarian:

Keith Smith 940-566-4869

Roster:

Marvin Dietel 972-564-1545

Trip Coordinators:

Charles Edwards 972-867-6579

Jerry Kier 972-869-2642

Sam Sloan 214-826-6159

Membership:

Cyndy Meijer 972-342-5821

Racing:

Richard Steepe 972-252-2493

Raffle:

Judy Purze 972-717-5053

Yo Deatherage 972-222-1407

Safety:

Mary Beth Kvanli 214-352-5446

Training:
Kayaks

Debbie Meller 214-727-9290

President's Column

by Jack Deatherage

Guess everyone will remember that our next meeting will be at White Rock Lake. I will bring a couple of small grills, just bring what you want to cook along with side dishes and dessert and plates and a fork, you know the usual camp gear. Also bring a boat or two for visitors to try.

Get Connected on the Internet

DDRC's website is provided by Inturnet, inc., a local ISP based in Richardson. In addition to providing our club with FREE web space, inturnet also offers access to DDRC members at a 10% discount off the regular monthly rate of \$19.95 per month for unlimited, 24 hours per day access.

To top it off, DDRC receives a 10% bonus for each member signing up, so it's a double win-win for you and the club. If you want your own web pages, inturnet provides 10MB FREE space, enough space to create about 900 pages (more or less)! You will also receive an e-mail address so you can communicate easier.

Call Tod E. Weber at (972)783-0066 for an account and be sure to tell him you are a DDRC member so both you and the club get the bonuses, or contact Rich Grayson.

Due to liability concerns, I'm not going to beg a trailer full of boats this year from High Trail's or any other outfitter. Having a dozen canoes and kayaks on a trailer that I don't own or have insurance on, setting in my driveway does not make for a good nights sleep. Almost all of us have several boats. Please bring at least one. Also extra paddles and pfd's.

Again want to thank Bob Narramore for his extreme generosity in the past for our White Rock outings.

Our club have had a lot of publicity the last month or so from two newspaper articles and the numerous handouts at several functions. I have had a lot of emails and phone calls from interested people. The problem being that most of them have no experience and have the urge to get on the water. If anyone is interested in taking someone under their wing, let me know. Some of them are have some experience on the water but need advice on boats, tents, sleeping bags, etc.. I have also been contacted by various Boy Scout and Girl Scout Troops looking for help in getting merit badges and planning various trips. Anyone interested in helping let me know. There will most likely be a group at our White Rock outing looking for some basic instruction.

This can be a good opportunity to get these kids off on the right foot.

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 1st Thursday of each month. Information may be submitted via e-mail, at 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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DDRC Annual Membership

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

Send to:

DDRC

**P.O. Box 820246
Dallas, Texas 75382**

Editor's Note: Last month David's email which had the April's Environment Section in it slip through my inbox unnoticed till after the newsletter had been printed. So this month I have included both April and May. Sorry for any inconvenience.

The Environment Section

by David Lamb

May: 103 bags of trash were picked up in Denton Creek, the Elm Fork of the Trinity and at White Rock Lake during April by:

Brian Carroll
Rich Kasey
Alan Lamb
David Lamb
Rachel Lamb
Leslie Morris
Travis Patterson

This is a "no joke, whopping" lot of trash picked up. We need a bit more help on both White Rock and the Elm Fork. We are right at the edge of making it look terrific. The Elm Fork has been tough as the litter from the creeks has been moving into the river with each rain. It is only cleaned 500M up from the boat ramp at McInnish.

I have been going out most afternoons to McInnish to continue to make significant headway up the Elm Fork. I would love to have some company.

I have a cleanup log on the www.adventureteam.com/tckc web site for those who wish to see a log of what we have accomplished.

The cumulative total is 984 bags since August 1997.

The next four "For The Love of The Lake" Cleanups at White Rock Lake will be May 8, June 12, July 10, August 14. I need someone to be in charge of the summer cleanups as we have races on those Saturdays. Please call David Lamb at 972-931-3068 or email at dlamb@adventureteam.com to offer assistance.

April: 11 bags of trash were picked up from Marine Creek Lake and Denton Creek in March by:

Alan Lamb
David Lamb
Brian Carroll
Dustin Usery

For information on how to be part of a massive Trinity River cleanup see <http://people.goplay.com/trcleanup>. This will be on May 15. There will be twenty cleanup sites. Approximately 200 national guardsmen will be working cleanup with their equipment. You can also check www.adventureteam.com/tckc, go to event schedule, then double click on "A Clean Trinity". This will show a preliminary list of cleanup sites.

