

# Journalist spends night on mountain before rescue

## Hiker OK thanks to team effort of many

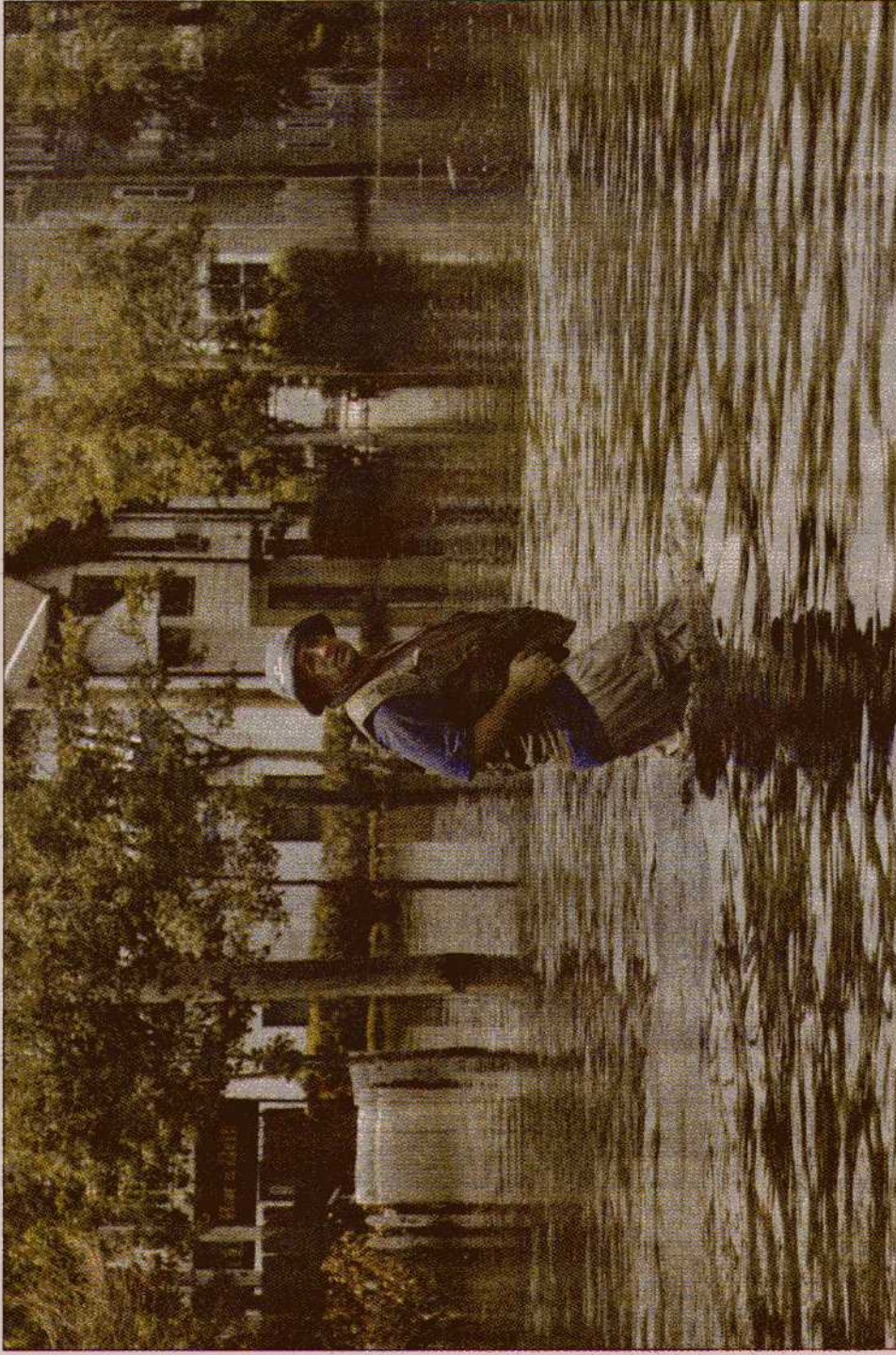
By Anna Walters  
For *The Taos News*

Local and state search and rescue personnel pulled a lost hiker to safety Thanksgiving morning after the 41-year-old journalist spent a sleepless night in the mountains near Taos Ski Valley.

Victor Epstein, a Houston-based reporter with *BloombergNews*, and his two Basenji barkless dogs had left Nov. 22 for a day in the woods, setting off without a knife, compass or jacket.

Epstein said, "My problems began with the end of the Bull of the Woods trail, which was not marked. Thinking there was more to the hike, I followed the path down one mountain-side, across a creek and up another mountain. I ran into trouble on the way back, when the covering of snow on the hillside below the Bull of the Woods proved too thin for traction and made everything impossibly slippery. I was forced to climb up the many downed trees in the area, using the branches like ladder rungs. By the time I had reached the top, my legs were shot. I was soaked in snow and perspiration, and night was approaching."

Epstein had made a 7 p.m. appointment with Katherine Kett, a massage therapist



Courtesy Daniel Acker/Bloomberg News

Victor Epstein wades through the Hurricane Katrina aftermath. The journalist had another harrowing ordeal this month when he got lost while hiking near Taos Ski Valley.

### Side notes

■ On Nov. 18, 2006, in Dallas, Texas, Epstein received the Katie Award for breaking the story of 35 dead patients at St. Rita's nursing home in Chalmette, La., of St. Bernard's Parish, which is located between New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico, and was one of the communities hit hardest by Katrina in terms of fatalities.



Epstein said that his dream was fulfilled in an odd sort of way when as a lost hiker, he was rescued by a joint team that included members of CAP.

Epstein said, "When I looked up this morning, I would see the helicopter, but I knew from my days as a cadet that the plane was likely a Cessna 172 or 182 — probably being piloted by a CAP volunteer. It gave me

