

THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY CIVIL WAR TRAIL

WAR & PEACE ON THE RIO GRANDE

1861-1867

A TRAVELING MUSEUM EXHIBIT

CREATED BY THE CHAPS PROGRAM

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY



UTRGV : Community Historical Archaeology
Project with Schools (CHAPS)

On February 4, 2019, the CHAPS Program at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley debuted their Rio Grande Valley Civil War Trail traveling museum exhibit titled “War & Peace on the Rio Grande 1861-1867” at the Visitors Center on UTRGV’s Edinburg campus. The exhibit was designed, developed, and produced by the CHAPS team and regional museum consultants. This traveling museum exhibit encompasses all aspects, events, people, etc., regarding the Civil War era along the US-Mexico border. The exhibit stood at UTRGV until June 19, 2019 and hosted over 4,600 visitors. These visitors included regional residents, Winter Texan tourists and a multitude of K-12 class field trips. The exhibit has since traveled to several venues and is currently booked through December of 2022. If you are interested in hosting this exhibit, please let us know. In the next pages, we will illustrate how the exhibit was displayed in several venues; some utilizing the thematic triptych banners only and while others utilized the full exhibit (including mannequins, flags, and educational tools displays). Please note the success in visitor traffic for all venues below:

**February 4 – June 19, 2019 University of Texas Rio Grande Valley,
Edinburg Campus, Visitors Center (4,600)**

July 1 – August 30, 2019 Museums of Port Isabel, Port Isabel, Texas (8,100)

September 7 – October 31 Zapata County Historical Museum, Zapata, Texas (100)

**November 4 – December 20, 2019 University of Texas Rio Grande Valley,
Brownsville Campus, Special Collections Library (100)**

**January 7 – May 29, 2020 Webb County Heritage Foundation,
Laredo, Texas (960)**

June 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021 Corpus Christi Texas (NAACP) (25,000)

April 1 – June 30, 2021 South Texas College, Weslaco, TX (300)

July 1 – September 13, 2021 – Mission Historical Museum, Mission, TX

September 15 - December 15, 2021 Texas A&M Kingsville

December 15, 2021 - March 30, 2022 McAllen Heritage Museum

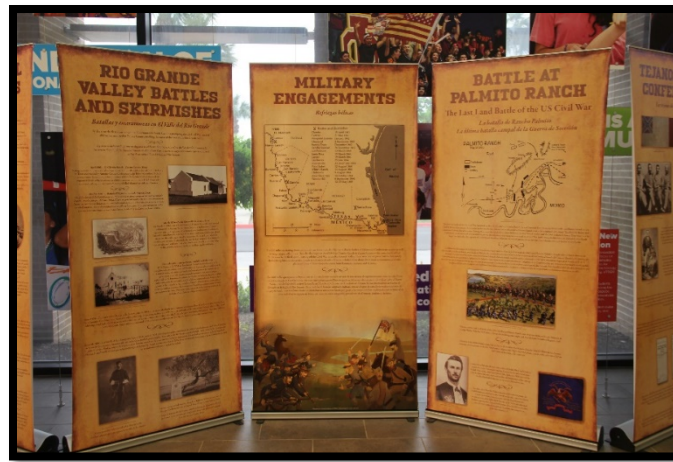
August 1 - September 30, 2022 Weslaco Historical Museum, Weslaco, TX