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
 Downriver K-1 \$450 + \$100 shipping

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

ICF K-1s have your choice of pedals or T-bar, over or under stern rudder.

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

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

As many of you know, we are working to build a sprint and kayak polo paddling club with emphasis on kids here in Dallas. This is taking a lot of effort and money, but with great rewards. As a special fund raising project this summer, we are going to paddle as far down the Trinity as we can. We are looking for sponsors who can provide a few pennies per mile for our eager paddlers. We will be

trying to cover 40-50 river miles per day. We are starting from downtown Dallas on June 26. We hope to reach the end of the Trinity before July 11. Heck, we may even try to paddle to Galveston!

Please consider pledging a few pennies per mile for the folks that are going to try this. It helps them keep paddling knowing that they are working to raise money for a future

club and to try to get the Olympics to Dallas. Call 972-931-3068 or email lambdapro@sprynet.com to make your pledge.

See you in Galveston Bay!
 Thanks.

Brian Carroll - Olympic K-1
 Alan Lamb - Olympic K-1
 Rachel Lamb - Tandem Surf Ski
 David Lamb - Tandem Surf Ski

How Teresa Got Her Groove Back or Clinic vs. Clinical: Post-Traumatic Boating Stress Syndrome And Recovery

by Tre Roberts

A strange and confusing thing happened to me on the way to Class IV last year. My fear center, always vibrantly active to date, shut down and altogether stopped communicating. It felt real good for awhile there but sure caused a lot of trouble before it reactivated. First there was my Ocoee search-and-rescue kayak scare, then the Guadalupe 100-year-flood search-rescue-and-property-loss trauma, rat-a-tat the Barton-Creek borrowed-property-pin incident, then flash news of the death of a friend on the Potomac (search but no recovery). After months of grief and confusion my fear center belatedly decided to kick back in and start re-sending those little packets of 180-proof adrenaline. You know the ones. They poison the brain and tauten muscles to the point of non-functionality. Too bad that naughty fear center didn't see fit to enhance my good judgment, but those who know me can tell you that never was a well-developed area of my consciousness anyway. Thank goodness for guardian angels, good Samaritans and best friends.

I had the luxury of reviewing all this recently while lazily recirculating in the hole at Huaco Falls during a 3000cfs release on the Guadalupe (yes Virginia, there is whitewater in Texas). I'd gotten there through fearful distraction (paddling on the wrong side altogether) just before the fair-weather fear center kicked whimsically back off and left me on my own to sort out the mess it'd gotten me into! I low braced like a proper banshee but my entire boat was immediately sucked under. Through the miracle of poor outfitting, my heroic brace suspended me alone, sucking big breaths of spray while spinning around like the head of one possessed, looking for life support and a precious turquoise Rival. It was nowhere, nowhere, deep in nowhere! The suck took me as well and I was nowhere too. I'm told the boat endured out real swell. Guess I passed it on the escalator down. Fascinated by

new, rather circular sensations and busy reliving my deceased friend's experience before he'd vanished into infinitely less friendly terrain, I emerged mysteriously downstream and infinitely calm. I took off and had a humiliatingly snooty but good long cry, punctuated by my friend Whitney who paddled over to console me after each of his rodeo forays into the blender. A stop-off on the way back up in line from one who missed Scott too. Very comforting and therapeutic.

I considered psychiatric counseling but signed up for canoe clinics instead. First, a Dallas Down-River club-sponsored CPR and first aid course from the Red Cross in which a rather unpleasant and self-impressed instructor talked down to us for four hours two nights running. Her delivery seemed insultingly geared for 2nd graders. The teenagers in the class humored her rather more seriously than the adults or we never would have gotten through it so stubborn was her insistence on routine. We all hunkered down to the material and patiently waded through her inanity, forced to grudgingly respect her thorough knowledge of the basics. Fortunately they had low-fat animal crackers in the snack machine. Biting off their little heads got me through the worst of her. Besides, my classmates were congenial and given to just the right amount of class clowning. We painstakingly walked through the steps of salvation and I'm learning more as I periodically review the text.

