

TEXSAR DISPATCH



The level of training that TEXSAR members experience differentiates TEXSAR from many organizations. Members hold more than 4,000 certifications.

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

September 2025

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From the CEO



I hope that I get the chance later this month to look you in the eye, shake your hand and thank you for making it possible for TEXSAR to serve as Texans helping Texans with service above self, and always at no charge. That opportunity will be on September 20th, at our [10th Annual Search Party](#).

Our Search Party events always provide a great opportunity to meet TEXSAR family members, learn more about what we do (almost everyone is surprised at the range of services that TEXSAR provides) and raise funds to support our work. This year's event will be no different in those ways, but quite different in another important way: the transformative nature of the July 4th floods.

Thanks to the outpouring of generous support, TEXSAR is now bigger, better resourced and better known than it has ever been. Despite the many spotlights that we found ourselves in while responding to the devastating floods, we remain committed to humble service, honored to be of assistance to the agencies and partners who ask us to help them implement their critical work.

This year's Search Party will include many important people: those who supported our response to the floods, and our members who performed unselfish service -- more than 7,000 hours -- over the course of several weeks. Everyone there is important to all of us who comprise TEXSAR -- we are all truly in this together. It is the only way.

I hope that you can make it to the Search Party. I look forward to shaking your hand and thanking you for what you are making possible.


- Justin McInnis


News and Announcements

Growing to Serve

Thanks to an overwhelming response from across Texas during the July 4th floods, TEXSAR has shattered its 2025 goal for the number of new members. On July 1st, we had just under 350 members and we now have almost 1,000, and more to come. All members are background checked and trained in First Aid, CPR, AED and Wilderness Search and Rescue before being deployed; this is for their safety and that of those they will be working around. It is clear that people want to be part of TEXSAR’s commitment as Texans helping Texans with service above self.

AI and Finding Missing Persons



TEXSAR: Texas Search and Rescue
2,030 followers
3d • 


Automated Drone Image Analysis Tool - ADIAT, is an open-source, desktop-based software application developed by volunteers and sponsored by TEXSAR (Texas Search and Rescue) to help search and rescue (SAR) teams and other organizations analyze drone imagery quickly and efficiently, even in remote areas with no internet connectivity.

When drones collect thousands of images across large, rugged terrain, reviewing them manually can take days or even weeks. ADIAT dramatically shortens that process by using a combination of AI models and image-processing algorithms to scan photos and automatically flag areas of interest.

In July 2025, Italy’s National Alpine and Speleological Rescue Corps - CNSAS successfully located the remains of Dr. Nicola Ivaldo, who had been missing since September 2024, on the steep north face of Monviso. In a single five-hour drone flight, the team gathered roughly 2,600 images across a 183-hectare area. The use of AI-powered analysis tools, including ADIAT, enabled rescuers to detect subtle visual anomalies, such as distinct red pixels corresponding to the hiker’s helmet, that would have been easy to overlook with the human eye.

According to CNSAS drone pilot Saverio Isola, “It was the AI software that identified some pixels of a different color in the images taken on Tuesday.” That clue led directly to discovery and recovery on July 31.

ADIAT is available free of charge to public safety agencies and organizations and can be downloaded at <https://texsar.org/adiat>.
Learn more about CNSAS: <https://www.cnsas.it/en/>
Read the full story here: <https://lnkd.in/g7F9Gu-g>



A Hiker Was Missing for Nearly a Year—Until an AI System Recognized His Helmet
wired.com

In a recent Linked In post, we highlighted a recent story about the use of AI in locating a hiker who had been lost for two decades. TEXSAR Director of Technology, Charlie Grove, is a long-time volunteer with TEXSAR. He developed an important resource, Automatic Drone Image Analysis Tool, that is open source and free for others to use. Its capabilities are extensive and its future will be busy as the use of drones becomes more critical for a variety of uses in the search-and-rescue realm.

More information about this important tool can be found [here](#). Version 1.6 was released on July 14.

On behalf of SAR agencies everywhere, thank you, Charlie, for developing this incredible tool.

“Through the Flood”: Jonathan McComb on Lara Logan Show

Jonathan McComb’s story of survival and faith is well-known. The only survivor of his family during the Wimberley floods in 2015, he became involved with TEXSAR and has been an active member and supporter ever since. He has used tragic experiences to strengthen and heal others. He recently [shared his story with Lara Logan](#), a South African journalist who lives in the Texas Hill Country and has an international following.

Member Milestones

Every quarter, TEXSAR members who meet certain criteria within that quarter are entered into a random drawing to receive a gift from TEXSAR. Meet Cal Neff, the most recent recipient, as he responds to the following prompts.



North Texas Division Leader, Meg Hinkley (L) with Cal Neff while serving the National Park Service in Guadalupe Mountains National Park.

Who are you?

