

TEXSAR DISPATCH



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

November 2025

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Follow us and stay engaged.

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TEXSAR volunteers are available to serve in any of the 254 counties that comprise Texas. TEXSAR partners with the National Park Service at the Guadalupe Mountains National Park.

From the CEO



TEXSAR recently received a letter from someone who wished to thank the organization and all the volunteers who do such outstanding, selfless work. The sender noted how hard the work had to be and how appreciative she was for all that we had done during the July floods and do on a regular basis. It was truly a letter of thanks-giving. This month seems like a good time to highlight her message. We are blessed by the many messages we receive like hers; however, one of her sentences struck me as particularly poignant.

“Thank you for treating our loss like it was yours.”

That’s it. In ten words she captured the essence of the heart of TEXSAR people. To a person, TEXSAR people understand that the work they perform, the training they undergo, the time they commit, the personal activities they sacrifice...all of it is for another human being. Our work is not that of completing tasks on a list; we do those things to serve others who are working to find, rescue, recover or assist others in need. The tasks are part of the method, but not the purpose.

It takes empathy and compassion, as well as a healthy dose of grit, to accomplish what our volunteers do. The mortar that holds all the pieces together is the sense of the personal aspects of every mission: human beings with family, friends, loved ones, colleagues, or essentially alone in life. No matter their “status” or situation, they deserve our full commitment and attention when we are called upon.

My heartfelt thanks to all our volunteers and their loved ones, our donors and supporters, partners and friends, who make TEXSAR what it is. We are family. This Thanksgiving, let us all give thanks for all that we have.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours from everyone in the ever-growing TEXSAR family. Stay safe.

With thanks and gratitude,

- Justin McInnis

News and Announcements

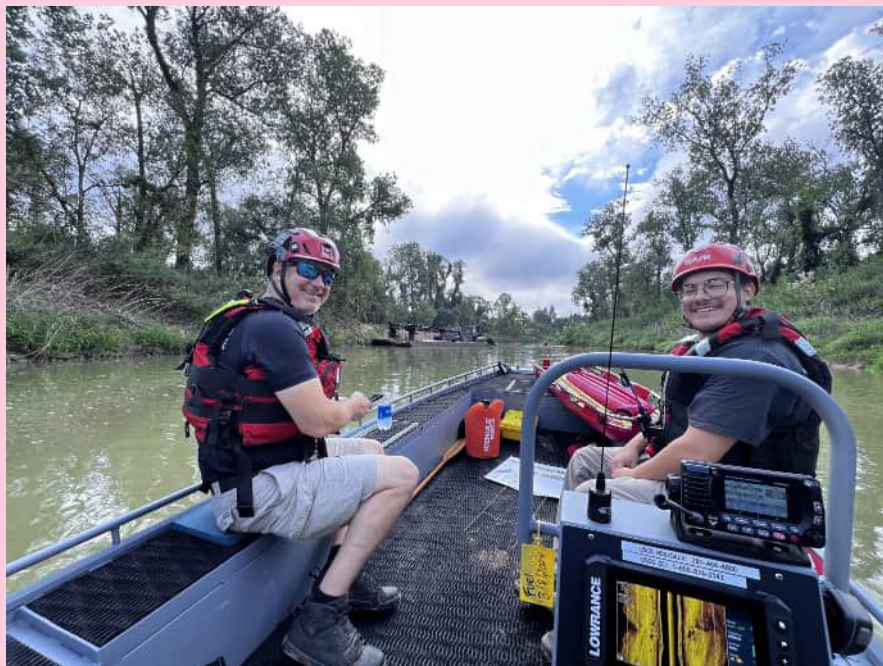
TEXSAR in the News

The stories of our missions are not ours to tell. We serve the needs of agencies and partners and it is they who share insights when they deem it is appropriate to do so. Sometimes TEXSAR is referenced in the stories they share. This [story](#), though about a sad loss, exemplifies that the work of TEXSAR volunteers provides assistance to agencies and answers to families.

A few TEXSAR members joined the show, “[Texas & Me](#)” to share their insights on TEXSAR and its mission. Hearing from those who live the mission provides insights into the world of TEXSAR and its members.

