

# METRO AND STATE NEWS

## Fond memories

Families remember deceased children at the 10th annual Candlelight Memorial Service

PAGE 3B



SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS-NEWS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2001

M

7B

# Mariachi Extravaganza concert galvanizes enthusiastic crowd

By RAMIRO BURR

EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

The beauty and the versatility of mariachi music were amply displayed Saturday night at Municipal Auditorium.

Despite early evening showers, an enthusiastic audience roared approval at almost a dozen top amateur and professional mariachi troupes.

The concert capped the three-day Mariachi Extravaganza sponsored by Ford Lincoln Mercury.

"This is a concert that touches the heart through the songs about love," said Steve Hammond, Lincoln Mercury's Southwest marketing manager. He called the event a "first-class concert experience ... and a beautiful celebration of family, culture and tradition."

The highlight, of course, was Mexico's world famous Maria-



KAREN L. SHAW/STAFF

Steeven Sandoval of Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan performs Saturday.

chi Vargas de Tecalitlan, whose vocal power and superb musicianship never fails to ignite au-

## Event winners

### GROUP COMPETITION:

**Elementary/Middle School:** First place: Mariachi Los Galgos, Johnston Middle School, Houston; second place: Mariachi Tolteca, Harlandale School District, San Antonio; third place: Longfellow Mariachi, Longfellow Middle School, San Antonio.

**High School:** First place: Mariachi Nuevo Santander de Roma High School, Roma; second place: Mariachi Agullas de Oro, Harlandale High School, San Antonio; third place: Mariachi MECA, Multicultural Education and Counseling through the Arts, Houston.

**College/University:** First place (tie): Mariachi Internacional, Texas A&M International University, Laredo; the Advanced Mariachi Group from the University of Texas Pan American, Edinburg; second place: Intermediate Mariachi Group, the University of Texas Pan American, Edinburg; third place: Mariachi de SWT, Southwest Texas

State University, San Marcos.

### VOCAL COMPETITION:

**Elementary/Middle School:** First place: Fernando Moguel, Bammell Middle School, Houston; second place: Monique Alvarado, St. Gregory the Great parish school, San Antonio; third place: Victoria Garza, Stuchberry Elementary School, Houston.

**High School:** First place: Mayra Guerra, Roma High School, Roma; second place: Iris Zambrano, Hebbbronville High School, Hebbbronville; third place: Lizzette Abreu, Spring High School, Spring.

**College/University:** First place: Gerardo Lopez, Baylor University, Waco; second place: Diana Degollado, Texas A&M International University, Laredo; third place: Carla Medina, University of Texas Pan American, Edinburg.

**Best of Show:** Virginia Stilla, Johnston Middle School, Houston.

dexterity and repertoire.

Laredo-based Mariachi Internacional de Texas A&M University and Edinburg-based UT Pan Am Mariachi tied for first place at the university level. And it was easy to see why, as both featured large groups of 18 members, each with six violins and a harp.

Mariachi Internacional galvanized the fans with a sizzling workout on a complicated medley that included "Mexico Rico," "Tres Huastecas" and "Violin Huapango."

UT Pan Am got the crowd on its feet with its on-fire rendition of the "Popurri Huasteco" which featured "La Petenera," "Altamira Tamaulipas," and "El Panuelo."

From El Paso, the professional group Los Arrieros was no less inspirational with inventive arrangements of familiar pop tunes such as Maria Grev-

er's "Jurame," performed as a tango, and Son by Four's "A Puro Dolor," redone as a ranchera with three-part vocal harmonies.

Saturday's show included Mariachi Music Hall of Fame induction ceremonies for local mariachi pioneer Benjamin Valdez. He was honored for founding the local trio Los Conquistadores in the late 1940s, and for being among the first mariachi instructors in the area. He was presented with the Ruben Fuentes Award.

Earlier Saturday and Friday several dozen high school and university groups participated in workshops and in vocal and group competitions.

The Extravaganza concludes at 8 a.m. today with a Mariachi Mass at San Fernando Cathedral.

Rburr@express-news.net