

TEXSAR DISPATCH



TEXSAR DISPATCH is dedicated to sharing the mission and passion of TEXSAR, as well as insight into its people.

June 2025

In this month's issue

2...From the CEO: If there were ever a time...it is now

3....News and Announcements: Highlights and good news

4...Member Milestone: Meet Shawn Hohnstreiter

5...Development Corner: The season of anniversaries is gift-giving time

5...Mission Matters: We have been busy and it is not hurricane/flood season yet!

6-7...Gallery of the Month

Back cover...Key Links: Follow us and stay engaged

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From the CEO



If there were ever a time...it is now.

When weather or economic conditions cause a shortage of bed space in shelters, it is declared an emergency because of the overabundance of need; when economic conditions create an overwhelming need of food banks, it is declared an emergency because of the overabundance of need. While I do not declare an emergency for TEXSAR, our resources are strained because of an overabundance of need for TEXSAR's service across the state. **If you have ever considered supporting our mission, the time is now.**

In January 2025, TEXSAR leadership set an aggressive goal of 125 missions for the year. Last year's goal was 100 and we ended up serving on 126. At the end of May of this year, we had already served and/or scheduled 110 missions. These deployments range from as far west as the Guadalupe Mountains National Park and east to the Piney Woods. Our team has closed cases, saved lives and supported agencies in a myriad of ways. Fortunately, we have more deployable members than we have ever had to address the increasing number of requests. All this activity across the height and breadth of the state puts a demand on equipment, supplies, and support of members...and we are just now entering the hurricane and flood season.

We never want to say "We can't" when it comes to find an elder with dementia or a lost child, to rescue people from rising or raging waters, to provide emergency victims with water or other assistance, or participate in a missing person case with law enforcement...because [TEXSAR Never Stops](#).

Please consider making a contribution to help assure that we never must say, "We can't." You can make a one-time donation [here](#) or become a monthly Service Above Self donor [here](#). You may also [contact our development officer](#) to discuss other giving options.

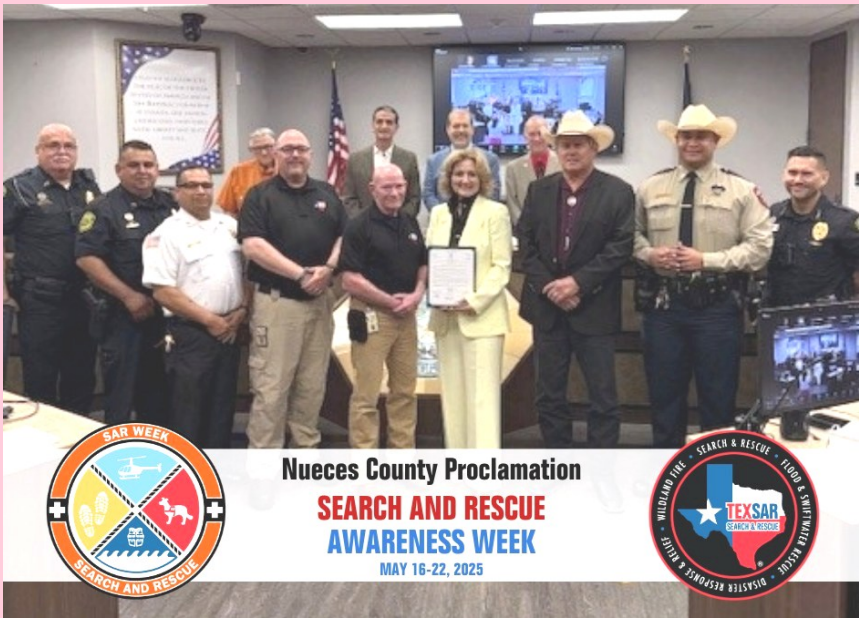
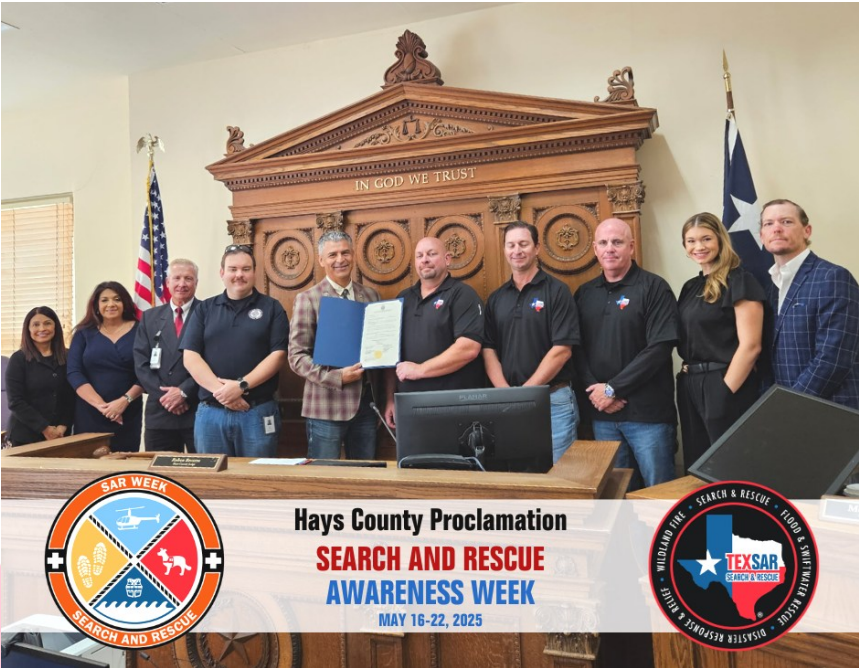