My name is Calum Neff and I go by Cal, I'm a Canadian born in Scotland, and grew up in six different countries but currently live in the Gulf area of Fulshear with my wife and four daughters. I am a professional long-distance runner focusing on ultra-trail races and also host my own events through my company Trail Racing Over Texas in addition to coaching. I also love hang gliding, paragliding, and the mountains.

Why did you join?

I was previously part of a SAR team for a number of years in Canada and following the Hurricane Harvey disaster where all that experience became very valuable, I decided I wanted to get back involved. I love training, the TEXSAR team, and bringing all together to help others during difficult times.

What is the most special thing about TEXSAR?

Professionalism, ability, and care. I know how difficult it can be to earn the trust of tasking agencies. I've seen in other organizations how people with good intentions can become liabilities - TEXSAR's team is doing it right with our community relationships, high standards, and full of people who care.

Any other item that you'd like to share about yourself that you'd like folks to know?

My annual fitness was declined when I submitted a 100km trail run! If you have any fitness/endurance questions I'm always happy to talk training, feel free to reach out.

Development Corner

TEXSAR's largest fund-raising event is just around the corner: the [10th Annual Search Party](#) on September 20th. For some nonprofits, their annual galas present the opportunity for attendees to show off their fanciest attire and for the nonprofit to showcase their successes. Our event is more like, "Let's get to know each other because we're all in this together." Too long for a tag line, the message is clear and attendees feel it the moment they walk into the venue.

The Party is Texas, through and through. People laughing, hugging and shaking hands. Short on pretense and long on friendship, you'll be part of the family at the first hello. Everything and everyone you encounter will provide you insights into what TEXSAR does, how it does it and who makes it all possible. Along the way, funds will be raised to assure that [TEXSAR Never Stops](#) and never charges. Thanks to the generosity of the Adam R. Scripps Foundation, they will match 1:1 monies raised at the event up to \$100,000! More information on the event can be found [here](#).

For more information about the various ways that you can support TEXSAR's mission, feel free to contact Dion McInnis, Development Officer, at Dion.McInnis@TEXSAR.org.

Spotlight on Supporters

Thank you, sponsors!

There is still time to purchase tickets and join the fun of the 10th Annual Search Party.

Photobooth Sponsor



Gold Sponsor

thrivent®

Silver Sponsors



KTLO Solutions
Resilient. Relevant. Open.



Choice



In-Kind Sponsors



Meet TEXSAR members and people who believe in the concept of Texans helping Texans with service above self. For more [information](#).

Will you be **"in the picture"** this year?



Safety in an Unpredictable World:

Be prepared to save a life

By Jeff Conrad, Director of Field Operations

Did you know that bleeding is the leading, preventable cause of death? An unpredictable world subjects us to injury from events we encounter in our daily lives such as motor vehicle accidents and falls, as well as acts of violence. Injuries from these events could result in life-threatening bleeding. Major bleeding can result in death in as little as 3-5 minutes. Immediate action has proven to be life saving and basic skills that can be learned by almost anyone can mean the difference between life and death.

History

During the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, the military learned methods to significantly reduce the number of battlefield deaths. The Department of Defense (DOD) developed training and influenced the development of equipment for soldiers in the field to provide life-saving skills. This program became part of the Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) standards in the military. It was quickly recognized that the life-saving potential of early bleeding control learned in the combat field could be applied to the civilian environment. This led to the development of a civilian bystander program now known as STOP THE BLEED®.

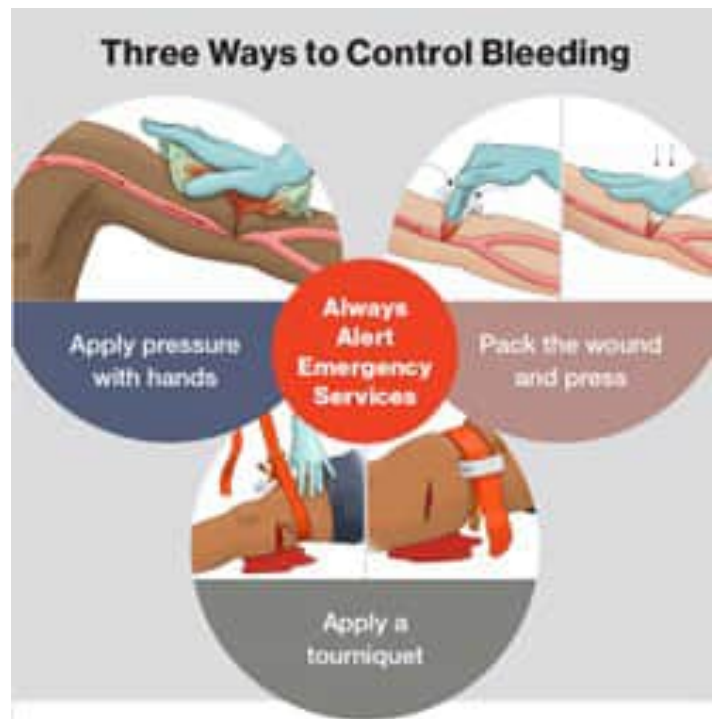
STOP THE BLEED® is a DOD national public awareness program launched by the White House in October of 2015. Since its introduction, thousands of civilians have been trained in these life saving skills.