October 15 - December 15, 2022 South Texas College, Weslaco, TX

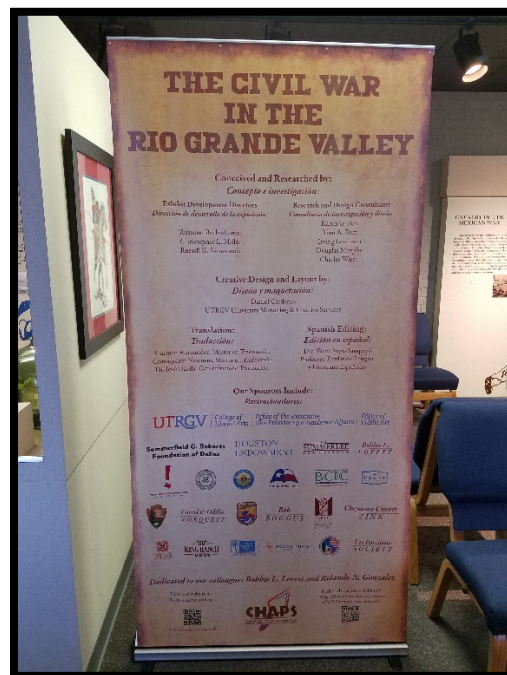
**For further information, please call Roseann Bacha-Garza,
CHAPS Program Manager at 956-665-3231 or via e-mail at
roseann.bachagarza@utrgv.edu. Thank you!**

What does the exhibit include:

1. Six (6) sets of triptych thematic panels
 - a. Introduction to War & Peace on the Rio Grande
 - b. Trade, Commerce, White Gold & Entrepreneurs
 - c. Imperial and Republican Mexico
 - d. Tejanos in the Union & Confederate Armies
 - e. US Colored Troops and Reconstruction
 - f. Military Battles and Skirmishes



2. One (1) credit panel–Civil War on the Rio Grande/Sponsors



3. Six (6) individual soldier panels



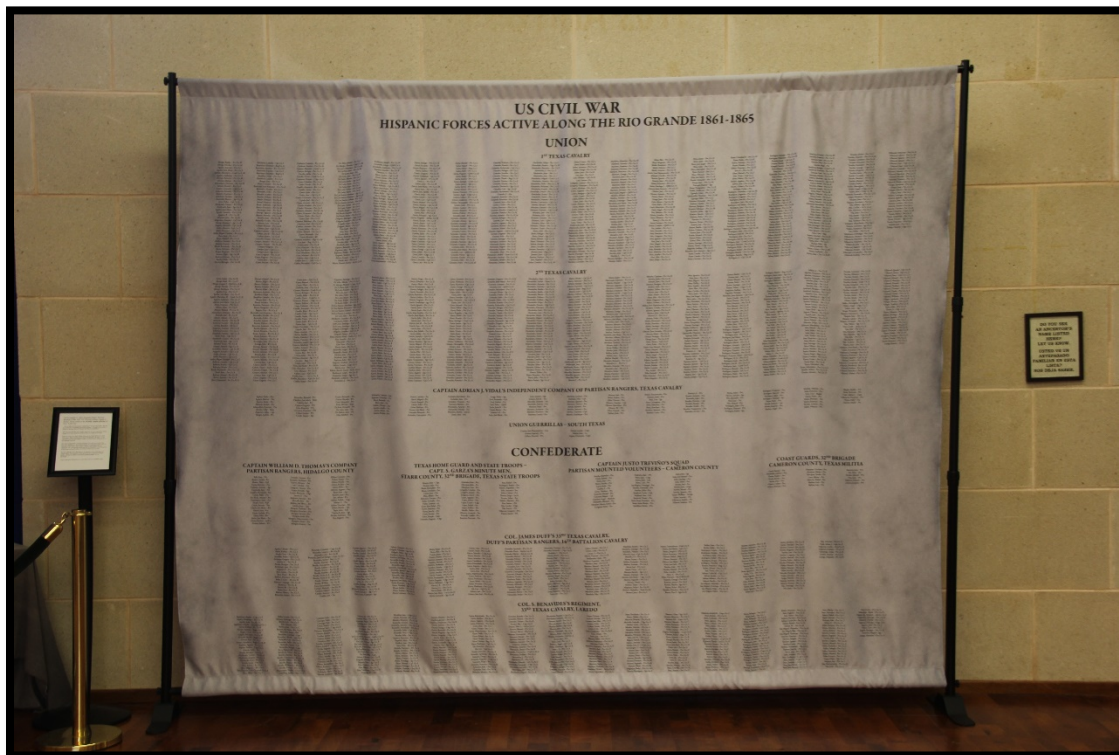
4. Mannequins/Flags/Union & Confederate Soldiers and Field Nurse