- Justin McInnis

News and Announcements

TEXSAR Humbled by SAR Week Proclamations

TEXSAR was honored by proclamations offered by several counties during SAR Week in honor of the unselfish service provided by search-and-rescue members to agencies and critical infrastructure partners around Texas. Thank you!



Member Milestones



Shawn is one of the founders of TEXSAR. The following profile comes from our series, "[20 Years, 20 Stories](#)."

"I am just a country boy. I love the outdoors. I've worked hard all my life. I began working at 8 and began paying taxes at 10," said Shawn Hohnstreiter, one of the most influential and long-standing influences in the 20-year history of TEXSAR. He is a builder of many things.

Shawn is quick to not take credit for what has been the result of many people's efforts to create, expand and develop TEXSAR to what it is today, but that is like the slab not taking credit for the house built upon it.

His youthful experience with work is not the only thing from the younger years that forged his focus on search/rescue/recovery volunteerism, with a particular passion for swiftwater rescue, including teaching skills in that field. As a child, he had a near-death drowning experience when he was underwater for an hour before being recovered. "We didn't talk about it as a kid. As a family, we just moved on. As I researched more about that type of experience, I became more aware of how common it actually is."

Instead of taking a path that many would – teaching swimming or water safety – Shawn used his drive, energy, ambition and innate urge to serve to help others as a volunteer in the Midwest. He moved to Texas and helped with construction projects with Habitat for Humanity, eventually becoming a project manager. Eventually, he opened his own construction company and expanded to Louisiana for a year and one-half after Hurricane Katrina. He added volunteering for search-and-rescue as a counterbalance to working 70 hours per week. "I was

still busy for that many hours, or more, but they were split between working and volunteering," he said.

"I'm fortunate to have a business and crew that allows me to spend the time I want to with volunteering," he said. He also volunteers with Rodeo Austin, an event that led to early visibility for TEXSAR. "As a force multiplier for law enforcement and EMS, we were able to partner with another charity and raise awareness about TEXSAR."

Shawn originally discovered TEXSAR while attending a farmer's market in Sunset Valley. He could tell that the small group's raw ambition and desire to serve needed more structure and organization to grow into the future. He stepped up to help build just that.

"Most people don't realize the range and scope of missions that TEXSAR volunteers have been part of in its short history. Our volunteers were part of the debris field searches and documentation after the Lockhart balloon catastrophe in 2016 when 16 people died, and after the Amazon flight crash in the swampy lands of Trinity Bay in 2019. TEXSAR first appeared 'on the radar' for many because of its efforts after the Wimberley Floods of 2015. Hurricane Harvey represented TEXSAR's immense capabilities with more than 90 members deployed with about 11,000 hours of assistance. The stats are staggering for an organization as young as TEXSAR."

"I wish potential volunteers would check out TEXSAR and I wish even more agencies were aware of the capabilities of our volunteers. There is so much that TEXSAR can do."

TEXSAR grew by stepping up to fill the gap by asking agencies, "How can we help you?" "If we could help, we did," Shawn said, "and we do."

