



# TEXSAR DISPATCH

Each issue of the DISPATCH is dedicated to sharing the mission and passion of TEXSAR, and insights into its people.

**October 2024**

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The 9th Annual TEXSAR Search Party was a resounding success and a great highlight of TEXSAR's 20th Anniversary. Thank you to everyone in TEXSAR's past, present and future.

TEXSAR is a 501 c (3) nonprofit registered in Texas. Federal ID: 84-1644603

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## From the CEO



I had the honor of sharing my thoughts about TEXSAR at the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual TEXSAR Search Party, which was an incredible event — our best ever, by all measures — thanks to our supporters and volunteers. “Thanks” was the core of my message. There is so much to be thankful for, individually and collectively, and as an organization. The realities of TEXSAR’s work to fulfill its mission as “Texans helping Texans” with service above self provide different perspectives on “thanks” and gratitude that are worth keeping in mind, especially as we start the path toward the holidays.

### *Thanks for this day*

We never know what might happen to us, our loved ones, our friends or members of our community. Each day is truly a gift. What we have today we may not have tomorrow, whether that is a person, a condition or possessions. Be thankful for the day, every day.

### *Thanks for growth*

Growth is not just a matter of size, but includes knowledge gained, skills acquired and challenges met. I see growth in our volunteers at every training and every mission. We should all aspire to grow in some way. TEXSAR has grown as an organization in its capabilities, reach, partnerships and much more; our growth is because of our volunteers and our commitment to Texas and Texans. Every day is a good day for growth.

### *Thanks for a fighting chance*

TEXSAR missions remind us that everyone wants a fighting chance. A chance to be found or to find a missing loved one; a chance to be saved from rushing waters or to save someone else who is in harm’s way; a chance to find the unfindable piece of information or evidence necessary to close a case; a chance to succeed.

All these reasons for thanks and gratitude relate to all of us and to the organizations or entities we are part of.

Thank you to everyone who made the Search Party a resounding success. Thank you for helping us honor our volunteer members and their selfless efforts. Your greatest honor to their efforts would be to give thanks for this day, for growth and for a fighting chance.

-Justin McInnis



# News and Announcements

## Search Party Highlights

The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual TEXSAR Search Party was an outstanding success, topping all previous events with income of over \$250,000 and more than 350 attendees who were able to meet TEXSAR members, play games, and see first-hand some of the important assets that TEXSAR deploys in service to Texas and Texans. What a great way to celebrate TEXSAR's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary! One of the games was the throwbag toss that revealed how difficult it is to accurately toss a bag that could be what saves a person who is in trouble in the water. Attendees also enjoyed hearing from keynote speaker Mike Sarraile and having the chance to view TEXSAR's new video, "[TEXSAR Never Stops](#)." Check out the photo gallery [here](#) to enjoy again the fun of the night.

Nick Spears, one of our friends at McCoy's Building Materials wrote,

*"McCoy's takes a lot of pride in our relationship together and is so grateful for all of the amazing work TEXSAR does around the state every single day.*

*This event is truly one of our favorites to support and attend each year.*

*I personally and absolutely love it when the quiet moments 'hit' the room during the event. When everyone, and everything, stops.*

*In those moments you feel, and hear the sacrifices made by so many in the TEXSAR Family.*

*Thank you to you, Justin, Shannon, and the entire TEXSAR team.*

*So proud to support the mission!"*



## Combined Federal Campaign Season

Again this year, TEXSAR is part of the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) effort that provides opportunities for federal employees to support their charities of choice with paycheck deductions. Please consider supporting TEXSAR through this convenient program if you are a federal employee. Spread the word! Our CFC number is 35805.