Next came a two-day Mark Poindexter "precision river running" clinic. Mark is well known for being laid back and friendly with a great sense of humor. I'd taken from him before and eagerly anticipated a great time and the opportunity to learn a lot. A Team Dagger C-1 slalom racer, Mark tweaked our basic strokes and boat lean, then expanded our repertoire to include enhanced cross strokes, side slips, slalom gates and a battery of flatwater drills and specific

stroke combos. We all got real excited about the cross strokes, and I for one immediately and awkwardly began incorporating them into my routine paddling to the point of high abuse. But that was good. Mark's main goal was to get us out of the habit of hanging onto outside steering strokes which kill momentum. He wanted us to increase the options in our little bags of tricks. He also wanted us to see that we didn't have to move up to class V to challenge ourselves. It could be done on class II water with the proper gate placement. He worked with us on another important skill - plotting moves for the entire slalom course before you run it—a crucial strategy for paddling high-consequence runs on class V water. Mark urged us to paddle smart, to be aware of small water features and use them to our advantage. It wasn't a new concept so much as one we needed to incorporate more. We ate some great dinners, drank our share of killer margaritas and had a lot of laughs in the process.

Third was a Boy Scout instructor-training course in outdoor wall climbing. It gave me a chance to try a new source of adrenaline and practice my knots. Plus it really amused my boyfriend's staff who'd previously assumed Jeff had no life. And I was good at it, which is always nice for me on those rare occasions I take to something quickly. I have to admit, one reason I was able to climb those walls and chimneys so quickly was because I was so scared I wanted to get it over as fast as I could! The fiendish fear center was cranking that day and would NOT listen to my constant admonishment that I was safely on a rope and it could back off now. No way.

Fourth and most fearful, the Bob Foote Clinic. I'd been watching him on videos for years, paddle one of his numerous boat designs and even lusted for one of his paddles. But I was really

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afraid of this guy. I'd heard stories of student humiliation. I'd heard he ran his clinics like boot camps. I'd heard the proud boasts of those who had defied him. In short, I'd heard he was a jerk. But I also knew that he was good. I signed up for boot camp and corralled a friend in too. Stephanie and I showed up on time the first day out of fear. And a strange thing happened. He turned out to be a swell guy! We showed up on time the next two days out of sheer suspense. We kept waiting for him to turn, to snap, to act out. A few times it looked like it might happen. It never did. I don't know if he found God, Buddha, Kent Ford or AA, but Bob Foote was not only a great instructor but a really great guy. I was dumbfounded to hear he'd spent a week with Jake Albritton when his dad died, and another week helping the Tigards fix up their rental properties for sale so they could retire. Could this possibly be the same guy I'd heard berated all these years? No matter. He tore apart our basic strokes and put them back together much improved. He took away our cross forwards (unless we were really serious about steering towards that offside) and assured us we weren't ready for the cross sweep and the cross bow draw. Instead he pushed us to perfect our stern pries and draws, clearly demonstrating how. He had 12 students and 6 or 7 assistant instructors, so nothing escaped undetected. Instruction began at 8:30 or 9 am each day, continued through lunch and, after a brief and hurried dinner break, we gathered round for videos and lecture till 9 pm. Three days of intensive and invaluable learning.

I abandoned cross strokes altogether for about a month, returning only after much concentration on the subtleties of the on-side. Taking the clinic feedback seriously to heart, I worked hard to quiet both paddle and boat, re-centering my gravity and strengthening visual keys and muscle memory of proper form and finesse – where to cut off propulsion strokes, hanging on steering strokes less frequently, speeding up the recovery, cleaning up the catch, lining

hands and torso up along more synergistic planes. So little time, so much to know. It really pays to take instruction from a variety of teachers and spice your own parameters with a dash of each.

I'm heading east to the Ocoee this month with Charles Smith and the North Texas River Runners to test the rewards of my hard work, dragging along my Guardian Angel boyfriend to help assuage the insistent adrenaline in hopes my shoulder and torso muscles will be relaxed enough to carry me successfully through whatever other rivers might be running and our group skills may dare. I have no current aspirations to hard boat class V. I'll proudly portage Lucy around those or settle for tandem shredding with Jeff and hope his high class hard boat moves will come to me someday. Better to execute class IV moves on class II features through conscious machinations than to generate class V consequences on class III water through sheer irresponsible audacity. I officiously passed my carnage queen scepter on to a much younger candidate better skilled in safety. I've got the slalom gates to tackle and yet more clinics to keep me amused awhile. I think I'd rather recirculate amongst instructors than in holes. I suspect some swimming classes are in order as well as heightened safety, first aid and boating skill development.