"I've learned along the way that sometimes you have to think expansively and sometimes you have to keep the blinders on to maintain critical focus. That is as individuals and as an organization. TEXSAR is where it is today and has the future it holds because of that ability."

"TEXSAR is my family," Shawn said. "I don't get emotional about much, except TEXSAR. The organization and the people are everything to me."

Mission Matters

Why is TEXSAR so busy? Because our professionally trained volunteers are trusted by agencies and critical infrastructure partners to serve with commitment, courage and confidentiality. At the end of May, we were already at almost 90% of our projected number of missions for the year. The need is great; the laborers are few. TEXSAR volunteers comprise 1/100th of 1% of the population of Texas.

Though TEXSAR has more deployable members than ever in our history, there is much more need than there are people or resources to accomplish the necessary tasks; that is why TEXSAR is being called upon more and more.

Missing Persons

In 2024, there were 44,783 missing persons reports in Texas, down from nearly 46,000 in 2023, according to the Texas Center for the Missing. The majority are children. TEXSAR assists agencies in searches for missing persons, including the tremendous load of cold cases involving missing persons and homicides.

Floods and Water Rescue

Hundreds of people are rescued from floods, lakes, rivers and the ocean in Texas each year. On Memorial Day, TEXSAR volunteers saved three lives at one lake in separate incidents. TEXSAR assists agencies and emergency management departments to help rescue people and pets.

Disasters

Officially declared disasters are not unfamiliar to Texans, including those caused by floods, freezes, hurricanes, wildfires, tornadoes and the pandemic. TEXSAR assists agencies, bringing assets and skills in service to the needs of the community.

Please consider [supporting](#) TEXSAR and/or becoming a [member](#). The need is great, the laborers are few...but [TEXSAR Never Stops](#).



Development Corner

June is the beginning of hurricane season, a time that we must pay attention to. It is also the month of many wedding anniversaries. You can help keep TEXSAR prepared for the season by making a contribution in honor of your loved one for your anniversary. The same can be said for birthdays, retirements or other times that serve as reminders of how grand life is. Please consider making a donation [here](#), and remember to leave a special note to commemorate what you are choosing to celebrate with your generosity.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss creative ways to match your philanthropic goals with TEXSAR needs: Dion.McInnis@TEXSAR.org or 512-956-6727.

Gallery of the Month



Agencies who request TEXSAR services often compliment the quality of operations and communications that they see with TEXSAR teams. Training, preparation and coordination of processes come together to maximize efficiency and effectiveness. Pictured to the left are TEXSAR volunteers in a prep meeting before deploying as a force multiplier at the Jeep Weekend on Bolivar Peninsula in May.



Top: TEXSAR volunteers have been deploying at a record pace all across Texas. From North Texas to the Gulf Coast, from the Guadalupe National Park in West Texas to the Piney Woods of East Texas. Here, two TEXSAR volunteers are involved in a search. Much of TEXSAR's work involves stories that are not ours to tell. It is up to the families and agencies involved to determine what details can be shared and when.



Below: When TEXSAR volunteers are serving as force multipliers over an extended period of time, they utilize the quiet times to enhance their training through practice and practicing skills with each other. In this image, members who deployed for the Jeep Weekend on Bolivar Peninsula practice proper ways to carry a victim to a stretcher and place them securely in order to transport them to additional help. TEXSAR volunteers are often the first on the scene where someone needs medical attention. They are prepared to take action for immediate needs thanks to training in First Aid, CPR, Wilderness First Aid and more.



Above: Over Memorial Day weekend, Wimberley held a concert event in memory of the many who were lost during the 2015 Memorial Day floods. TEXSAR's involvement with the floods brought it into the limelight and changed the trajectory of the organization. TEXSAR representatives attended, including Jonathan McComb (left) whose story is captured [here](#). Below: Training and fitness are key to the success of TEXSAR volunteers to ensure they are ready for any mission.



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.

For more information about joining and the expectations of members, please check [here](#).

Thank you!



Important Links: Stay in Touch!

[Become a Member](#)

[Donate today!](#)

[Service Above Self Monthly Donor program](#)

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

The party of the year! Mark your calendars!

SAVE THE DATE

10th Annual Search Party

09.20.25

THE RENAISSANCE HOTEL - AUSTIN, TX

www.texasar.org/searchparty

