



# TEXSAR DISPATCH

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

January 2026

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**2025  
TEXSAR  
IMPACT**  
READY FOR THE CALL

**269  
MISSIONS**

**67,496  
HOURS VOLUNTEERED**

**\$2,348,216  
VALUE OF DONATED TIME**

2025 was a transformative year for TEXSAR and this year portends to be another busy year. We humbly and proudly commit to our role as "Texans helping Texans with service above self."

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## From the CEO



There are two clear realities of those in the emergency response world: 1. You never know what call to serve will arise, and 2. Be ready (equipped, trained and positioned) to respond. This past year has shown how far TEXSAR has progressed in its ability to meet the ever-growing demand for its services. I could not be more proud of our dedicated volunteers, committed staff and supportive board members.

We do not know what 2026 will bring, but we are certain of several things:

- TEXSAR is larger and better resourced than ever in its history. With more than 1,000 members (we had approximately 300 on July 3), we have more volunteers than ever. All will be trained and certified. We have many new assets and specialized equipment that enhance our capabilities.
- TEXSAR's reputation for excellence and service is spreading, prompting more and more agencies across Texas, and beyond, to seek our expertise and services.
- TEXSAR will increase its infrastructure of staff to support members, missions and operations.
- TEXSAR will complete a major re-branding that will more accurately convey our cause and mission.
- TEXSAR will have a central office location.

As an organization, we are at this point because of the trust that so many have in all who comprise the TEXSAR family. We could not have the future we foresee were it not for the members, donors, sponsors, and the many partners we have in the law enforcement and emergency response fields. We intend to continue to earn that trust every day.

I hope that you follow all the news related to those items. We will share, as is appropriate, through this newsletter and social media, as well as through traditional media.

- Justin McInnis

# News and Announcements

## New Version of ADIAT Released: A Faster, Smarter, More Intuitive Analysis Experience.

Automated Drone Image Analysis Tool (ADIAT) 2.0 is now out, the most significant update since its public launch. Updates introduce real-time streaming analysis, allowing users to analyze video from files, RTMP streams, and HDMI capture.

ADIAT remains completely free and open source. Learn more and download it [here](#).



## Clay Shoot Coming Soon

Registration is officially open for the TEXSAR Memorial Clay Shoot, presented by our friends from Briggs Equipment. Join us Saturday, March 28, 2026 at Hog Heaven Sporting Club in Dripping Springs, TX.



We're eagerly seeking sponsors, auction donations, and team registrations.

All participants receive: breakfast, lunch, drinks, live music, an event T-shirt, raffle entry, awards, and more!

We'll have live music, local vendors, and belt buckles for the top team and top shooters!

We hope to see you there!

[Download Sponsorship Info](#)

Registration Link: [www.texasar.org/clayshoot](http://www.texasar.org/clayshoot)

## Receipts for 2025

This past year will forever be remembered in TEXSAR's development as a resource for Texas. It would not have been possible without your support during the year. It is because of that support that TEXSAR can provide its services for free.

The level of support that we received, particularly related to the July 4<sup>th</sup> floods, was humbling and extensive. We will be sending out a year-end summary in January via email or postal mail to all donors who made donations to TEXSAR in 2025.

Your support enabled us to respond to more than 240 missions, commit more than 63,000 hours in service and training with a value of more than \$2.1 million, enhance our capabilities with equipment and assets, and provide extensive support to our members to maximize their effectiveness and their safety.

If you would like your receipt emailed to you, please contact [donations@texasar.org](mailto:donations@texasar.org) with your preferred email address and phone number so we can adjust your records accordingly.



# Safety in an Unpredictable World:

## Navigation basics: part two

Part one available in the [December 2025 newsletter](#)

By Jamie Going, SAR Responder-Advanced, TEXSAR Membership Committee Chair

Now let's pepper in some actual tangible tools, starting with a paper map. If you have a map, you can potentially orient yourself just by looking at the terrain around you, and determining where those features are on the map. You may see a pond to your right, and one small but steep hill by itself in a flat area to your left. Once you locate those on your map you can begin to deduce where you are, and ultimately which way North is.