## Thrivent Event Benefits TEXSAR



Thrivent played a major role in helping TEXSAR acquire needed funding in our response to the Panhandle wildfires. For this they were named TEXSAR's "Supporter of the Quarter" for Q2 2024. They recently held an event in September that also benefited TEXSAR. Thrivent hosts events for its clients that enables them to get to know area charities and provides an opportunity for them to support specific needs of the charities. TEXSAR is honored to be among the charities that Thrivent celebrates. Thank you, Thrivent!

# Member Milestones

One of the challenges for any nonprofit is the challenge of adding volunteers and keeping them. TEXSAR is proud of its growth in membership as well as in the longevity of those who join. For September, Happy TEXSAR-versary to the following individuals.

## 14 Years

Mike P.

## 11 Years

Doris C.

Meg H.

## 9 Years

Suzanne J.

## 7 Years

Andrew T.

Carl P.

Chris Buchanan

Emmett M.

Kevin D.

Rith B.

Sarah H.

Tyrone N.

## 6 Years

Brandon H.

Isaac G.

## 5 Years

Caryne E.

## 4 Years

Chris J.

## 2 Years

Chris H.

Dorina H.

Greg P.

Sandro M.

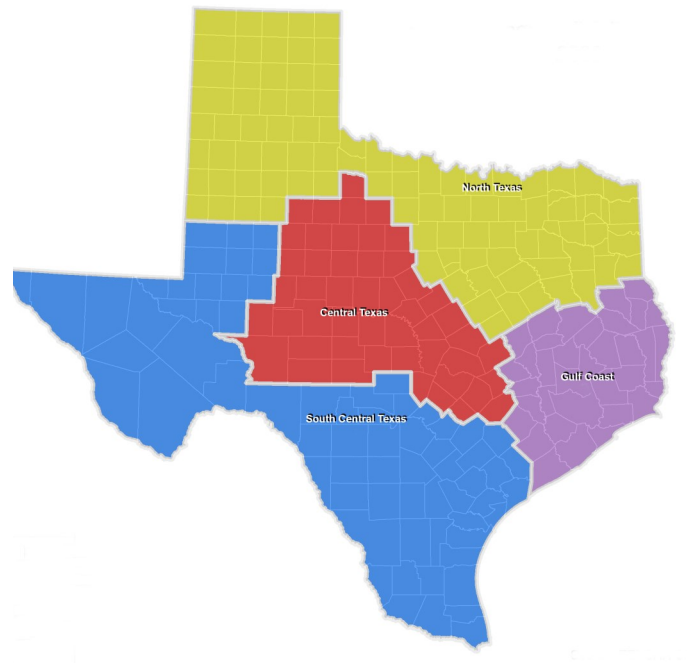
Stacey S.

Suzanne M.

Tom L

## 1 Year

George C.



## Division Updates

The call went out to all the divisions: “Help make the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Search Party event the best ever...and have fun!” Volunteers from around the state did exactly that. Our event on September 21<sup>st</sup> was our best Search Party ever. Thank you, TEXSAR members for all that you did to make the party successful and fun!

Thank you for your years of dedicated service to the community as “Texans helping Texans.”

TEXSAR is always looking for new members to serve with us. There are a myriad of ways that members can support our mission of “Texans helping Texans” with service above self. If you have a talent that you want to share and a commitment to serve, there is a place for you. For more information about joining and the expectations of members, please check [here](#).

Thank you!





## Central

TEXSAR membership continues to grow. Each month, a new member orientation session is held to help new members learn more about TEXSAR, meet fellow members and receive a warm welcome to the TEXSAR family. Sessions are held at various locations around the state. 29 new members attended the recent event hosted by the Central division.

In October, the division will host a Swift Water Rescue Technician training program. This is one of the most sought-after offerings among members.



## South Central

The division recently hosted a Wilderness Search and Rescue class. This program is required of all TEXSAR volunteers and employees. Wilderness Search and Rescue (WSAR) training is a minimum requirement for SAR Responder level. WSAR is offered by the TEXSAR Training Institute (TTI) trainers. This course introduces students to the basics of ground search and rescue including needed gear, self-care, search theories and definitions, lost person behavior, search techniques, radio communications, land navigation, and search management. This course certificate must be renewed every three years.