5. US Colored Troop display/A Letter From Roma display



6. Tejano Military Memorial Wall Banner (8' tall x 10' wide)

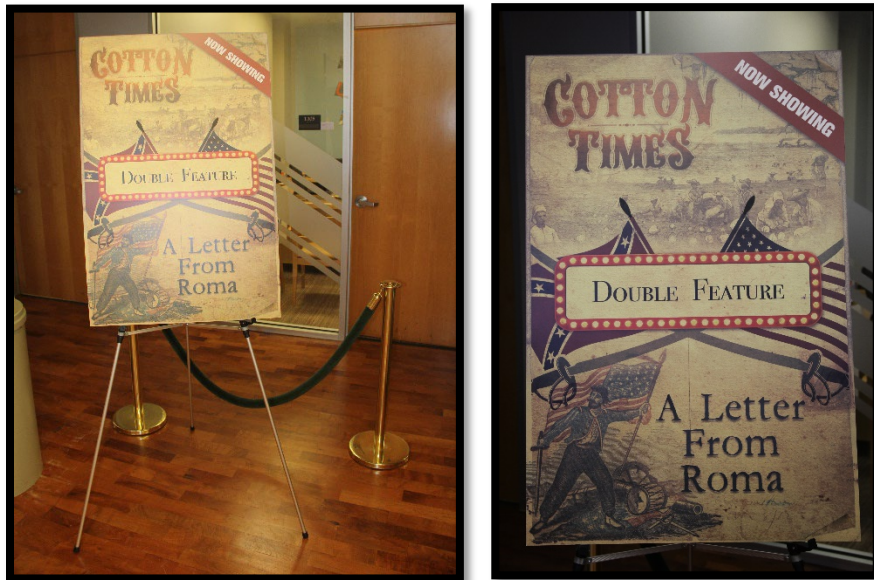


7. Educational Tools/Traveling Trunk items & posters



Note: Case cannot travel – you would have to provide your own display case(s).

**8. Two 9-minute short films (runs on continuous loop)
“Cotton Times” & “A Letter From Roma”**



9. Bi-lingual exhibit catalog to sell in gift shop \$16.99



<https://www.lulu.com/en/us/shop/russell-skowronek-et-al/war-and-peace-on-the-rio-grande/paperback/product-1wk7yz2r.html>

10. Collateral – postcards, bi-lingual maps, etc.



War & Peace on the Rio Grande 1861-1867

Venues that housed the exhibit include:

Museums of Port Isabel – July 1 – August 30, 2019



This exhibit was spread among three different buildings in this complex. We were able to make an inviting front window display of the individual soldier banners and the mannequins with their corresponding flags.



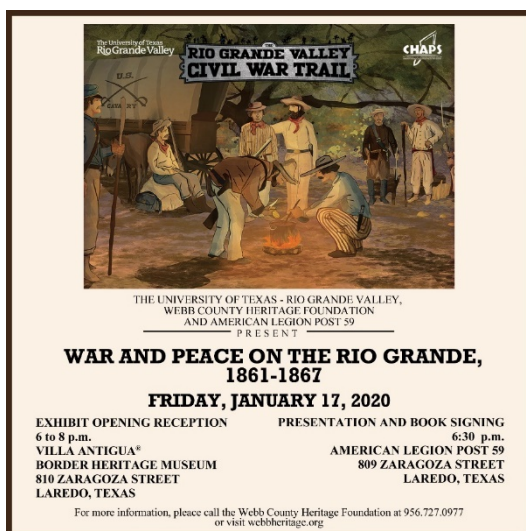
They supplied display case(s) to house our traveling trunks for K-12 education items. We were able to place the thematic triptych panels within the Champion House, Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage and Nautical Museum buildings.



They conducted several community engagement events throughout the two months that our exhibit stood in Port Isabel that included presentations by the CHAPS team and book signing events.

Villa Antigua Border Heritage Museum

Webb County Heritage Foundation – January 7 – May 29, 2020



Ad flyer for the opening reception event and exterior view of museum with vinyl exhibit banner

The Webb County Heritage Foundation hosted a grand opening reception which included a presentation by the CHAPS team and a book signing event.



