

TEXSAR DISPATCH



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

September 2026
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TEXSAR is humbled to be included in important events of our partners, like this store opening in Kerrville.

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From the CEO



For the first time in its history, TEXSAR will have a central office. I could not be more proud of this important milestone and what it means to our partners, requesting agencies, committed members and generous donors, as well as the dedicated staff who keep this rapidly expanding organization on track.

The lease is signed, furnishings are on order and renovations are underway. You will be able to follow the progress as we move into the facility that has our important partner, Texas State University, as a neighbor. Our office will be easily accessible by partner agencies and donors, as well as being near the State Capital. We will be sharing updates and images in social media and in this newsletter.

Highlights of the facility reflect what TEXSAR holds dear: training and relationships. We will have a large classroom that will serve as the genesis of TEXSAR Training Institute and its Academy. The room will be used for live, streamed and packaged training for our members. We will also offer TEXSAR's excellent training programs to other organizations, producing a revenue stream to strengthen TEXSAR's financial base. In addition to staff offices, we will have meeting rooms for our law enforcement and other partners to meet with our staff and volunteer investigators. Now, when donors request a site visit, we will have a beautiful office for them to come to.

There is much to share, and I promise that we will. I wanted to let you know as soon as "the ink was dry" on the lease because it is our donors, partners and friends who have made this move both necessary and possible.

— Justin McInnis, President and CEO

News and Announcements

Search Party Is Getting Closer!

The 11th Annual TEXSAR Search Party is shaping up to be an incredible evening, and we are grateful to the businesses, families, and individuals who have already stepped up to support it. The September 19th event will be at The Renaissance Hotel (Arboretum) in Austin, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Tables are still available, but don't wait – get yours before they sell out! You can find [ticket information here](#).

We can't wait to see you there! [Check out scenes from last year's event](#).

Staff Promotions

As TEXSAR continues to grow and evolve, we are taking intentional steps to strengthen the organization behind the mission and ensure we have the structure, resources, and support needed to serve our communities for years to come.

As part of this continued growth, we are making several updates to our staff leadership structure, effective immediately. These changes are designed to better align our teams, strengthen our advancement efforts, and build the capacity needed to support TEXSAR's future.

We're excited to announce that Dion McInnis will move from Director of Development into the role of Chief Advancement Officer (CAO), expanding his leadership across our advancement efforts and helping guide TEXSAR's continued growth. Advancement's role will be to unify outreach and messaging to maximize fundraising success and partnerships as TEXSAR heads toward its 25th anniversary in 2029.

Rianne Sykes-Wenske will move from Assistant Director of Development into the role of Director of Development, taking on expanded leadership of our fundraising and donor development efforts.

As part of this alignment, Shannon Smith, Director of Communications and Outreach, will now report to the Chief Advancement Officer, bringing our communications, development, and advancement efforts into closer collaboration as we work toward our strategic goals.

TEXSAR Is Hiring

TEXSAR is looking for several key staff members. These critical positions will help ensure efficiency and effectiveness in our missions and our ability to support no-charge services to requesting agencies and critical infrastructure partners. More information can be found at our [website](#).

- Development Specialist
- Division Chiefs (four positions)
- Finance/HR Specialist



Spotlight on Supporters

THE
RENAISSANCE
HOTEL
AUSTIN, TX

11TH ANNUAL TEXSAR

Search Party

SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER
19TH

THANK YOU TO OUR KIND AND GENEROUS SPONSORS!

PRESENTING SPONSOR



Adam R. Scripps
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PHOTO BOOTH



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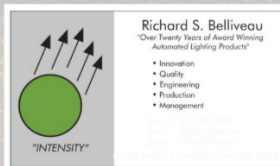
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Branham Family
Firefly Aerospace
GCS Technologies
Scripps Family

Development Corner

By Dion McInnis, Chief Advancement Officer

We're making a move! Will you help?



As described in our CEO's message on page 2, TEXSAR will soon be moving into its first-ever central office. Located in San Marcos with Texas State University as a neighbor, the office will provide an excellent location for meetings with partners, training programs for members and partner personnel, and centralized operations.

Furnishings, renovations and upgrades will reflect TEXSAR's spirit, culture and humility. You can help us with this significant transition by donating to this project.

All donors who contribute \$1,000 or more to the "TEXSAR Home Fund" by December 31, 2026 will be permanently recognized in the reception area of the office. Please remember to select "TEXSAR Home Fund" on the list of options at our donation page so you can be recognized. In the note section you can share if you want your contribution to be made in honor of someone. You can also opt to donate anonymously.

We are already looking to a not-so-distant horizon — our 25th anniversary in 2029 — with enthusiasm and commitment to the vision. Having a central office is a major step forward.

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

MPU Updates

By Patrick Turck, Director of TEXSAR Missing Persons Unit

While the focus of TEXSAR remains firmly rooted in "Texans Helping Texans," our mission has always been about something even broader: helping others when and where we can. As mentioned in previous newsletters, TEXSAR's reputation and relationships continue to expand well beyond the borders of Texas.

August provided an extraordinary example when TEXSAR was asked to assist authorities in Lithuania with the search for three climbers missing in the mountains of Kyrgyzstan. Our role primarily involved assisting with the analysis of drone imagery collected over the search area, utilizing TEXSAR's [Automated Drone Image Analysis Tool](#) capabilities. Ultimately, those combined efforts contributed to the recovery of all three climbers. It was a unique opportunity to demonstrate how the expertise developed by our volunteers here in Texas can have an impact thousands of miles away.

Closer to home, August began with a request for assistance from the Schertz Police Department in the search for a missing man. TEXSAR deployed with an outstanding leadership team and a group of phenomenal searchers, and within less than an hour of beginning our search, the missing person was recovered. It was another reminder that preparation, teamwork and experienced search personnel can make a tremendous difference.

