

TEXSAR DISPATCH



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

October 2025

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The 10th Annual Search Party was a resounding success, raising more than \$400,000. It was our best ever. Thank you to all the sponsors, attendees, auction bidders, donors and members who made it all possible.

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From the CEO



What a night it was. The 10th Annual Search Party was a record breaker for TEXSAR in every measurable way. You will find many photos from the event at the gallery section of this issue of TEXSAR Dispatch. There was something, however, that overwhelmed me more than anything that was seen or could be measured; a tremendous sense of gratitude.

As I looked out over the audience of supporters; as members moved to the front of the room and several shared personal stories about what it means to serve; as donors bid on auction items or raised their paddles to make contributions; as I heard from attendees in individual conversations how grateful they were for TEXSAR's mission and purpose; as I watched staff members and volunteers work tirelessly to make the event the great success that it was; as I considered the incredible levels of time and commitment that TEXSAR volunteers commit in unselfish service...the feeling I had above all others was gratitude. Perhaps that feeling was enhanced because I saw these things with a perspective of time since I joined TEXSAR in 2015.

Epicurus said, "Do not spoil what you have by desiring what you have not; remember that what you now have was once among the things you only hoped for." Over the years, TEXSAR leaders have hoped for a level of support and membership that we have now exceeded beyond our most ambitious dreams and plans. Our primary want at this time is to be honorable stewards of what we have been given: the time and talent of members, the financial support that empowers our work, and the trust that agencies and partners across the state have in us. I, the TEXSAR board, and all staff members and volunteers are committed to that stewardship.

While we still have three months in 2025, we have already greatly exceeded the number of missions that we had projected for the year (there is the possibility of doubling the projection), we have blown past our goal for the number of members, and we have far exceeded our fundraising expectations. While those are measurables, they actually serve as inspiration and empowerment for TEXSAR to continue boldly as "Texans serving Texans with service above self."

With gratitude,

- Justin McInnis

News and Announcements

Growing to Serve

For the first time in TEXSAR's history, it put a temporary hiatus on membership applications to provide time to process the 1,400 applications it received during the July 4th flood event and thereafter. The application window opened again on October 1 and 40 people applied within the first few hours. Prior to July 4th, TEXSAR averaged 30 applicants per month. Check [here](#) for more information about the new application deadlines and for more information about membership. TEXSAR continues to grow in size and capabilities to serve throughout Texas, and beyond.

TEXSAR, Out and About

TEXSAR is well represented in the community at a variety of events, conferences and programs. The resulting public awareness leads to new members, engaged partners and an informed public.



Member Milestones

We have occasionally shared in this space stories of some of our members from the [“20 Years, 20 Stories”](#) collection that we created during our 20th anniversary year. As we consider the transformative year that 2025 has already been for TEXSAR, we share the 20th profile of who will be the future of TEXSAR: **You**. We appreciate all who will be part of our future as we also honor those who are part of our past and present.

People from all walks of life, with a variety of interests, comprise the larger story that is TEXSAR. Over the years, people responded to the call to serve, accepted the rigor of training and made the commitment to always be ready to step up as “Texans helping Texans with service above self.”

TEXSAR volunteers are butchers and bakers and candlestick makers...all types of career paths are reflected in our members, including retirees. Some members have enhanced or changed their careers because of their experiences with TEXSAR. Some have had lives of service as first responders or military, and many accepted the call to service because of personal experiences or their witness to the needs of others during times of emergency or disaster. These are people like you, and TEXSAR will always be of such folks.

Many of TEXSAR’s volunteers love the outdoors, love K9s or horses, love roughing it in the wilds, love physical and mental challenges, love data and all that it reveals, or love the choreography of logistics. All love their fellow human beings.

TEXSAR’s members include people of renown and people that only family members and close friends would recognize; they include people who have started their careers and CEOs overseeing highly successful, international businesses. All are humbled by the opportunity to serve and are governed by humility; all are called to service, and none to recognition or fame.