## Gulf Coast

Two new shallow-water boats were recently added to our assets. [Firehouse Subs Foundation's](#) generosity enabled us to acquire one of them and a combination of donors funded the other. As with most TEXSAR assets, they are available to any mission that needs them, regardless of where they are stored.



Most training expenses are covered by the members. You can help support their training by donating [here](#). Please consider helping us defray the expense of training for our members.

Thank you!

# Spotlight on Supporters

Thank you, supporters, for making the 9th Annual TEX-SAR Search Party a resounding success!

## Event Sponsors

### *Platinum*

H-E-B

Andrew Tull Enterprises

### *Presenting Sponsor*

JAS

### *Bar Sponsors*

Lande and Chris Juban

### *Photobooth Sponsors*

Hat Trick Promotions

### *Gold Sponsor*

Tailwind Business Ventures

GCS Technologies

Richard Belliveau

Silver Sponsor

Sun Coast Resources, Inc.

Chris Branham Memorial Foundation

Judge Beth Smith

La Cima

### *In-kind Sponsor*

Whitestone Fine Jewelry

Corporate Sponsors

Texas Mutual Insurance

McCoy's Building Supply

## Auction and In-kind Sponsors

Abby Brantley

Alfredo Rivera and Keith Kramarz

AMC

Amy's Ice Cream

Andrew Rauxh

Atlas Industries

Austin Aquarium

Austin Zoo

Beau Theriot

Ben Bronson

Beth Smith

Black Rifle Coffee

Bob Talamini

Brave Brew

Capital Cruises

Carve

Cheesecake Factory

Clutter Consultants

Consuela

Crystal Falls Golf Course

David and Suzanne Johnson

David Gonzalez / Isreal Rios

Diamonds Direct

Eric Hess

Float On

Garrison Bros

H-E-B Floral

Home Depot

Hot Mother Trucker Hats

Jasmine Steele

Jay Roush

Joe Gleinser

Joy Matheson

Kathy Rigdon

Keith and Sarah Smith

Kyrsten Byrens / Dan Degnan

Liz James

Longhorn Cellars

Mark Vitek

Matt and Margaret Woodruff

McCoy's

Messina Hof Winery

NB Staging

Nikole Martinez

Nothing Bundt Cakes

Omaha Steaks

Ranger Firearms

Renaissance Hotel

Round Rock Express

Rudy's

San Antonio Spurs

Sarah Strum

Sarge Custom Rods

Sea World

Siboney Cellars

Smokey Mo's

Spec's Wine and Spirits

Sunny Fox Farms

Texas Stars Foundation

The Dierker and Schnacke Families

The Hills Country Club

The Line Hotel

Theresa Coniglio

Tito's

Top Notch

Total Wine

Typhoon Texas

Wade Zunker

Whitestone Fine Jewelry



# Development Corner

## What is the giving season? Why does it matter?

October is the runway that leads to “the giving season,” as they call it in the nonprofit world. The “season” refers to the time of year when people are in the gift-giving mode, and that includes charitable contributions. It is also the time when people have a better-informed view of their tax situation for the year and can make charitable decisions based on their tax situation. By November, the “season” is all around us, leading to the gift-giving pinnacle: Christmas. In a recent webinar, a nonprofit expert reminded attendees that 30% of individual giving to charities occurs in December of each year, with 12% of individual giving occurring the last three days of December.



## Why and how does this matter to you as a donor?

Nonprofits receive the majority of funds from individuals during the giving season, with the most being donated in December. That means there is a lot of pressure on donors during the holiday season with requests coming from all charities they have supported, and many they have never even heard of. We hope you consider TEXSAR during this time.