Next Application Window

TEXSAR has gone to a quarterly application window for people who are interested in joining as volunteers. In October, more than 100 people joined and have become active members. The next window opens on January 1, 2026. Learn more [here](#).



Where is the guy on the left going? Learn more about Jeff Conrad’s future on page 4 as he tackles his new “mission.”

Member Milestones

Jeff Conrad, Director of Field Operations, is now tackling a very different mission than the types he has tackled since becoming a TEXSAR member in October 2018; he has reached a new milestone. Jeff is retiring and re-locating to North Carolina with his wife to return to his roots.



"Jeff was an extraordinary division leader for the Gulf Coast Division," said Justin McInnis, TEXSAR President and CEO. "His dedication in the field as a responder and his commitment as a leader has had a tremendous impact on TEXSAR. Much of what he developed with TEXSAR members in terms of preparation, training and execution came to fruition during our response to the July 4th floods."



The call to serve started early in Jeff's life. His early inclination to law enforcement was born in a desire to serve. His career path changed, but not his innate call. When he moved to Texas, he explored search-and-rescue organizations about a possible outlet for his interest. "I joined because TEXSAR was the fit I was looking for. The organization, the people, the level of training and the structure was perfect for me."

He was particularly drawn to the water rescue type of missions, thanks to his lifelong love of the water and his encounter with Hurricane Harvey in 2017. "We had four feet of water in our house. Luckily, we were able to move upstairs, but the day after the hurricane hit, we were rescued by members of the Houston Fire Department."

It did not take long for Jeff to move from motivated volunteer to becoming the Division Leader for TEXSAR's Gulf Coast Division. "I guess you could say that I was guilted into the role," Jeff said with a laugh. "A few of the long-standing members in the Division asked me to take the position. It seems like whenever I take volunteer roles in organizations, I end up in a leadership role." That was a good thing for TEXSAR.



His accomplishments and dedication to TEXSAR's mission moved Jeff to apply for the full-time Director of Field Operations position when it was established in 2024. In just over a year in that role, Jeff made a significant impact. He is proud of those accomplishments, but humble. "Nothing is done by only one person. Every TEXSAR success is a team achievement," he said.

Aside from being a parent, Jeff sees his efforts with TEXSAR as what he is most proud of, and he believes all members look at their efforts similarly. "All TEXSAR members have so much to be proud of," Jeff said. "Their commitment, courage, selflessness and dedication are commendable. Volunteering for TEXSAR is unlike most other types of volunteer roles. We ask a lot of our members. Their humility is another reason that I am so impressed by them all."

"Every mission has for me a personal aspect to it. A family component. We're always working with or for families and how the situation of the mission affects them. While we can never truly provide closure for the families, we can provide answers, which, for many, is what they need in difficult times.," Jeff said.

From the entire TEXSAR family to Jeff: Thank you for all you've done and for who you are.

Development Corner

Now may be a good time to consider making a donation of stock. By donating publicly held stock directly to a charity (of course, we humbly suggest TEXSAR), you can avoid paying income tax on the capital gains. (This is not financial advice, but a reminder that this sort of donation may be something to talk to your accountant or financial advisor about.)

Contributions are, in fact, investments in TEXSAR, not in the sense of stocks and bonds, but with confidence that the funds increase the value of TEXSAR as a resource to requesting agencies, partners and communities. The "return" on your investment includes the finding of lost children or elders with dementia; providing answers to families' questions about loved ones who have been lost to violent crime or other causes; rescuing people from rising waters; distributing water and other essentials to affected communities; and locating critical evidence located criminal cases.

Please consider investing in TEXSAR; the returns are priceless.

For more information feel free to contact Dion McInnis, Development Officer, at Dion.McInnis@TEXSAR.org.

Spotlight on Supporters



It started with a contribution of 67 cents gathered by a few children, it included a single dollar bill sent from a homeless man in New York, as well as thousands of donations, including some that were six figures. Thus was the support that came to TEXSAR in support of

our response to the July 4th floods. And the contributions keep coming.

Such support enabled our response and is empowering our ability to respond to the needs of agencies, partners and communities in the future. We now have more than 1,100 active members who are on the path of continual training to learn new skills, master various equipment and assets, and come together as a cohesive team. On July 3rd, we had about 300 members. Our supporters are making it possible for TEXSAR to transform into a premier, elite nonprofit organization in the search-and-rescue space because of its size, capabilities and professionalism.