Later in the month, authorities in North Texas requested TEXSAR assistance for a missing person. What followed was a challenging three-day search involving our volunteers and local authorities. The persistence of everyone involved ultimately paid off when the missing person was recovered.

The relationships built during that operation also demonstrated one of the less visible but incredibly important benefits of every TEXSAR deployment. Just days later and thanks to the work in the previous search, another local sheriff's office contacted

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TEXSAR and requested assistance with a separate search. Every mission gives us an opportunity not only to serve a family or an agency, but also to build relationships that can make TEXSAR a resource for the next agency to provide answers for another family.

Behind the scenes, volunteer MPU investigators continue working their assigned cold cases, with significant developments and encouraging progress occurring in two investigations. These cases rarely produce immediate results, but our investigators remain committed to following leads, reviewing evidence, coordinating with law enforcement, and continuing to search for the answers that families have sometimes waited years to receive.

During August, the MPU Director also attended two conferences focused on strengthening law-enforcement relationships and increasing awareness of TEXSAR's capabilities and resources. Those relationships continue to generate new opportunities for TEXSAR to assist agencies throughout Texas and beyond.

As another busy month comes to a close, we continue to be amazed by the dedication of our volunteers. Whether analyzing drone imagery from a search thousands of miles away, spending days searching difficult terrain, assisting law enforcement with a cold case, or deploying with little notice to help locate someone who is missing, our members continue to conduct themselves as true professionals.

Most importantly, they continue doing what this organization was created to do: bring resources to agencies, answers to families, and hope to those who are still waiting.

BeforeDuringAfter

By Michael Rojas, Director of BeforeDuringAfter

Another month, another collection of stories of support, effort and compassion to share. The BeforeDuringAfter (B4DA) program has been supporting recovery in the Hill Country since the onset



of the July 2026 flood response efforts, and spirits remain unwavering. We have remained active in collaboration with the coordinating partners on the ground and listening to what is needed. Efforts in Kerrville with the incredible individuals that make up [Kerr Together](#), a local long-term recovery group, served as a stark reminder that efforts of combined forces are critical for recovery efforts.

A common concern shared in conversations with many is the need to tell the story of the impact in the Kerrville area and, more importantly, the need to visualize it.

B4DA worked with TEXSAR drone pilots to support in flyover efforts and provide the data to the leaders on the ground who needed it most. Over three days the pilots completed 23 mapping flights:

- Goat Creek (six)
- Indian Creek (four)
- Johnson Creek (six)
- Town Creek (six)
- Town Creek Reservoir (one)

Disaster recovery is a long and arduous road. TEXSAR and B4DA continue to help our neighbors in these endeavors.

Member Minute

Shawn Hohnstreiter Honored for Service

We are incredibly proud to celebrate TEXSAR Co-Founder Shawn Hohnstreiter, who was recently honored with the 2026 Spirit of Service Award from engAGE Travis County.

The RSVP program is a federally authorized national service program of AmeriCorps Seniors and was established to connect volunteers with meaningful opportunities and provide the resources and support they need to make a difference in their communities.

Shawn has been connected with engAGE Travis County for many years, alongside several other members of TEXSAR.

A special thank you to everyone at engAGE Travis County for encouraging volunteerism and creating opportunities for people to serve. And thank you to Jennifer Sanders of KXAN, who did an incredible job as emcee and shared such kind words about Shawn and TEXSAR.

We also want to celebrate our very own Penny Goering, who was recognized for 10 years of service with engAGE and 500 hours of volunteer service. Shawn was also recognized for contributing more than 2,000 hours of service. These numbers reflect last year's service and are a testament to the time and commitment they continue to give to their communities.



L-R: Amy Shoe (TEXSAR member), Shawn Hohnstreiter (TEXSAR member, honoree), Shannon Smith (TEXSAR Director of Communications and Outreach and Andrew Tull (TEXSAR Chairman of the Board).

The TEXSAR Team

With the many changes TEXSAR has experienced due to tremendous growth in missions and membership, and more coming in the near term, we believe this is a good time to list the staff and volunteer leadership team dedicated to ensuring that our committed volunteers have what they need to serve efficiently, effectively and safely.

Justin McInnis

President and CEO

Smith Tennyson

Chief Operations Officer

Dion McInnis

Chief Advancement Officer

Terri Putney

Director of Business Administration

Michael Duffek

Director of Field Operations

Patrick Turck

Director of Missing Persons Unit

Scott Abram

Volunteer Director of Training

Charlie Grove

Volunteer Director of Technology

Shannon Smith

Director of Communications and Outreach

Rianne Sykes-Wenske

Director of Development

Michael Rojas

Director of BeforeDuringAfter

Jacklyn Macaulay

Administrative Assistant

TEXSAR representatives joined volunteers from RiteSite Health for a workday in Hunt, organized by Right Connection. Afterward, the Right Connection Foundation presented TEXSAR with a \$5,000 contribution.



Justin McInnis (TEXSAR President and CEO) joined in a presentation at Patriots' Hall in Dripping Springs. The panel of presenters shared ideas on how veterans can continue their call to service after serving the country.



Stephanie and K9 Eddie participated in a recent Nulo Pet Food photoshoot. The company is a new sponsor of our K9s (see announcement in last month's TEXSAR Dispatch).





Training is the backbone of TEXSAR's readiness to respond efficiently, effectively and safely. Members take a break during a recent rescue boat operations training session.



Justin McInnis (TEXSAR President and CEO) met with 4Corners K9 Search and Rescue in New Mexico to discuss various aspects of TEXSAR's capabilities. Afterward, the group came together for a photograph.



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](#)

["Ready for the Call" video](#)

www.TEXSAR.org



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See you then!**