The entire exhibit was contained on the first floor of the Villa Antigua Border Heritage Museum with the use of moving walls, stanchions, and a display case supplied by the museum.



The base square footage of the Villa Antigua Border Heritage Museum has **xxxxx square feet of display space.**

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

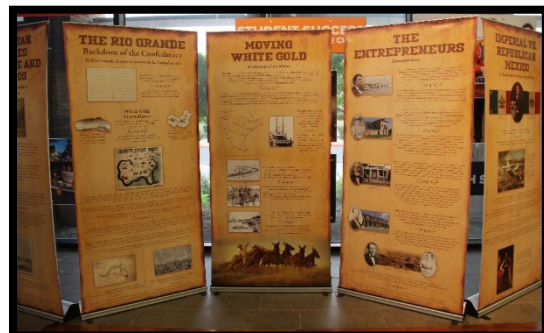
Visitors Center – Edinburg Campus – February 4–June 19, 2020



The 10' x 10' exterior vinyl banner advertised the exhibit



The UTRGV Visitors Center is an 1,871-square-foot space with an attached small theater space. Any display cases were on loan from UTRGV's Performing Arts Complex and do not travel with the exhibit.



University of Texas Rio Grande Valley - Brownsville
Special Collections Library Colonnade, Brownsville Campus
November 4 – December 20, 2019



This location and the Zapata County Historical Museum chose only to house the thematic triptych banners.



Example of a press piece for the community engagement event conducted by the CHAPS Program at UTRGV's Edinburg Campus on April 6, 2019:



6F | WWW.THEMONITOR.COM

THE MONITOR | FRIDAY, APRIL 5, 2019

Revisiting the Civil War Trail



Re-enactors, lecture series to highlight history exhibit

BY A. COLLEEN
DEGUZMAN
STAFF WRITER

EDINBURG — A map of the region is standing here at the center of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley visitor center lobby, pinned with symbols that show the location of Civil War landmarks.

Showcasing the 200 miles between Brownsville and Laredo, the map allows visitors of the Valley's Civil War Trail exhibit to see where historic events took place. Learning about battles is just one part to the "War & Peace on the Rio Grande Valley" museum exposition.

Though the history display has been open to the public since February, the banners, artifacts and life-size mannequins will be open to the public from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday at the university. Guests will also have the opportunity to attend a public lecture series that will run throughout the day and meet reenactors who will be impersonating seminal figures of Civil War leaders from the region.

Roseann Bacha-Garza, program manager for the UTRGV Community Historical Archeology with Schools Program, CHAPS, said the

Regional reenactors will bring the Civil War to life at UTRGV CHAPS Program's RGV Civil War Trail all-day community engagement celebration event on Saturday at UTRGV Edinburg Campus. Pictured from left are Dirk Yarker, Rob Ramaker, and Ruben Cordova.

See CHAPS | 7F

CHAPS

From Page 6F

event is designed to foster space where people can engage with local history.