We are grateful for the many new donors who have chosen to support TEXSAR. You may be one of them, and we thank you. We are humbled by our supporters' generosity. We are thankful for those who have stood by us and supported our work year after year. We appreciate those whose participation and sponsorship make our special events possible, like our Memorial Clay Shoot and our annual gala, Search Party. We welcome those who have joined the community of monthly donors through our Service Above Self initiative.

This year has been a year of transformation for TEXSAR. We are now larger and better resourced than ever in our history, just as the needs of agencies throughout the state continue to increase. We are here to serve and at no charge. We can only do this because of our supporters.

Thank you for your contributions, words of encouragement, prayers, and appreciation. You make our work possible.

Safety in an Unpredictable World:

What if a loved one goes missing?

By Patrick Turck, Director of TEXSAR Missing Persons Unit

Texas Search and Rescue (TEXSAR) is committed to helping law enforcement agencies in the search for missing people, whether they be a young child, older

dementia patient, an intellectually disabled individual, or someone who is a victim of a violent crime. When these people go missing, it is imperative that law enforcement work closely with the families to gather as much information as possible to aid in the search, regardless of the circumstances. You, as a family member, can have a tremendous impact on the chances of finding a loved one by taking the following steps. If this is an emergency or you believe the person is in immediate danger, call your local emergency number now.

Immediate actions (first minutes–hours)

- Call emergency services if you believe they're in immediate danger or if you suspect a crime/abduction. Do not wait.
- Contact local police and file a missing-person report. Ask for the officer's name, report number, and how to follow up. Provide every detail (see "What to give police" below).
- Search the most likely places: home (inside and outside), nearby parks, friends'/exes' houses, workplace, public transit stops, hospitals, shelters, known hangouts. Bring others and stay safe; don't search alone in risky areas.
- Call close friends, family, coworkers, and neighbors — anyone who might have seen them or know their plans. Ask for any recent conversations or changes in behavior.
- Check recent communications: phone calls, texts, email, social media messages, ride-share and banking apps for recent activity. Preserve anything relevant (screenshots, export logs).
- If enabled, try device location tools immediately: Find My (Apple), Google Find My Device, Samsung Find My Mobile. If you have account access, do not turn off tracking.
- If they have a vehicle, note its make, model, color and license plate and check areas where it may be parked.

What to give police and to include in public notices

- Full legal name, nicknames, and aliases.

- Recent photograph (clear headshot and full-body if at all possible).
- Exact last known location and the time/date last the person was seen.
- Clothing, footwear, hair, distinguishing marks/ tattoos, piercings.
- Any medical conditions, medications, mental health issues, developmental disability, or sensory impairment.
- Known habits, patterns, routines, places they frequently visit.
- Phone numbers, social media handles, and email addresses.
- Vehicle description and license plate, if applicable.
- Suspected direction of travel, companions, or vehicles.
- Any threats, abusive relationships, or risky activities known to you.

Digital & evidence checklist (preserve immediately)

- Take screenshots and save call/SMS logs, social media messages, and location history (e.g., Google Timeline).
- Preserve voicemails, emails and timestamps.
- Check and secure home and ring/doorbell camera footage; ask neighbors to check their cameras. Download or request these recordings quickly (they can be overwritten).
- Get CCTV footage from businesses near last known location — ask police for help obtaining it if needed.
- Contact the phone carrier to ask about call/SMS logs and possible cell-tower location info (often needs police request/subpoena).
- If a device is missing, report it stolen/lost and consider remote lock/wipe only if you must protect sensitive data (discuss with police first if device location could help find them).

Who else to contact (quick list)

- Hospitals, urgent care centers, and local morgues. Provide details and ask to be notified if they arrive.

- Local shelters, addiction recovery centers, and jails/prisons.
- Employer, school, or university security office.
- Close friends, coworkers, ex-partners (carefully), and others they might contact.
- Missing-persons organizations such as the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (US) 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) or the Texas Center for the Missing (see more information in the article in this newsletter). Also contact local NGOs and advocacy groups for guidance.
- Your attorney if there are legal concerns (custody, international travel, identity issues).