Looking back with 20-20 humility, I see my great mistake was letting the destination distract me from the journey.

I rushed my own development in a vain attempt to keep up with my faster learning friends, selfishly endangering them, at times endangered by and/or rescued by these same chums or serendipitous handsome perfect strangers. Perhaps I learned my lessons harder than I had to, perhaps that's simply how it goes. I was luckier than the high toll of boaters who died in 1999. I finally learned that sometimes you have to step back in order to move forward and give up some favored boating chums in order not to hold them back or burden them. I'm really a better boater than my fear center recognizes. I wish that I could count on it for realistic feedback but it's a strange and quirky beast, generating somewhere in my limbic system, not my brain. Fear don't make ya yellow, but it'll get you there, and in even worse spots if you either indulge or ignore it. I did both before that luxurious recirculation and its concomitant gestalt. Now my motto is: Twice the boater, half the risk. I'll take the time and pay the dues to get there.

US National Kayak Polo Team member "E.J" Ambrosetti will be in Dallas, May 22 and 23, conducting a free introductory workshop for Kayak Polo. All level of paddlers are welcome. Thrills, spills, and fun guaranteed! Contact Marsha Harner at (214)683-9641 or marsha@kayakatak.com for more information.

TRINITY RIVER CHALLENGE NEWS

by Debbie Meller

We are still needing the following efforts to be coordinated before the race. It's only 4 months away! Don't worry, you won't be on your own. We try to get new people involved so that the same folks aren't always doing everything and getting burnout, but the old coordinators are always available to turnover and assist the new coordinators. I've always had a good time helping out with this race. This race brings a lot of top Texas paddlers to our area, is a great membership booster, and is just plain fun. If you do nothing else for the club all year except pay dues and go on our trips, this would be the event to do some volunteering.

Award Ceremony – someone to handle this special event and announce winners.

Event Marketing – a new and important role for someone to contact businesses, organizations, and the media to market this event.

Race Sponsorship – we need everyone's help to obtain sponsorship of money, raffle items, or other resource donations.

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accepted into the group from the beginning !! (Have I mentioned that everything was perfect ?? !!)

Lunch on the river was delightful. What a variety of food !! There were sandwiches, crisp veggies, snacky things, nuts, sweets, even a beautiful fresh salad in a real salad bowl !! Knowing little about kayaks, I was really surprised when Rochelle (another new DDRC member) pulled two folding chairs out of her kayak !! She and her husband ate in style and comfort !! Jay, Jodie's incredibly well-behaved young son, found a baby frog and saved it from harm by moving it out of the way of our big, wet feet.

After lunch, our paddling continued in unabated happiness !! Our leaders, Bonnie and Jerry, guided us around obstacles, pointed out beauties of nature we might have missed, and took excellent care of us all. Under their tutelage, we learned bunches ... we even eddied-out river-right, and learned how to say it !! At one point, around a sharp bend, with a swift current and a huge downed tree, we were glad to see Charles Edwards waiting on shore, throw bag at the ready, in case any of us needed it !!! I am pleased to say, however, that its use was not required !!

At the take-out, having moved the Jeep down near the boat, Diane and I were standing by the canoe, going over our loading procedures ... we didn't want to look like bumbling idiots in front of everyone ... when, all of a sudden, four strong arms reached down, picked up the boat as if it were weightless, and placed it on top of the Jeep !! It happened so quickly that I don't even know who our "Sir Galahads" were !!! It was the easiest loading job we've ever experienced !! (Have I mentioned that everything was perfect ?? !!)

Having the newest canoe in the bunch, we took a lot of ribbing. (Apparently, it's important that your craft have a "used" look !!!) Well, after running a few rocky shallows, we now have "adventure marks" on our boat, too !! Back at camp, however, there was still a threat to transfer mud from other canoes to ours, but it faded when I explained that

The intent of this monthly article will be to communicate basic information that can be used to help prevent accidents or at least minimize injury, involving paddling sports. The information will come from a number of sources such as the Whitewater Rescue Manual, the Outdoor Action Program of Princeton University, the ACA and American Whitewater.

Let's talk about helmets and their fit. Why? Because it's important to your survival during whitewater paddling.

A whitewater helmet should have 1/2 to 3/4 inch of shock absorption, cover the forehead all the way down to the eyebrows, cover the temples and cover the back of the head. Full coverage helmets also cover the ears and sides of the face. Some sidecut helmets cover the top of the ears.

