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Tale of Nando Parrado's survival in Andes to be filmed by Dallas-based AMS Pictures

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It was standing room only at Amarillo College recently as Nando Parrado told his story with video cameras rolling. In 1972, he and 15 other Uruguayans survived a plane crash in the Andes and two months of waiting for help. Finally, Parrado and another man trekked for 10 days through the snow to secure their rescue.

AMS Pictures, the 60-person Dallas production company that Andy Streitfeld founded more than a quarter-century ago, is aiming to tell Parrado's story in a documentary that will include archival footage of the fateful time that claimed the lives of Parrado's sister and mother.

[Ethan Hawke](#) portrayed Parrado in the 1993 film *Alive*, which had the tagline, "They survived the impossible by doing the unthinkable." That "unthinkable" was surviving off the flesh of their fallen comrades.

"It's one of the most incredible survival stories ever," Streitfeld said. "He's a very nice guy, very down to earth. Clearly he's moved way past what happened to him. He talks about if you were in that situation, you would do the same thing [cannibalism], given that these boys had already died. They talked about it early in the crash, and they were OK with it. That was their method of survival."

While the survival story has been told on film, Streitfeld said Parrado's specific tale has not. Add to that newer techniques in computer animation and re-enactments and Streitfeld believes the story can be told today in a much more compelling manner.

AMS is the largest full-service production company in the Southwest, but Streitfeld, who serves as executive producer on the project, with Brad Osborne producing and directing, said projects like this documentary aren't taken on simply as moneymakers. "We're telling it because it's a great story."

Parrado has become a well-known public speaker, a career that began in Dallas when [Gail Davis](#) contacted him and eventually used Parrado as a springboard to creating a respected speakers bureau.

"This story seems to rise above them all," Streitfeld said of the documentary that he expects will take another six to eight months to complete. "These boys were so young. What they went through is just unimaginable. His sister died in his arms. He was very badly injured in the crash, and people thought he would die."

Bonus footage

A sneak preview of Dallas-made *The Beacon*, written and directed by Michael Stokes and produced by Sally Helppie, is at 7:30 tonight at the Studio Movie Grill in Dallas. The supernatural story stars Teri Polo, [Ken Howard](#) and [Michael Ironside](#) and won best feature at the Paranoia Film Festival. ... Dallas is under serious consideration as a shooting locale for a cable television series. More as this develops. ... Could Houston soon host its first big-budget feature film since 1997's *Arlington Road*? It's looking very likely. ... ABC has ordered a pilot script for *We Are Here*, former [My Name Is Earl](#) writer and Texan Hilary Winston's proposed series about a group of recent [University of Texas](#) graduates. Anthony and [Joe Russo](#) are producing, according to *Variety*. ... Austin director [Richard Linklater](#) has been quietly shooting an independent film about a boy over a 12-year time span. It's in its seventh year now and about to film in November under the title *Boyhood*.