Public outreach & social media

- Make a concise public post: name, photo, last seen time/place, clothing, medical concerns, contact info for police and for your family (don't share home address). Ask people to contact you directly and police if they have info.
- Share to local community groups, neighborhood apps (Nextdoor), local news stations, and missing-person groups. Encourage people to share.
- Keep posts factual and avoid speculative or accusatory statements. Don't share information that could endanger the missing person (e.g., precise last known address if it might cause retaliation).
- Track leads you receive and report them to police; do not investigate dangerous leads on your own.

If the missing person is a child, elderly person, or vulnerable adult

- Inform police immediately and specify age and any vulnerabilities — these cases often get priority.
- Contact child welfare services, the school/daycare, and pediatrician (for children).
- For dementia/Alzheimer's patients, carpet-search local neighborhoods, common routes, waterbodies, and places that trigger memories (old stores, former neighborhoods). Many police departments have specific protocols for wandering seniors.

If abroad or international concerns

- Contact local police where they were last seen and file a report.
- Contact your country's embassy or consulate for assistance and advice. They can often help liaise with local authorities and advise on legal steps.
- If passports or travel documents are missing, report loss to your embassy immediately.

Ongoing steps (days to weeks)

- Maintain a single point of contact within the family/media team to handle calls and messages to avoid confusion.
- Keep a detailed log of all calls, tips, actions, and police contacts (dates, times, names). This is vital for coordination.
- Follow up regularly with police and any investigators (ask for updates and case numbers).
- Consider contacting local media when police agree — media attention can generate tips but discuss timing and content with law enforcement first.

Legal & privacy considerations

- Understand that some records (phone records, financial transactions) often require law enforcement/subpoena to access. Work closely with police.
- Be careful sharing identifying or sensitive personal data publicly (bank/account numbers, home address).
- If there are custody or domestic violence considerations, seek legal advice before speaking publicly.

TEXSAR is always available to assist law enforcement with searches but the request for our services must come from the agency. Please note, TEXSAR provides this information as a guide to possible steps you could take if a loved one goes missing. TEXSAR does not provide legal advice nor is it to be considered the ultimate authority on missing persons emergencies.

MPU Updates

TEXSAR's Missing Persons Unit (MPU) had an incredibly busy month in October, responding to eight missions across Texas. Thanks to the strong leadership of our Division Leads, TEXSAR teams assisted law enforcement agencies statewide, providing answers to several families and helping bring resolution where it was needed most.

A special shoutout to Central Texas Division Lead, Tim Worthy, who coordinated a complex and challenging search requiring a wide range of assets. Multiple factors had to align for the mission's success, and because of Tim's leadership and the team's dedication, we found what we were looking for, an outcome that will help bring justice.

Additionally, Central Texas volunteer Michelle Olsen helped lead a search, where the team successfully located the remains of a missing person. The team expressed deep appreciation for TEXSAR's efforts, noting that they could not have recovered as much evidence without our assistance.

Great work to everyone who contributed to MPU's October missions! We look forward to continued participation as more volunteers become and remain deployable.

The motto for TEXSAR's Missing Persons Unit is : "Trained to Respond. Committed to Bring Them Home."



TEXSAR volunteers train to master their skills in GPS, an important tool in missing person cases.

Partner Perspectives

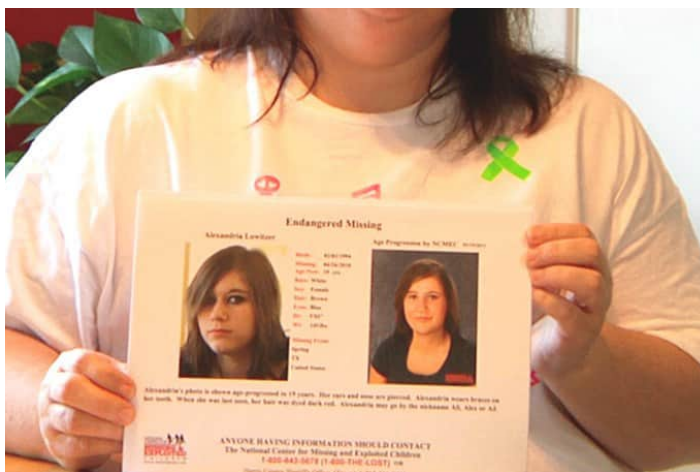
Texas Center for the Missing

By Mel Turnquist, CEO



As a small grassroots organization with just three employees, Texas Center for the Missing (TCM) relies on our community partners to maximize our efficiencies AND deploy ALL available tools and resources in support of searching families.