Many states, including Texas, now have STOP THE BLEED® laws. Texas law requires all public schools to have accessible bleeding control kits at facilities, requires all school employees to be trained and requires the schools to establish and implement protocols for responding to traumatic injuries

The Training

STOP THE BLEED® training consists of recognizing life-threatening bleeding, and three quick techniques that can be applied to stop bleeding:

- *Applying direct pressure with your hands to the wound*
- *Packing a wound with gauze or other material to stop bleeding*
- *Applying a tourniquet*



(image from the American College of Surgeons Stop the Bleed program. <https://www.stopthebleed.org/>)

The three techniques taught in the class empower bystanders to take action in an emergency and provide life-saving care until higher level care arrives.

Anyone old enough to understand the elements of the course can take the training.

Classes are usually offered for no or very little charge from various sources in communities including schools, healthcare facilities, emergency services providers and private organizations.

TEXSAR and STOP THE BLEED

TEXSAR recognizes the importance of these life saving skills which is why we require STOP THE BLEED® training for all of our field deployable members. This training is a critical component of our skillset to help ensure we are prepared to provide care to our members on deployment and the public that we serve.





TEXSAR is an Educational Licensee for STOP THE BLEED® with certified instructors to teach our members and the public. Whether our members are on a mission or in daily life, they are prepared because of this training.

Learn More

Learn more about STOP THE BLEED® and find classes in your area by visiting the sites listed below:

- [STOP THE BLEED® Coalition](#)
- [American College of Surgeons Stop the Bleed Program](#)
- [STOP THE BLEED® Texas Coalition](#)
- Many of the Texas Department of Health and Human Services [Regional Advisory Councils](#) offer training

Please share with your friends and colleagues!

<p>Subscribe to TEXSAR Dispatch</p> 	<p>Read TEXSAR Dispatch</p> 
<p>Become a Service Above Self Monthly Donor</p> 	<p>Donate today!</p> 

Training: The key to preparedness. With the large influx of new members in July, there is much training to be done so TEXSAR members are ready when the call to serve arrives and are safe when deployed.



Everyone who joins TEXSAR must be trained in basic skills before they can be deployed; this is for their safety and that of those they work with. First Aid, CPR, AED and Wilderness Search and Rescue comprise the essentials. From this base, members can pursue a wide variety of options for skill development, ranging from swiftwater rescue to drone operations, from man tracking to lost person behavior, and many more. On July 1, TEXSAR members held more than 4,000 certifications, a number sure to grow as the new members complete their training in the various skill sets they desire.



**“You cannot do a kindness too soon because
you never know how soon it will be too late.”**

Ralph Waldo Emerson

The moment that TEXSAR deployed in response to the July 4th floods in the Hill Country, individuals, groups, businesses and foundations stepped up to make sure that our team members had what they needed to complete their mission. Donations included funds, materials and services. There was much at stake and people knew it. When we were called upon, we responded to serve; when we served, others responded with support. We also facilitated getting donated goods to other organizations that were in need. Thank you to all who donated to our work and to the many organizations that responded to this tragedy.

TEXSAR is now bigger and better resourced than ever, and forever committed as Texans helping Texans with service above self.





Numerous businesses, venues and performers raised funds for TEXSAR with percentage-of-sales campaigns, concerts, and point-of-sale donation opportunities for customers. We are humbled by the level of support and the heart with which it came to us. Donations came from around the country along with messages of support, prayers and appreciation. Pluckers (above), Devil's Backbone (right) and Pat Greene (below) are some examples. Thank you, all!





Above: CEO, Justin McInnis and Gulf Coast Division Lead, Linna Selbrede were invited to the *Band Together Texas* benefit concert through the Kendra Scott Foundation. They were able to share TEXSAR's mission with Kendra Scott, Zac Brown and the Kendra Scott team. Great to meet you!

Left: Mozart's Coffee Roasters hosted a benefit event; TEXSAR was a beneficiary. Thank you!

Bottom: The Polaris Foundation donated vehicles during our July 4th flood response. 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! We're expecting a full house, so purchase early!
Monies raised this year will be matched 1:1 up to \$100,000 by
the Adam R. Scripps Foundation!**

SAVE THE DATE

10th Annual Search Party

09.20.25

THE RENAISSANCE HOTEL - AUSTIN, TX

www.texsar.org/searchparty