Reading topographic lines will give you the understanding of the elevation changes around you. Each line is a horizontal slice through the earth, with the same elevation at any point along that line. If the lines are close together, that means that there is a steep slope at that location. If there is more space in between the lines, then it's a shallower slope. We can use this for route planning before we navigate anywhere. The shortest distance between 2 points usually seems like the logical route to take, until you realize there's a cliff or valley in between you and your target. Perhaps the topographic lines on your map indicate that there is a shallower descent or ascent, even though it may ultimately mean a longer trip to get there. Reading these lines can even help when utilizing the study of lost person behavior to try to predict where a missing person might be. When someone is lost, they will oftentimes be attracted to linear formations because they represent some kind of path

that the person can hold onto when they're otherwise surrounded by a sea of randomness. That linear formation may come in the form of a ravine for example, which you can easily find by reading the topographic lines.

Knowing your pace count will aid in estimating distances when navigating. If you don't know your pace count, you can figure it out by choosing a set distance, 100 meters for example at a high school track, and counting your paces to travel that distance. If you take 64 paces to travel 100 meters, then you can deduce that 16 paces would take you 25 meters, and if you wanted to travel 500 meters you'd have to take 320 paces. We utilize this technique on trail during missions at Guadalupe Mountain National Park. There may be a trail intersection 400 meters ahead while hiking down a dry wash. Instead of constantly checking the map, whether paper or digital, you can count your paces and know when you're getting close to that intersection.

If you've never used a compass before, it may seem like a daunting task until you realize that you're essentially just finding out how many degrees away from north you want to travel, and using the magnetic needle to make sure you're pointed in that direction. That works assuming you know where you are on the map to begin with, but if you don't you can use a compass to figure it out, even with as little as a single measurement with your compass. Let's say for example you're standing along a creek, and you know for sure it's the only creek in that area. You could point your compass at a well defined feature, like a mountain top, and figure out the bearing number you'd have to travel on to get there. Find that mountain on your map, and take what's called a back azimuth. A back azimuth is simply the opposite direction you're pointing, and you'd figure this out by either adding or subtracting 180 to get the reverse direction. Wherever that line intersects the creek is where you are. Without the creek, you could take a second or even third measurement, figuring out the bearing number towards other features, and triangulate your position. The use of a compass can also actually simplify your description of where you are. If you were utilizing a



## MPU Updates

*By Patrick Turck, Director of TEXSAR Missing Persons Unit*

As we reflect on the close of 2025, I want to extend my sincere thanks to the staff and incredible volunteers of TEXSAR. You are a tremendous team, united by a shared commitment to finding the missing and bringing them home. That dedication was on full display in December, when TEXSAR supported multiple missions.

The first mission was a search for a 96-year-old man who walked away from his residence in a rural area in East Texas. After a two-day search, he was found alive in the middle of the woods. He was dehydrated and hypothermic, but alive. Throughout the operation, the team conducted themselves with professionalism and compassion, prioritizing the victim's health and welfare.

Later in the month, TEXSAR assisted a search for a person who had gone missing while hiking more than 35 years ago in South Texas. The mission required team members to scale steep cliffs and navigate a small mountain to reach the search area. The terrain was extremely rugged, often forcing searchers to move on their hands and knees. The team was able to recover evidence to help law enforcement officially close the case.

In addition, the Missing Persons Unit (MPU) assisted with a search for a missing 31-year-old woman from a remote area in Central Texas. She was considered to be in imminent danger. TEXSAR volunteers responded in force on short notice. After two days of searching, the woman was located alive and well.

Lastly, TEXSAR responded to a request in Central Texas to assist in locating a missing person. A large team was deployed, including drones, K-9 teams, and ground searchers. Two K-9s trained in human remains detection in water alerted to a specific area. The precision of the K-9 alerts allowed dive operations to be narrowly focused, resulting in a timely recovery. Concurrently, ground search teams covered

GPS, you'd read off a couple strings of numbers representing your latitude and longitude, and there's the chance that one of those numbers could be misinterpreted over a crackly radio. However you could also potentially say "You know that water tower that we can all see from a mile in any direction? I'm 315 degrees from that on the creek." Anyone looking at a map and having a compass handy would be able to figure out exactly where you are using that information.

While it's beneficial to know the old tools, you don't have to choose between old vs new. You'll benefit from not just knowing the different methods but also combining them. Before ever heading out on a mission, I'll use modern technology to look at a satellite view of the area. I'll see where this water feature is in relation to the staging area along this road, and so on. When arriving on scene, I've got a mental map, I know which way North is so I can orient myself, and hopefully never lose sight of where I am out in the field.



extensive areas of shoreline and wooded terrain, locating important items of evidence.

As we move into 2026, the MPU remains committed to expanding both its size and capabilities. Planned growth includes adding four volunteer investigators, one for each division, one additional full-time investigator, and potentially a volunteer MPU analyst. These additions will improve response times, strengthen cold case capabilities, and increase the likelihood of safe recoveries for missing individuals.

