



TEXSAR DISPATCH

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

February 2026

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★★ NATIONAL ★★ MISSING PERSONS DAY



BRINGING AWARENESS TO MISSING PEOPLE & SUPPORT FOR THEIR FAMILIES

Join us at the Texas Capitol to bring attention to missing persons and their families, and to remind everyone of the dedicated agencies and organizations that continue to search for those who are missing.



**SOUTH STEPS OF THE CAPITOL
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3RD, 2026
★ 10 AM – 12 PM ★**

HOSTED BY: TEXAS SEARCH AND RESCUE

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: PATRICK TURCK AT
254-681-2224 OR **PATRICK.TURCK@TEXSAR.ORG**

From the CEO



In 2023, TEXSAR established a Missing Persons Unit. Its reputation, under the leadership of Director Patrick Turck, has been spreading across the state for its professionalism and excellence. The performance of our members in this important work is a perfect example of the blend of grit and humanity that is TEXSAR.

On February 3rd, TEXSAR will sponsor an event on the South steps of the State Capitol from 10 a.m. to noon. The event brings attention to the important cause of missing persons and the people affected – those who are missing and their families, and the personnel from various agencies and organizations that search for the missing. I hope that you can attend.

TEXSAR's work for missing persons utilizes a wide range of skills possessed by our members, K9s and horses, as well as a variety of technological tools including UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, aka, drones) that are equipped with LiDAR and thermal sensors, enhanced by our own ADIAT program that analyzes drone images in real time for key indicators. You can read more about ADIAT in this issue of TEXSAR Dispatch.

The missions that we are all called upon to support can range from those for people who are recently reported missing to cold cases that are decades old. TEXSAR always strives to provide answers to families and our agency partners.

We received a call for help to find a missing person while more than 200 members were attending our recent annual member celebration event. It was late at night when the call came in. More than 50 members, including many at the event, showed up to help with the search though a full mission was not needed. This experience serves as a clear reminder that our members are [Ready for the Call](#).

The support of many makes that readiness possible.

I hope to see you on the steps of the Capitol on February 3rd.

- Justin McInnis

News and Announcements

Ready for the Call

We are proud to share our new promotional video for 2026, [Ready for the Call](#). It shares the perspectives of members about their readiness and commitment to responding when needed. Please feel free to share the video among family members, friends, colleagues and networks.

TEXSAR is Hiring!

TEXSAR continues to grow to better meet the needs of agencies, organizations and partners. We are now hiring three positions:

- **Director of Field Operations**
- **Director of BeforeDuringAfter**
- **Assistant Director of Development**

More information on these positions and how to apply can be found [here](#).

Join Us for National Missing Persons Day at the State Capitol

Join us on the South Steps of the Texas State Capitol as we recognize National Missing Persons Day and stand in support of missing individuals and their families. This event brings together families, advocates, search and rescue professionals, law enforcement, and national and state organizations committed to ensuring the missing are never forgotten. The event is February 3rd from 10 AM to noon.

Guest speakers include:

- **Leemie Kahng-Sofer**
*Executive Director of Case Management & Texas Regional Office
National Center for Missing & Exploited Children*
- **Melissa Turnquist**
CEO, Texas Center for the Missing
- **Jo Ann Lowitzer**
Mother of Ali Lowitzer, missing since 2010
- **Connie Branham**
Advocate for the missing; mother of Christopher Branham
- **Patrick Turck**
Director, Missing Persons Unit, TEXSAR

Additional speakers will be joining us on the steps to support this event.

TEXSAR proudly serves agencies and organizations involved in missing persons cases and established its Missing Persons Unit in 2023. Led by former detective Patrick Turck, the unit supports coordinated search and investigative efforts across Texas. Together, we will raise awareness, share resources, and reaffirm our commitment to those still missing.

Safety in an Unpredictable World:

Getting Attention

By Dion McInnis, Development Officer

TEXSAR's missions in 2025 serve as stark reminders of the importance of being able to get someone's attention. Be it on mountain trails, rising waters or being lost in the woods, a 120 dB emergency whistle can be the difference between life and death.

I recall a camping trip of 45 years ago, being awakened by park rangers and hearing one of them call out, "We found him." A young wheelchair-bound man had gotten off smooth terrain and found a spot not far from where our tent was set up. He had a great view overlooking the park. Rangers said he had been missing for a few days and had likely died during the night preceding him being found. "If only he had had a whistle," one of the rangers said. It turns out that his physical condition was such that he did not have the capacity for yelling out. A whistle requires little effort.

The pitch of an emergency whistle carries much further than a human voice and can be utilized no matter how little energy you have left to get the attention of others.



Now that I am a "senior citizen," I keep a whistle on my necklace. Whether I fall while on a neighborhood walk or in the wood or in the house, I can signal for help easily and effortlessly.

Whistle signaling code is easy to remember:

- **3 Blasts:** Distress signal / "Help me!"
- **2 Blasts:** "Come here" or a call-back signal
- **1 Blast:** "Where are you?" or a response to a signal
- **The international SOS** uses a pattern of three short, three long, and three short.

