

# FESTIVAL

States, Europe and Asia. The oil-

you can imitate and try to be

LeBlanc said. In addition to the

show physically," she said. After

4427.

## Mariachi Vargas brings century of tradition to Valley fans

By DAVID L. TIJERINA  
Monitor Staff Writer  
dtijerina@themonitor.com

Not many groups have the staying power and tradition of *El Mejor Mariachi Del Mundo*, Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán. The group is now in its 108th year, performing with a fifth generation of musicians who continue to bring *huapangos*, *románticos* and *rancheras* to audiences worldwide.

Currently, the group is comprised of six violinists, two trumpeters and one player each for the *vihuela*, harp, guitar and guitarrón. It has been under the direction of Maestro Rubén Fuentes for 60 years and Jose "Pepe" Martínez, the group's musical director and arranger, since 1975.

"The tradition that Mariachi Vargas has is playing true

### MARIACHI VARGAS DE TECALITLÁN

**WHEN:** Doors open  
at 6 p.m. Saturday

**WHERE:** McAllen Civic  
Center Auditorium, 1300 S.  
10th St., McAllen

**ADMISSION:**  
\$24, \$36, \$46, \$57, \$107

**FOR MORE**

**INFORMATION:**  
Call (956) 688-3400

mariachi," Martínez said.

On rare occasions the group will stray from performing or



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ROSE YBARRA

## TEJANO TALK

### Tejano ROOTS Hall of Fame gears up for annual extravaganza, inductions

The Tejano ROOTS Hall of Fame in Alice is preparing for its biggest night of the year. On tap is the organization's sixth annual induction ceremony and kick-off dance.

Both events start at 6 p.m. and will be held at the VFW Hall, located at 2500 N. Texas Blvd. in Alice.

The festivities begin on Nov. 11 with a show and dance featuring performances by Carlos Guzman, Freddie Martinez, Sunny Ozuna, Carlos Miranda, Agustín Ramírez and more.

At the induction ceremony, 27 new members will be recognized, including locals Juanita García, Eddie Perez, Robert De la Cruz, Los Donenmos and Ernesto Guerra. One of the highlights is sure to be reunion presentation by Los Fabulosos Cuatro, past and present.

Laura Canales won't be

in the works.

"We will have more details in the next couple of weeks," he said. "We know that there is a demand for traditional music. We ask our listeners to be patient."

Montes said the new station is expected to be a high wattage station with the ability to reach a larger audience than before.

"The station will have respect for the public, without bad words," he said. "It will be a station that the whole family can listen to any hour of the day."

**READER QUESTION:**  
*Ramon Ayala wasn't nominated for a Latin Grammy this year. What happened? His album (El Disco Que Se Ve/Ya No Flores) is really good.* - Della M. Hidalgo

This is a question that has been asked by many readers. To set the record

## VARGAS

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recording songs based on Mexican folklore, such as its recent adaptation of Italian opera tenor Andrea Bocelli's "Por Ti Volaré" ("I'll Fly for You"), but the song is world renowned and was translated into Spanish.

That song and others it has adapted from Spain and interpreted into mariachi styles have enabled it to continue to be world renowned, Martinez said.

Mariachi Vargas has a cross-generational appeal. At the group's concerts it's normal to see a great-grandmother, grandmother, mother and child seated together, he said.

It hasn't hurt that the group recently accompanied Luis Miguel on his latest CD, *Mexico en la Piel*.

Aside from the enduring influence of Fuentes, who became a member of the group in his 20s, what helps it maintain the mariachi tradition and allows it to still appeal to younger audiences is the wide age range of its members.

Frederico Torres, the group's trumpet player and coordinator is 67, and Martinez is 65. The youngest members of the group are violinists Steven Sandoval and Alberto Alfaro, both 30, Martinez said.

The group has been busy recently; it has toured Mexico extensively and performed in



Special to The Monitor

**Mariachi Vargas is slated to wow its audience with hupangos and rancheras at the McAllen Civic Center auditorium.**

concerts with the symphonies of the cities which it visited.

Known to record two to three CDs a year, and with more than 60 to their credit, the group recently released two new ones, *Las Canciones de José Alfredo Jiménez*, *Los Arreglos de Rubén Fuentes* and *Por ti Cantaré y Volaré*.

Currently, the group is working on two other CDs, which have yet to be named. One of the albums will feature more adaptations of José Alfredo Jiménez's and the *Hermanos Castro's* work, and the other will be a symphonic-based compilation.

Special guest performances at the concert include Gerardo

Lopez and Vanessa del Fierro, finalists from the national television competition *Nuevas Voces de América*. The University of Texas Pan-American's Mariachi Femenil, Roma High School's Mariachi Nuevo Santander, Zapata High School's Mariachi Halcon, Edinburg High School's Primer Orgullo Mariachi, La Joya High School's Mariachi Los Coyotes and the Dancentre of Edinburg are also scheduled to perform.

David L. Tijerina covers education and general assignments for *The Monitor*. You can reach him at (956) 683-4434.