Great work to all of our TEXSAR volunteers. Your resilience, professionalism, and unwavering dedication continue to make a meaningful difference for families and communities across Texas.



## Development Corner

“How can I help?” is a common question that people ask when they want to learn more about how to financially support TEXSAR’s mission. There are several ways:

- Event sponsorships or participation, including the upcoming [Memorial Clay Shoot](#)
- [Service Above Self](#) monthly donations
- Targeted endowments in your name or that of a loved one
- Waypoint initiative, a special program limited to 28 donors that uniquely addresses TEXSAR’s current and future needs.

For more information about any of these programs, please contact Dion McInnis, Development Officer, at [Dion.McInnis@TEXSAR.org](mailto:Dion.McInnis@TEXSAR.org).





## Spotlight on Supporters

*Soon after the July 4<sup>th</sup> floods began, Jalen Kisner, the New Braunfels Branch Manager for Briggs Equipment, reached out to express an interest in supporting TEXSAR’s work. The rest, as the saying goes, is history.*



Some relationships are just meant to be. They are obvious to everyone because of the shared values, among other things. So seems to be the relationship between TEXSAR and Briggs Equipment who became a supporter of TEXSAR’s mission during the July 4<sup>th</sup> floods in Central Texas.

“When the tragic events of July 4<sup>th</sup> unfolded, our team wanted to do something by supporting an organization that shared our values. We researched a number of organizations and TEXSAR responded quickly to our inquiry,” said Jalen Kisner, New Braunfels Branch Manager for [Briggs Equipment](#), an employee-owned

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company with operations from Brownsville to Miami. Many of the Texas operations of Briggs Equipment contributed to the donation that supported TEXSAR. Collaboration and partnership are key to the way that the company conducts business, Jalen said. “We try to rally team members and our other partners when there is a need. Hazel’s Hotshots, for example, stepped up to help us deliver the Polaris vehicle to TEXSAR, at no cost to us or TEXSAR. We saw in social media how far the volunteers had to go through difficult terrain to get to their mission site. I reached out to our company president to get approval to donate a Polaris and he replied within an hour with his endorsement. Serving is in our corporate blood, just as it is with TEXSAR,” he said.

Briggs Equipment is part of Sammons Enterprises. Jalen said that service to community is a key element for all of the companies that comprise Sammons Enterprises.



“For Briggs Equipment, we focus on balance, integrity, respect, growth, grit and safety. We were impressed by the measures taken to assure the safety of its volunteers as they served so selflessly.”

Jalen shared that they focus on relationships, not just transactions, in their business and their support of the community. “We look forward to a long relationship with TEXSAR,” he said.

Long-standing relationships with like-minded nonprofits are essential, he said. Citing the involvement of Briggs Equipment with the New Braunfels Food Bank and local chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association, he said that they use community engagement as a way for team members to build camaraderie and have fun while serving.



“We support the clay shoot held by Freedom Service Dogs,” he said, “because it is a way to honor those who serve. That is the same reason that we chose to be the presenting sponsor for [TEXSAR’s upcoming clay shoot](#).”

“There seems to be a lot of commonality between our people and culture, and those of TEXSAR,” Jalen said. “We have a lot of outdoors types and we value relationships. We’re not in the short-haul with our clients, communities or partners. Briggs Equipment’s motto is ‘Equipment to stay a step ahead; service so you never fall behind’ and it is that ongoing view we have with our new relationship with TEXSAR. We look forward to what is to come.”



# Member Minute

We take more than a minute to honor our dedicated volunteers as they serve on missions, commit to training, dedicate time for outreach into the community and never waiver from their willingness as “Texans helping Texans with service above self.” They have met all the challenges of 2025 and are ready for the new year.

















## 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](http://www.TEXSAR.org)**

**9TH ANNUAL  
TEXSAR  
MEMORIAL CLAY SHOOT**

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**SATURDAY 28<sup>TH</sup>  
MARCH 2026**

**HOG HEAVEN  
DRIPPING SPRINGS, TX**

**TEXSAR**  
40 YEARS OF RESCUE  
WILDLAND FIRE • SEARCH & RESCUE • FLOOD & SNOWWATER RESCUE  
DISASTER RESPONSE & RELIEF

**MORE INFO AVAILABLE AT: [WWW.TEXSAR.ORG/CLAYSHOOT](http://WWW.TEXSAR.ORG/CLAYSHOOT)**