



# Banner Newsletter

Brownsville Historical Association

Volume 10, Issue 2

April 2024

## ¡Fiesta y Cultura!: Showcasing the Outfits of Charro Days

Presenting over 20 textiles from the museum's permanent collection, costume donations from local Brownsville residents, *Fiesta y Cultura* is an introduction to the traditional and culturally significant Charro Days celebration. Showcasing the cultural

Brownsville. During the Children's Parade and the International Parade, it is not uncommon to hear the cheering and clapping from visitors as school groups pass by, performing traditional folkloric dances and Charros performing lasso tricks on dancing horses.

Families and out of town visitors line Elizabeth Street to get a glimpse of the colorful attire and hear the mariachi ballads. Children in the parades often perform traditional dances, such as *El Jarabe Tapatio* and in the later years, the dances were expanded to include *La Danza del Viejito* (The Dance of the Old Man).

Charro Days, is a festival that started as a celebration between Brownsville and Matamoros; border towns with



heritage of the region, the exhibit uses historic photographs and textiles to transport visitors back in time and immerse them in the cultural experiences of the past.

The first Charro Days celebration, in 1938, featured traditional *trajes* (outfits) from various parts of Mexico and Latin America. Folks from Brownsville and Matamoros proudly wore their *trajes* (outfits) in the festive celebration of two cities on the U.S. – Mexican border. The most well-known *trajes* (outfits) during the festivities are the Charro and the China Poblana.

Kenneth Faxon, known as the “Father” of Charro Days, initiated the week-long festivities where residents and tourists enjoyed parades, lively music, and dances. Started during the Great Depression, Charro Days began as a three-day celebration featuring firework displays, parades for all age groups, street dances and a grand ball. The original purpose of the festivities was to bring business to struggling merchants in the downtown area of Brownsville and to encourage visitors to support the local economy by shopping and eating in local restaurants.

Street dances and live music have become a staple during Charro Days and the sounds of mariachis and live bands converge to create an atmosphere for people to dance and enjoy in downtown

share roots in history. Today it brings visitors from all over the state and beyond. Sombrero Festival, a carnival, Mr. Amigo, concerts, dances and parades are all part of the Charro Days experience as they provide a fun and festive spirit in Brownsville, Texas.

We are delighted to showcase some of the beautiful textiles and outfits worn during this regional celebration. The inclusion of traditional regional costumes from various parts of Mexico, such as Michoacán, Oaxaca, Yucatán, and Chiapas, as well as the iconic China Poblana dress and Charro suit, offers a comprehensive representation of Mexico's diverse cultural tapestry. Visitors have an opportunity to learn about the traditions, clothing, and celebration that has been cherished for years and continues to be a source of pride for the Brownsville community. *Fiesta y Cultura* is now on display at the Costumes of the Americas Museum located at 1004 E. 6th Street until June 7th.





# Spring 2024 Intern Spotlight

We are fortunate to have interns and volunteers whose time and effort help support the BHA's mission. In this issue we would like to introduce to you our spring semester interns.

**Jose A. "Alex" Martinez** is a junior, majoring in History at UTRGV. He enjoys analyzing historical sources and having discussions over the perspectives of major historical events. In



Jose A. "Alex" Martinez

the future, Alex plans to become a teacher and show the importance of history to his students. In regards to his internship, Alex felt that it was a very insightful experience and recognized the importance of preserving Brownsville history along with the skills needed for archival work. He appreciated spending time with BHA staff and fellow interns who shared similar interests. Overall, Alex believed his internship affirmed his ambitions in becoming an educator and shares, "The museum staff are as much educators as they are preservers of history. As I watch them, I gain insight into how I should approach teaching historical knowledge and how to present it."

**Arely Campos** is a junior, majoring in History at UTRGV. One of the things she appreciates about her studies is considering the interpretations of history in how they appear in academic and public contexts. Arely hopes to work in a political campaign, museum, or newspaper in the near future but her long term goal is to teach at a middle or high school. Over the course of her internship, Arely found that it provided an opportunity to learn or practice a new historical skill each week. Every day was interesting and carried importance which made her see the impact and value of her work. Arely remarks, "This internship is another venture

into human relations. Working as a teacher will provide many and this internship will give me introspective experience to look back on. In addition, it has shown me the importance of involving yourself in local historical associations and becoming a patron."

**Sandra De La Cruz** is a senior majoring in History at UTRGV. She likes to contemplate how history has shaped the world around us as well as how different groups have influenced each other. In the future, Sandra would like to become a history teacher and encourage younger generations to see the value of history in society. She described her internship to be insightful, enjoyable, challenging, and informative. Sandra credits her internship with broadening her knowledge of museum operations and gaining an understanding of collections care and practices. She suggests, "I feel the work of museums is closely linked to the work of history teachers. We both wish to educate the public about the wonder and importance of history. Museums are great tools to teach history to students. Local heritage and cultural museums engage students by discussing topics closely related to their lives."