You know people like that. You might be like that. TEXSAR has always, and always will be, an

organization of such people and that is why TEXSAR leadership looks to the future with such enthusiasm and inspiration. It is because of people like you that TEXSAR can respond to agencies who request its support for people like you, your friends, your family members, your colleagues...and total strangers. The first 20 years were just the beginning.

Development Corner

While the July 4th floods captured the attention of people across America and beyond, events that benefit from TEXSAR support occurred concurrently and continue. People go missing, cold cases need answers, evidence from a crime must be found, hikers need to be rescued, communities need supplies, and organizations need support. TEXSAR stands ready to serve with a single-member mission or with scores in support of the task at hand.

TEXSAR has more members than ever in its history. You can help TEXSAR stay ever-ready with well-maintained equipment and members trained in a multitude of specialized skills by joining our community of monthly donors. We call them Service Above Self supporters. You can learn more and join their ranks [here](#). **Can you help us reach our goal of 100 SAS donors by year's end?**

Why are the suggested amounts so “different”? We use those values to remind people that TEXSAR is ready to serve in any of the 254 counties that comprise Texas.

DONOR LEVEL BENEFITS:	LONE STAR \$24.50 + PER MONTH	SILVER SPUR \$254 + PER MONTH
LISTED ON SAS WEB PAGE	INCLUDED	INCLUDED
LISTED IN ANNUAL REPORT	INCLUDED	INCLUDED
EXCLUSIVE DONOR GIFT: TEXSAR HAT		
EXCLUSIVE DONOR GIFT: TEXSAR DUFFEL		

Donor gifts will be shipped upon receipt of third monthly payment.

Spotlight on Supporters

Thank you to all the amazing sponsors and auction donors who helped make the 10th Annual Search Party our most successful ever, by all measures! We look forward to seeing you next year.

THANK YOU TO THE 2025 SEARCH PARTY SPONSORS

PLATINUM SPONSOR



PHOTOBOOTH SPONSOR



GOLD SPONSORS

RICHARD BELLIVEAU - 'INTENSITY'
MARGARET AND MATT WOODRUFF
LUKE BUGLER



SILVER SPONSORS



IN-KIND SPONSORS



THANK YOU, AUCTION DONORS!



THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING TO SUPPORT TEXSAR'S MISSION!

Safety in an Unpredictable World:

K9 Care and Safety

By Teri Callaway, SAR Responder II

TEXSAR's K9s are an important component of our team and it's critical that we ensure their safety is top of mind before, during and after each deployment. We'll discuss the process TEXSAR handlers use to keep our dogs healthy and ready for service. Much of this applies to your pet, too.

An important way to keep our K9s mission ready at all times is through regular appointments with their veterinarian. Dogs should be current on all recommended vaccinations as there is always a good possibility of encountering loose dogs or wildlife during deployments that could transmit diseases. Heartworm prevention and flea, tick and mosquito repellants are an important part of keeping our pups disease free. In the event a K9 does develop an illness related to a search, it's important that the vet has baseline information to compare to.

It's been said that driving to and from a deployment can be the most dangerous time for first responders and this is also true for our K9s. A high quality K9 crate that's designed specifically to transport our pups and has been rigorously tested for durability on impact protects our dogs in case of a crash. It's important to have something on the outside of the vehicle that alerts responders that a K9 is inside the vehicle. Inside the vehicle there should be an immediately visible container with vital information about the dog, handler information and an emergency contact.

Weather conditions play a major role in determining how we prepare for each mission. It's important that we acclimate both ourselves and our K9s to the heat and humidity, as well as to winter weather extremes, by gradually extending the dog's time outside during training and play time as the conditions change.



Prior to each mission we want the dogs to be well hydrated so we make sure that they have continuous access to fresh, clean water at all times. Dogs should be drinking $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 ounce of liquid per pound each day but most only drink a portion of that, especially when inside all day. We can encourage drinking by adding something tasty like chicken broth to their kibble. When in the field we stop for water breaks approximately every 15 minutes.