You can't be helped if you can't be found. Carry an emergency whistle with you at all times and attach one to your backpack. If you can reach your whistle, you can call for help.

ADIAT Update



Where is ADIAT Being Used?



5,300+ Downloads Worldwide



82 Countries



2500+ Recent Downloads
(Last 6 Months)



Trusted by SAR & Law
Enforcement



Texas Search and Rescue | www.texasar.org

Our [Automated Drone Image Analysis Tool](#) is utilized worldwide! Created by our volunteer Director of Technology, Charlie Grove, ADIAT is a desktop application featuring a suite of algorithms designed to programmatically identify "areas of interest" in digital videos and images.

Development Corner

Donate your vehicle to TEXSAR

Did you know that you can **donate your vehicle** to TEXSAR? Just go to [TEXSAR's page at CarEasy](#), and start the process. As their webpage states, "All vehicles are considered! We strive to accept all types of donated vehicles (running or not) including cars, trucks, trailers, boats, RVs, motorcycles, campers, off-road vehicles, planes, heavy equipment, farm machinery, and most other motorized vehicles."

For more information about how to support TEXSAR, please contact Dion McInnis, Development Officer, at Dion.McInnis@TEXSAR.org.

Become a Service Above Self
Monthly Donor



Donate today!



MPU Updates

By Patrick Turck, Director of TEXSAR Missing Persons Unit

The Missing Persons Unit (MPU) continues to grow, and I am deeply grateful for the dedication of our search professionals. Calling them “volunteers” does not fully reflect the commitment, professionalism, and sacrifice they bring to our mission.

We began the month with a search north of Houston supporting local law enforcement. Partner agencies expressed sincere appreciation for our response and strong turnout. The Chief of Party did an exceptional job organizing resources and ensuring search areas were thoroughly covered.

During Volunteer Appreciation Weekend where many team members were gathered for team building, TEXSAR received a call for a Central Texas search with serious concerns due to cold weather. Within 45 minutes, 51 search professionals committed to the mission, with more than half already at the staging area being briefed. Their rapid response on a cold Saturday night was remarkable, and the subject returned home safely that evening.

TEXSAR’s commitment was reinforced again as the recent winter storm approached, when Central Texas law enforcement requested immediate assistance for an endangered subject missing for 36 hours. Although the outcome was not what we hoped for, the immediate response of 40 search professionals was outstanding, and the Chief of Party once again provided stellar leadership.

These missions provide a heavy reminder to the importance of mental health awareness alongside physical preparedness. Some operations expose our search professionals to extremely difficult situations, reinforcing the need for the peer-to-peer support program being developed by our team and alongside our mental health expert and provider. Caring for our people is essential to sustaining our mission.

Looking ahead, the MPU will welcome new investigators and a new MPU Analyst in February, increasing our ability to support agencies and work

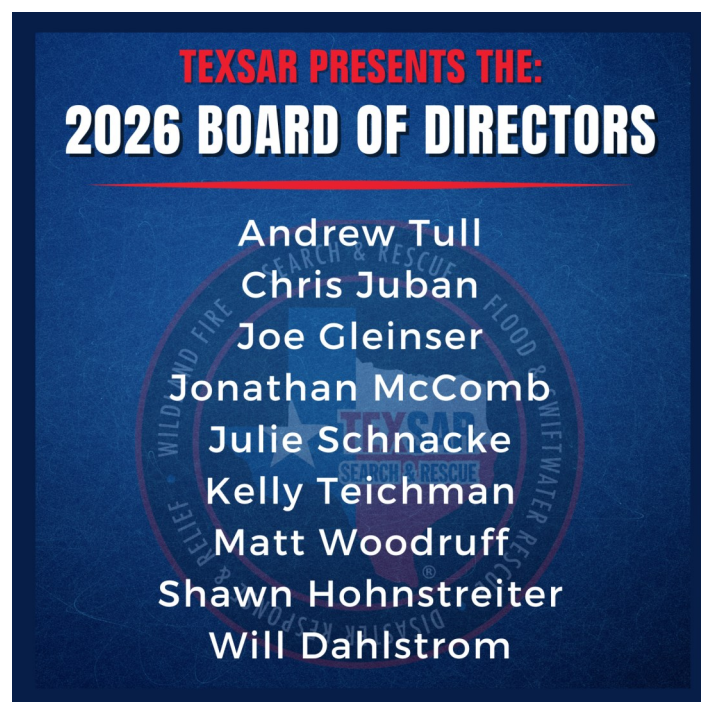
cold cases. February is also shaping up to include one of the largest missions TEXSAR has ever conducted out of state, further evidence of the growing reach and trust in TEXSAR and the MPU.

Trained to Respond.

Committed to Bring Them Home.

Thank You, TEXSAR Board

We are proud to welcome the 2026 TEXSAR Board of Directors and grateful for their willingness to serve our mission and our volunteers.



We also want to extend our sincere thanks to the 2025 Board of Directors. Your leadership, guidance, and commitment helped strengthen TEXSAR and ensured we could continue showing up for communities when it mattered most.