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(L-R): Arely Campos & Sandra De La Cruz

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## Welcome! **NEW BHA MEMBERS**

Frank Acevedo  
Corina & Ed Alaniz  
Daniel Zimmerman & Elnora Colley  
Bertita Elizondo  
Elizabeth Everson  
Jamal Colby Fayyad  
Emma Gonzalez & Family  
Sonia Hurtado  
Lindsay Irwin  
Dennis & Faith Johnson  
Bryan Martinez

Doris Martinez  
Marco Moreno & Family  
Marco Oliveri  
Cheryl & LeRoy Paulson  
Karen & Sandy Ray  
Terese & Mark Roberts  
Brooks Sheehan  
Karina & Adrian Tovar  
Esther Valle  
Amelia Walter  
Joan Wiley

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### Thank you to you 2024 BHA Sponsors

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# HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS



*¡Fiesta y Cultura!: Opening Reception*

*Historical Happy Hour: Viva Charro Days!*

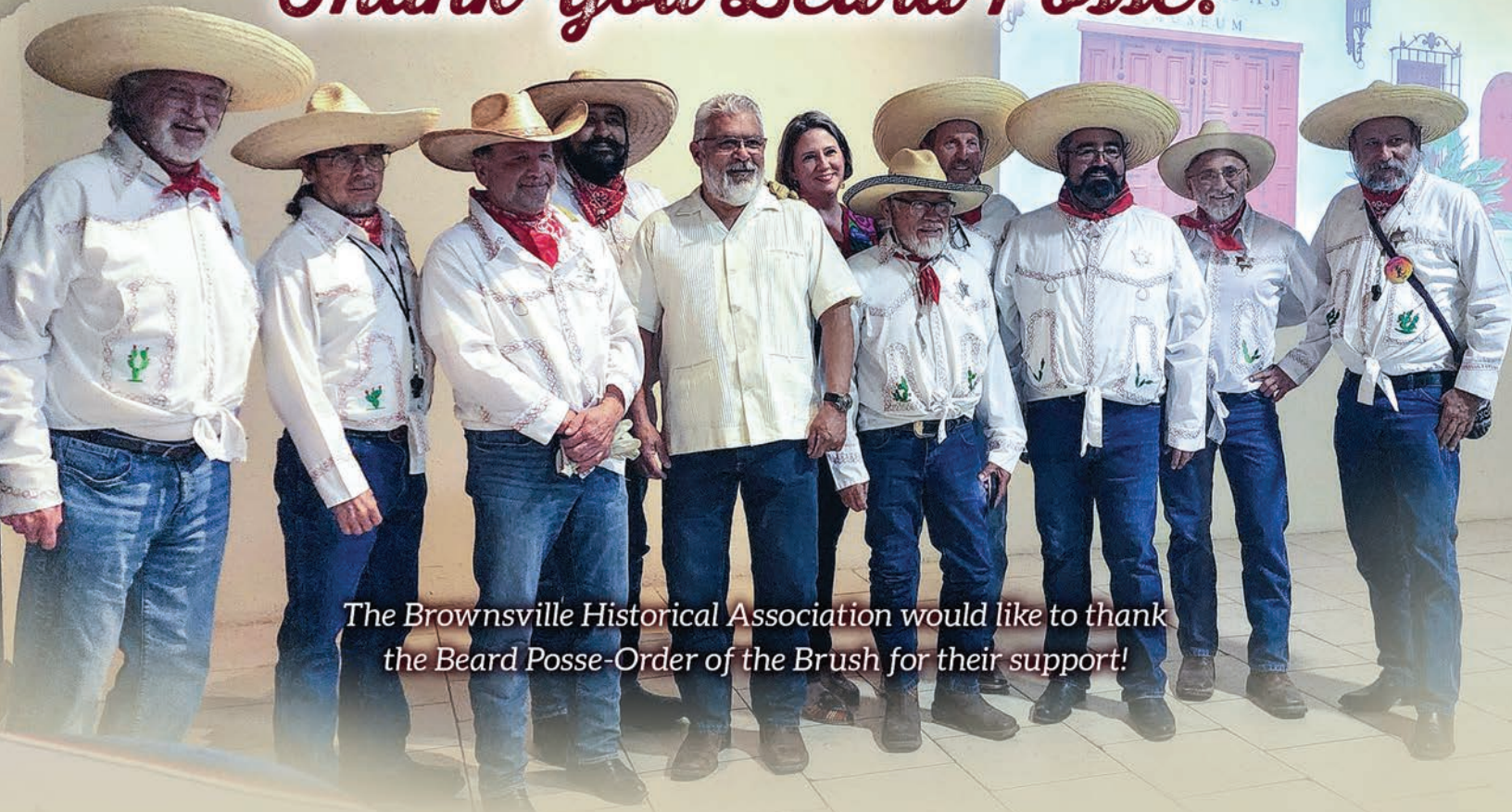


*Membership Social and BHA Awards Presentation*

*Sip N' Paint at Market Square*



# Thank You Beard Posse!



The Brownsville Historical Association would like to thank the Beard Posse-Order of the Brush for their support!

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