Too many helmets sold today, as whitewater helmets, do not offer this critical protection. They don't have any shock absorption material. They expose the forehead. They expose the temples. I see people paddling with these and I just cringe. But they look cool and they have the cool brand name on them, so people are buying.

Even a helmet that should supply the right protection can become useless if it is not fitted correctly. Fitting means the tightness of the fit. New helmets should come with instructions on how to test the tightness of its fit and extra material to pad it. With the chinstrap tight, the helmet should not be able to be pushed with little effort back off the forehead. It should not be able to be pushed forward, exposing the back of the head, or moved from side to side to expose the temples.

When a paddler is flipped underwater, thrown from a boat, or sent on a swim the risk of hitting their head is high. In fact, it is inevitable. Don't underestimate the power and speed of the water. An impact with a rock, or even forceful current, can move an ill fitted helmet, exposing sensitive areas. These impacts could cause severe lacerations, concussions, unconsciousness, and even death.

mud just wouldn't stick to something so beautiful !!!

That evening we all went to a marvelous restaurant. The menu featured such exotic fare as buffalo steaks, quail, mountain oysters, as well as more mundane offerings such as shrimp and regular old beef steak. The food was excellent, the atmosphere, terrific; they even had a bubble machine blowing bubbles outside !! About half-way through the meal, the sky that had been threatening rain all day finally opened up and let loose a gully-washer that lasted most of the night. I am happy to report that our tent, whose seams we had sealed *twice*, was totally waterproof !!! Diane's

memorable remark was, "I've never been so close to the rain before !!!"

The trip was wonderful ... beyond our expectations. All the planning and hard work of our trip leaders really paid off. THANK YOU, Bonnie and Jerry, and thank you, DDRC; we are now hooked forever on the joys of paddling !! Did I mention that everything was perfect ?? !!

Sabine River

Memorial Weekend

May 29 -31

Call:

Sam Sloan @ 214.826.6159

for more information

THE SAFETY SECTION



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Richardson, Texas 75081 Fax: (972)889-8060

Starting April 21 every Wednesday.
DDRC Roll, Paddle, and Rescue sessions from 5:00pm to dark at Lake Grapevine, Rockledge Park. The Park is located at the northwest side of the dam (off the other side of the road from the spillway). If there is a dam release, then go to the spillway. No park fees.
For more information call **Keith Smith @ (940) 566-4869.**

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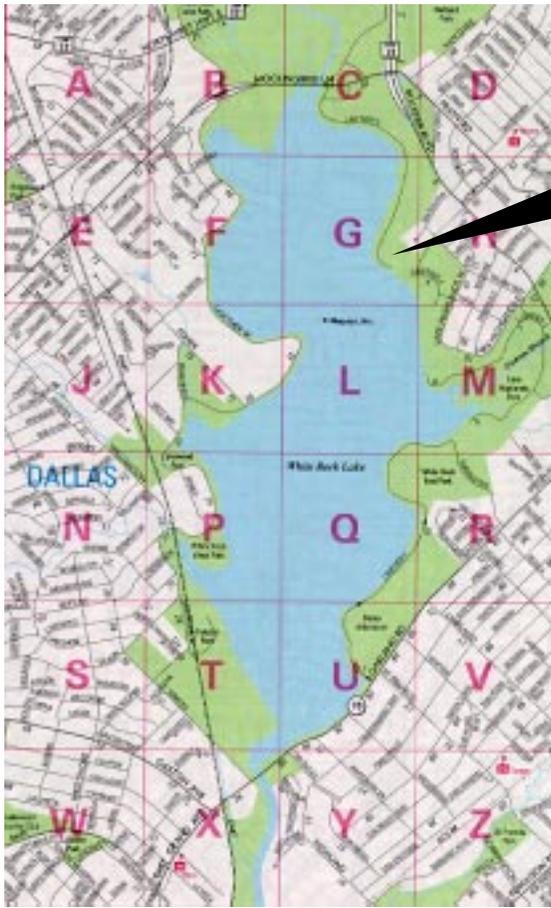
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**DALLAS DOWNRIVER CLUB
MAY MEETING
Thur. 20th, 7:00 PM**

This month's meeting will be held at the Bath House and Cultural Center on White Rock Lake. Bring your boat, some cold beverages, and something to throw on the grill. Plan on having a Great Time!

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

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MAY '99