### *Taxes*

Everyone is looking for the best outcome with their income taxes and donations can play an important part in reducing taxes. Most people get their best insight into their personal situation as the year wraps up.

### *Required Minimum Distributions*

Many people are required to make minimum distributions from certain types of retirement accounts (check with your tax advisor for your situation if you are over 72). Making a charitable contribution directly from your account can provide tax advantages. Again, check with your advisor, but please consider TEXSAR if RMDs are an issue for you.

### *Capital Gains*

Some assets, such as stocks, can be contributed directly to charities with great tax advantage. Again, check with your advisor if this is a good year for you to use this approach to charitable giving.

### *Thankfulness*

The season reminds people of all they have to be thankful for. We hope you are thankful for TEXSAR’s “Texans Helping Texans” with service above self. Please consider TEXSAR in your charitable giving by donating [here](#).

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about ways your contribution can have a significant impact on TEXSAR’s mission. [Dion.McInnis@TEXSAR.org](mailto:Dion.McInnis@TEXSAR.org) or 512-956-6727.

**Please consider joining our Service Above Self monthly giving program. The donation levels remind us that TEXSAR is able to deploy in all 254 counties of Texas. Regular, monthly contributions play a significant role in helping TEXSAR be prepared to send skilled volunteers to wherever they are needed, whenever they are needed. You can donate [here](#). Thank you.**

## Partner Perspective



*Jeremiah Bently serves as the Vice President of Marketing and Community Affairs at Texas Mutual Insurance. He has worked at the company for 25 years. Texas Mutual is a Texas company that is the leading workers' compensation insurance provider in the state with more than 76,000 business owners as customers. They*

*provide coverage for more than 1.5 million Texas workers and its commitment to Texas businesses and workers led to an innovative partnership with TEXSAR that began in 2021.*

Texas Mutual started its relationship with TEXSAR in 2021 with a sense of a common purpose to develop a new resource for small businesses in Texas. TEXSAR enlisted the help of Texas State University Institute for Government Innovation. That was an important win. All three partners to the concept felt the same way: they wanted credibility for the final product, not credit. That was key to the coalition, and key to the success of what the partners have accomplished and will continue to accomplish.

The concept was to develop a tool that would help Texas' small businesses prepare for and cope with disasters or emergencies. Three years in the making, the team was able to officially launch the web-based resource this past June: [BeforeDuringAfter.com](https://BeforeDuringAfter.com).

The original concept was a hard copy resource for businesses. One of the important aspects to a great partnership is the commitment to innovation and good solutions. Our partnership team had that. We were focused on providing a useful, easy-to-use resource. We ended up with a product that was better than any of us thought was possible when we started. I think is another great sign of partnership as the partners make each other better as they collectively focus on the desired outcome.

The partners recognized that small businesses are the lifeblood of Texas, particularly in the rural areas. We knew that we needed to provide an effective way to protect those businesses and help them rebound quickly after a disaster. The project took longer than we originally envisioned because we were more focused on effectiveness than an artificial deadline to simply say that we had completed the project. We believe that the product is much better because of this commitment to excellence.

TEXSAR is more than a partner in creating deliverables. The organization is a thought partner, too. I am happy to say Texas Mutual is so pleased with the united effort that TEXSAR has assembled for [BeforeDuringAfter.com](https://BeforeDuringAfter.com), that it will be supporting the future development and management of the resource as more Texas businesses come to depend on the valuable information available to them through the site.

Texas Mutual has confidence in the resource's future as the resource rollout continues through our agents to their clients, and to chambers of commerce, associations and Small Business Development Center offices. The team sees [BeforeDuringAfter.com](https://BeforeDuringAfter.com) as a living, changing product, continually being improved upon and enhanced based on feedback from users and modifications that have been part of the plan, including creating a Spanish-language version of the site.

I believe that the partnership with TEXSAR and Texas State University has been one of the most rewarding things that I have done during my career at Texas Mutual. It has been a true partnership in every sense of the word and now we are bringing other partners on board with this important resource for Texas and Texans.