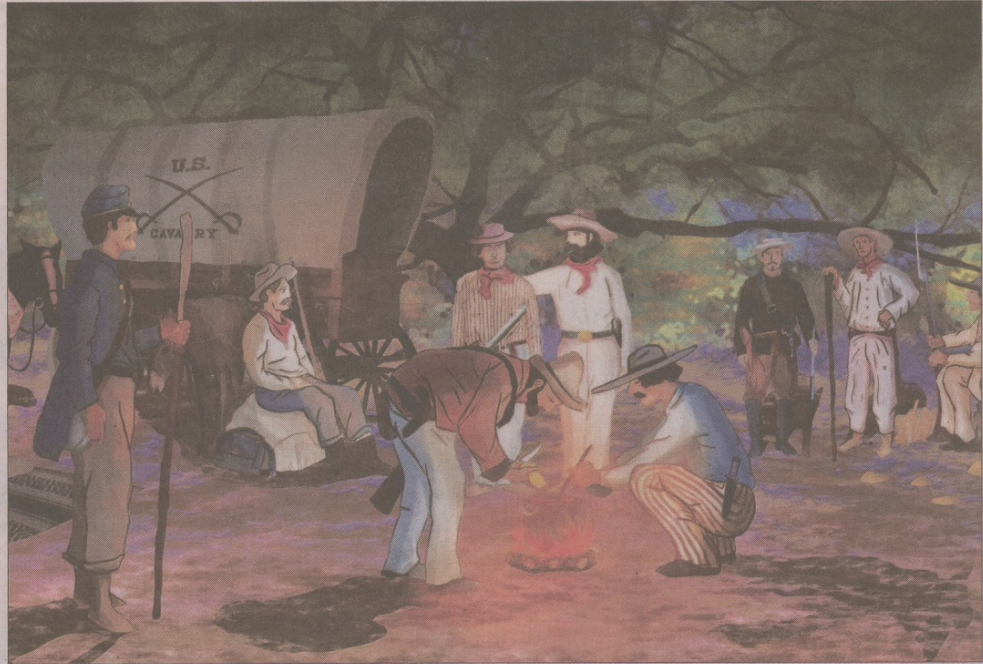
"I think that it is important for the students and Rio Grande Valley residents to know just exactly how interesting, intriguing and historically significant their home base is," said Bacha-Garza, who was a part of the initial planning of the project four years ago. "There are students here at UTRGV from all over the Rio Grande Valley that span from Brownsville and 200 miles up to our trail to Laredo, and since our trail encompasses that 200-mile span, we want the students here at the university to know how special this region is and how important it is to U.S. history."

The posters and banners of the exhibit were produced and designed by UTRGV CHAPS students and staff, which is scheduled to travel to the Port Isabel Historical Museum, Zapata Historical Museum, then make appearances in Brownsville, Laredo and Corpus Christi. Bacha-Garza said the exhibit is booked up to 2020, and that her hope is to one day send the display to San Antonio.

The exhibit will be available to view in the UTRGV visitor lobby until June 19.

During the event, "Just a Ferry Ride to Freedom," a 10-minute documentary that covers the underground railroads that passed through RGV ranches prior and during the Civil War will be screened in the UTRGV Student Union Theater. The film was produced by Nick Taylor, a communications professor at the university and Damaso Creative Video Services.

Additionally, attendees



Courtesy photo

A Tejano Civil War sketch by Daniel Cardenas.

will be able to sit in a public lecture series that features UTRGV history professors and scholars from across the country who have assisted in conducting research for the project. Speakers will present their own Civil War-related specialties, some being colored troops, the economy of the region and battlefield archeology.

While the lecture series goes on, film runs and the exhibit is open, attendees are also welcomed to meet Civil War re-enactors at the Chapel Lawn of the university, who will be donning the traditional uniforms of their respective leaders. The actors will be settled in a Civil War era camp set-up, which will be decorated with various camp props to bring the content to

RIO GRANDE VALLEY CIVIL WAR TRAIL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENT

The event will showcase a public lecture series, the traveling museum exhibit "War and Peace on the Rio Grande," book signings, re-enactors representing the Union and the Confederacy and documentary film viewings. Food vendors will be available.

WHEN 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday

WHERE University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Student Union and Visitor Center in Edinburg

life, according to Bacha-Garza.

"The community and public will be able to come up to them and mingle with the reenactors," Bacha-Garza said. "They will have the opportunity to ask them about why they are dressed that way, what the parts of their uniforms are, and ask why they do what they do."

One of the re-enactors will impersonate Confederate

Colonel Santos Benevides, the highest ranking Tejano in the confederacy and a Laredo native.

With the exhibit, documentary, lectures and reenactors, the heart of the program is to educate locals about the historical richness of the Valley. For this, Bacha-Garza said that student involvement is what moves the program,

This semester, 13 students of an advanced history course have been preparing for the event by learning everything there is to the Civil War events that occurred in the Valley. On Saturday, they will be the curators and docents walking residents through the exhibit.

"We are not just a region that is floating like an island out of the frontier in the middle of nowhere," Bacha-Garza said. "We are a significant location on the map of the United States and we have a tremendous amount of history here that really needs to come to the forefront. We want our students, and the community at large, to be proud of where we are from."

cdeguzman@themonitor.com