Texas Historical Commission Award of Excellence in Media Achievement

1.b. The Harlingen Historical Preservation Society (HHPS) has consistently achieved superior media coverage not only for the history of Harlingen but Cameron County and the Lower Rio Grande Valley as well. It has done so through the weekly Sunday Heritage Pages of the Valley Morning Star (Harlingen), the website of the Cameron County Historical Commission (CCHC)--www.cameroncountyhistoricalcommission.org, the Handbook of Texas Online, and Somos Primos, the national Hispanic website originating in Los Angeles. These contributions have been for not only the year 2009 but were commenced in 2003. The Valley Morning Star is a daily having an average circulation of around 23,000 with more on Sundays.

The primary contributors have been HHPS researcher Norman Rozef, and Mary Torres, noted genealogist, HHPS vice-president and current Cameron County Historical Commission chairman, who publishes a weekly "Harlingen Happenings" column in the Sunday edition of the Valley Morning Star. Material from other Valley historians as well have been placed on line and HHPS research has provided pertinent history-related links on the site.

Through Rozef's writings the general public has been exposed to Valley history with material both new and exciting. For history buffs desiring more in-depth treatments Rozef has produced monographs such as "The Story of Union Forces in South Texas During the Civil War." His "The Chronological History of Harlingen" available on the CCHC website is over 300 pages long and contains an index of over 3,000 surnames. It is continually up-dated with new findings and current events of significance. In connection with Harlingen's Centennial Year celebration in 2010 this document will be made
available to the public on a CD. The response from readers of these online documents and essays has provided additional information, data, and inquiries. This validates their impact. The CCHC website is dynamic and ever-changing. Both print and on-line media contain graphics that add to reader interest.

Torres' columns disseminate information on history and genealogy related stories, events, meetings, exhibitions and the like. In doing so, with print media general retrenching from public service announcements, Torres provides a valuable service to the community.

The following is a listing of the articles placed on-line in 2009 through October 2009 at the CCHC website. Many were also published in the Valley Morning Star and some in 

Somos Primos:

World War II Heroes from the Harlingen Area  
Major Facelift Creates a Beauty  
Flooding in Harlingen (Parts I and II)  
Airports, Airlines, and Airplanes in Harlingen-A Brief Survey  
Bowling in Harlingen  
Professional Baseball in Harlingen  
Cotton History Highlights  
Sun Valley Shopping Center History  
Americo Paredes, The Valley's Renaissance Man  
Last Piece of Railroad Puzzle Falls into Place  
Getsemani Presbyterian Church of San Benito  
The Armendaiz Ranch of Willacy and Cameron Counties  
Historic Flooding in the Valley  
History of US Coast Guard Lights in South Texas  
Arroyo Colorado History  
Ship and Rig Building at Port Brownsville, Brownsville Texas  
A Link to the Past, Historian Harbert Davenport  
A Zoo Farce in Two Acts  
The Story of Union Forces in South Texas During the Civil War  
When the Union Helped Mexico Independence (Parts I and II).

Lastly, the HHPS has provided speakers on history subjects to the Weslaco Museum, Harlingen Arts & Heritage Museum, Harbenito Garden Club, Rio Grande Valley Model Railroad Club, Harlingen Heritage Festival, Harlingen Schools, and the Tip-O-Texas Genealogy Society among others.
1.d. The Harlingen Historical Preservation Society working close in hand with the Cameron County Historical Commission has achieved remarkable success in bringing regional history to the forefront of public awareness. In doing so it has generated a response and recognition of the area's history heretofore relegated mostly to obscurity. One result has been the increase in the number of entities seeking Texas Historical Commission Subject and Cemetery markers. The whole of South Texas appears to be in dynamic flux regarding the reclamation of its historic heritage. The HHPS is happy that it played a significant role in this trend. It warrants recognition for its Media Achievements.