We feel that in our partnership with TEXSAR and the other partners that are making [BeforeDuringAfter.com](https://BeforeDuringAfter.com) a reality, we are helping make Texas businesses safe and secure. All the partners share a common commitment to being leaders with a focus on mission while giving back to the communities we serve.



# Mission Matters

September started slowly but finished in a flourish of missions. As with many of TEXSAR's responses, details can't be shared to protect the privacy of individuals involved and/or to limit information sharing about ongoing criminal cases.

With three months left in the year, we are already at more than 90% of our goal for missions for the year. It seems like every time one of our team members delivers a presentation at a law enforcement meeting or attends a conference, we find new partners who want and need our services.

Missions have included efforts in the Panhandle and Central Texas as well as with sheriff's departments in Harris and Panola counties.

## WebXtra: Missing Tatum man found dead near pond

Published: Sep. 25, 2024 at 2:48 PM CDT

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A Tatum man has been found dead Wednesday morning after he was reported missing since Sunday.

In an interview related to the Panola County mission, the sheriff described TEXSAR's work and the reason he requested it. His story is similar to many we hear, that is, departments are overloaded with demands and under-resourced. They need skilled, organized, professional assistance from people who have the talent, equipment and abilities, as well as an unselfish spirit to support the requestors. That is where TEXSAR volunteers fit in.

Sadly, the man was found deceased, but TEXSAR efforts were of value to the Office and brought closure to the man's family. The sheriff complimented TEXSAR volunteers' organization and professionalism. He also

shared that the limit of his department's resources had been reached, thus they requested support. That's TEXSAR: helping agencies by providing skilled personnel who are committed and empathetic. Watch the interview [here](#).

## TEXSAR Trivia

**TEXSAR started in 2004 with six volunteers. As our latest video, "[TEXSAR Never Stops](#)," declares, TEXSAR never stops growing, training and serving.**

**How much do you think you know about TEXSAR? Here is a fun quiz to test your TEXSAR awareness. We are using data for the past ten years. The answers are on the back cover.**

**Since 2013...**

- 1. How many total missions (standby and deployments) has TEXSAR been called upon?**
- 2. Texas is a big state! How many total miles have TEXSAR members committed to missions, training and meetings, all to help them better serve as "Texans helping Texans"?**
- 3. It takes a lot of time to train, deploy and engage as a TEXSAR member. How many total hours have been donated by our volunteers?**
- 4. As the saying goes, "time is money." What is the total value of the donated time committed by TEXSAR volunteers?**

## Gallery of the Month



The room was packed  
Laughter and fun throughout  
Important funds were raised  
'twas a great party, no doubt  
The 9th Annual TEXSAR Search Party...the best ever!  
Thank you!







Thanks to our photographer for the evening, Ronny Galdámez. Find more of his coverage of the event [here](#). Check back as more photos will be added soon.





## Important Links: Stay in Touch!

[Become a Member](#)

[Donate today!](#)

[Service Above Self Monthly Donor program](#)

[2023 Annual Report](#)

Social Media: [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [X](#), [YouTube](#)

[20 Years, 20 stories](#): TEXSAR's 20th Anniversary Celebrated  
Through Stories of Its Members

["TEXSAR Never Stops"](#) video

**[www.TEXSAR.org](http://www.TEXSAR.org)**

Trivia answers from page 9:

1 — Missions: 695; 2 — Miles: 3,161,970;

3 — Hours: 361,585; 4 — Value of donated time: \$10,263,113

**WE'RE PUTTING  
OUT THE CALL**

TEXSAR IS A FINALIST FOR THE

**20  
24 DEFENDER  
SERVICE AWARDS**



*Vote daily!*  
**October 2 - 17**

**VOTE DAILY TO  
SUPPORT TEXSAR**

**CLICK TO VOTE!**