Texas Center for the Missing (TCM) is a Houston-based nonprofit and is the Amber Alert (*for abducted children*), CLEAR Alert (*for kidnapped adults*), Endangered Missing Persons Alert (*for endangered missing persons with intellectual disabilities*), AND Silver Alert (*for endangered missing senior citizens diagnosed with dementia*) provider for the 14-county Houston-Galveston region. TCM offers crisis intervention, prevention, and community education services related to child abductions, runaways, internet lures, and endangered adults. Since our founding in 2000, we have worked closely with trusted partner organizations within the missing persons field. TEXSAR is an essential collaborator as we work diligently to reunite families.

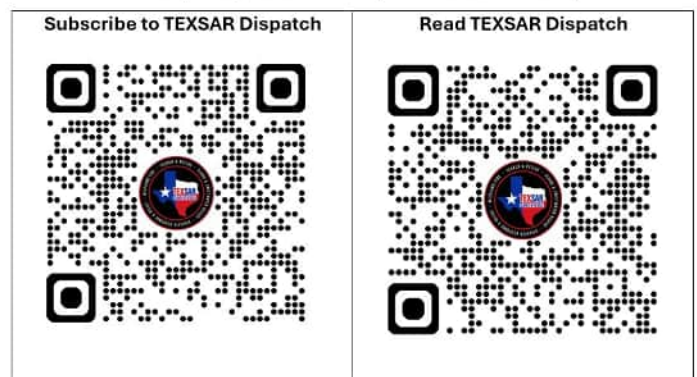


When a loved one is missing, TEXSAR provides invaluable resources to the families we serve during

their darkest most terrifying moments. Whether it is providing K9 teams, aerial search, or ground search-and-rescue, TEXSAR represents hope to the families desperately searching for answers. TCM relies on these partnerships to #BringThemHome each and every day.

Last year alone, TCM reunited 68 families as a direct result of our community networks and collaborative partnerships. TEXSAR is a life-saving resource to those we serve and a critical tool for the community.

You can learn more about Texas Center for the Missing [here](#).





Top

TEXSAR members participate in a recent Wilderness Search and Rescue class. Participants in the WSAR class practice looking for items in the grass that don't belong, much like an evidence search. This essential program is required of all members. With more than 1,100 members now, TEXSAR has been offering a lot of these classes to get new members prepared to serve.

Left

When Academy Sports + Outdoors opened a new store in Tyler, TX, TEXSAR representatives were there to answer questions for customers and to share information about our mission. Thank you to Academy for your support and partnership with TEXSAR!

Bottom

Gulf Coast Division Lead, Linna Selbrede, recently shared her knowledge about drones with an audience at the Drone Deploy conference in California.





Top

Members of TEXSAR's equine team joined the National Night Out event in New Braunfels. TEXSAR is frequently represented at community events, increasing awareness and sharing knowledge with others.

Right

Thank you Warren's Backyard for your fundraising event! A good time was had by many as they enjoyed live music and an auction, all to benefit TEXSAR's mission.

Bottom

We were honored to join a community event at Altstadt Brewing in Fredericksburg, hosted by the Adam R. Scripps Foundation alongside our friends at Mercy Chefs. The Adam R. Scripps Foundation continues to champion incredible causes across the country, and we're so grateful for the support they've shown TEXSAR throughout 2025.



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



9TH ANNUAL
TEXSAR
MEMORIAL CLAY SHOOT

SAVE THE DATE!

SATURDAY 28TH
MARCH 2026
HOG HEAVEN
DRIPPING SPRINGS, TX

TEXSAR
40 YEARS OF SERVICE

WILDLAND FIRE • SEARCH & RESCUE • FLOOD & SNOWWATER RESCUE
DISASTER RESPONSE & RELIEF

MORE INFO AVAILABLE AT: WWW.TEXSAR.ORG/CLAYSHOOT