Thank you for serving TEXSAR and helping keep us [Ready for the Call.](#)

Spotlight on Supporters

Lemonade and Flowers for K9s

The July 4th floods in the Kerrville area caught the attention of people around the world and TEXSAR's response moved many to action. Thousands donated funds, scores offered prayers and moral support, and hundreds were inspired to join TEXSAR as members. About 1,300 miles away from Kerrville, a nine-year old girl in Michigan named Charli saw on the television news some of the work being done in response to the floods. She was impressed by the work of K9s and, being a lifelong lover of dogs, decided she wanted to help. Clearly, she is part entrepreneur and part philanthropist with a heart for service.

Charli enlisted her sister Gwen's help and that of her mom, Becky. For three days, her lemonade stand sold tasty drinks and beautiful flowers, while also accepting donations from people in the community, including kids, parents, grandparents and neighbors. Becky said with a chuckle, "Every time I thought we were done with flowers, Charli would call out for more. I used to have a large hydrangea plant, but not anymore and that's okay."

"I did not realize that dogs could do so much," Charli said, "and I wanted to help them." She designated her portion of the funds raised to come to TEXSAR to support K9s and search crews. Becky said the family has a rescue golden retriever that has a lot to do with Charli's love of dogs.



Charli was so impressed by the work of TEXSAR members that she wanted to be a search-and-rescue (SAR) responder for Halloween but, Becky said, "We couldn't find a costume for that."

Becky said she felt proud as a mother to see that her daughter wanted to serve others. "She has always had a heart for taking care of others," she said, "and every time she thinks of what she wants to be when she grows up, it involves taking care of others in some way." Charli is now looking at someday serving on a K9 SAR crew.

"I think that kids in the area felt more connected to the cause because of the kids at Camp Mystic. The neighborhood country club was holding some summer camps at the time of Charli's lemonade stand and the camp directors brought attendees to buy from us or give donations. It was meaningful for all of us."

Charli felt so good about being able to raise money for a cause that is important to her that she wants to do it again...a true philanthropist.

TEXSAR at the New York Stock Exchange

The holidays have passed, but the warm feeling of being appreciated

by supporters remains. Cheniere Energy provided important support to TEXSAR during the July floods, enabling us to procure an advanced drone with LiDAR technology and a

command van that has proven to be an essential asset for a variety of complicated missions. We are humbled by Cheniere Energy choosing TEXSAR to be the nonprofit highlighted on their ornament at the New York Stock Exchange. Thank you, Cheniere Energy!



Member Milestones

TEXSAR hosted its annual member celebration event in January, a three-day activity to honor volunteer members, celebrate their commitment and build camaraderie. Attendance was the largest ever as attendees enjoyed activities, heard from special speakers and connected with each other in meaningful ways.



As part of the activities, numerous awards were presented. Thank you to all TEXSAR members for your commitment and a special thank you to those whose service earned you special recognition.

In addition to the honorees listed, several members were highlighted for the number of missions that they completed in 2025.

- Joe H., 62 missions
- Meg H., 60 missions
- Russell W., 57 missions
- Amy C., 45 missions
- Linna S and Jamine D. (tie), 42 missions



Name	Award Type	Award
Linna S.	Corporate	President's Award
Teri C.	Corporate	Spirit of Service
Tim W.	Corporate	Commitment to Excellence
Jamine D.	Corporate	Outstanding Leadership
Meg H.	Corporate	Distinguished Service
Ken J.	Corporate	Behind-the-Scenes Hero
Kelly H.	Division-Central	MVP
Madeline P. and Jordan J.	Division-Central	Behind-the-Scenes Hero
Allie S.	Division-Central	Most Spirited
Preston J.	Division-Central	Rookie of the Year
Caryne E.	Division-South Central	MVP
Brandon H.	Division-South Central	Behind-the-Scenes Hero
Traci H.	Division-South Central	Rookie of the Year
Julia S.	Division-South Central	Most Spirited
Chris H.	Division-North Texas	MVP
Greg F.	Division-North Texas	Behind-the-Scenes Hero
Sam G.	Division-North Texas	Rookie of the Year
Steve S.	Division-North Texas	Most Spirited
Abe S.	Division-Gulf Coast	MVP
Brandi M.	Division-Gulf Coast	Behind-the-Scenes Hero
Mark A.	Division-Gulf Coast	Rookie of the Year
Sonja R.	Division-Gulf Coast	Most Spirited
Meg H. and Jamie G.		Carrie Chalfoun Service Above Self

Important Links: Stay in Touch!

[Become a Member](#)

[Donate today!](#)

[Service Above Self Monthly Donor program](#)

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

[“Ready for the Call” video](#)

www.TEXSAR.org

9TH ANNUAL
TEXSAR
MEMORIAL CLAY SHOOT

SAVE THE DATE!

SATURDAY 28TH
MARCH 2026

HOG HEAVEN
DRIPPING SPRINGS, TX

TEXSAR
SEARCH & RESCUE

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

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