On deployments where there is ice or snow on the ground we may want to protect our K9's paws with booties. There are several varieties but it's important to make sure they fit well and provide adequate traction as our dogs often work in rough or slippery terrain. Another important consideration is that dogs only have sweat glands in the pads of their feet so we don't want to use booties when temperature and humidity are high.

It's important to watch for signs of overheating like excessive panting or drooling, tongue hanging out and wider at the bottom, dark red gums, or seeking out shade. Check for dehydration by pinching the skin between the shoulder blades to see if it 'tents' rather than returning quickly to normal. Working dogs often have a microchip under the skin with a handheld reader that displays internal temperature. Because our K9s spend a portion of their time in our vehicles during a deployment, we ensure they have good ventilation by leaving the back hatch, and/or windows, open and battery operated fans attached to their crates. We also drape a reflective sun shade over the hatch and windows to prevent exposure to direct sunlight in addition to parking in the shade when possible. The temperature inside the vehicle can be monitored through a device in the car that connects to an app on your phone.

Injuries in the field are always a concern so we want to be sure that we are able to

provide first aid as quickly as possible. A portable K9 first aid kit should include many of the same things that we carry for human purposes. These include gauze, adhesive tape, alcohol and antibiotics and tweezers. We also include items more specific to K9 needs such as a muzzle to ensure an injured dog doesn't bite out or fear or pain and a sling to carry an injured dog out of the field. A tourniquet is also a must have item but the Combat Applied Tourniquets typically recommended for human use are not ideal for K9s. Tourniquets made specifically for K9s are a better option but the rubber band style tourniquets used when you get your blood drawn also work well.



Our K9s may be exposed to a variety of toxins so it's important for handlers and flankers to be on the lookout for these during every mission. Water that is stagnant may have toxic algae or fungus that can cause a dog to decline rapidly. Water contaminated with chemicals or fecal matter is also a major concern during flood and hurricane deployments. If we expect that a dog has ingested a potentially toxic substance we need to get them to an emergency vet for monitoring and treatment right away. The ASPCA operates an Animal Poison Control Center hotline where you can get immediate advice around the clock. Even walking through contaminated water carries the risk of absorbing a toxin so dogs need to go through a decontamination process as quickly as possible.

Flankers play an important role in helping keep the K9s safe by watching for potential hazards like barbed wire, unstable surfaces, snakes and other wildlife. While we want our dogs to range independently from their handler to ensure maximum coverage,

we also want them to have good emergency stop and recall commands so that we can help them avoid dangerous situations. Because we periodically respond to flooded areas we want our dogs to be strong swimmers. K9 floatation devices should be used when in swiftwater situations or on a boat.

These considerations are important not only for SAR K9s but also for any working dog or family pet. The American Red Cross has [an online pet first aid course](#) for any that are interested in being even better prepared to take care of their pet in the case of an emergency.

Mission Matters

The performance of TEXSAR volunteers as they serve the needs of agencies and partners continues to impress and TEXSAR is busier than ever before thanks to its reputation. The quality of work is no accident; it is the result of ongoing training, maintenance of equipment, and acquisition of appropriate assets. More and more, TEXSAR is becoming the go-to nonprofit for search, rescue, recovery and related missions. One of the basic skills that all TEXSAR members learn is Wilderness Search and Rescue. Below are three of the groups who have recently completed the training.



Gallery

The 10th Annual Search Party was such a resounding success that we have expanded the gallery section of the newsletter to share images that convey the fun, energy and emotion of what happens when 400 people who believe in TEXSAR's mission, purpose and people come together for an evening of celebration.

Thank you to Ronny Galdamez of [Crossndot Visuals](#) for his excellent photography.







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 purpose of human life is to serve, and to show compassion and the will to help others."

— Albert Schweitzer