

## A SMILE AS BRIGHT AS STARLIGHT

Ximena Ordenez, 3, center, holds the hand of her brother, Luis, as they join Sandra Duque of Girl Scouts Troop 91043 in singing Christmas carols Tuesday night at Commerce Bank. Ximena, who has leukemia, was one of 16 local children and their families treated to a Winter Holiday Great Escape by Commerce Bank and the Starlight Foundation.



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# Election date near

By **ZACH LINDSEY**

LAREDO MORNING TIMES

A looming deadline to file for a place on the ballot of the upcoming election means the political season is under way.

Democratic Party Chairman Sergio Mora said with the Jan. 4 deadline approaching in less than a month, candidates should begin preparing to file.

“We encourage everyone to start with the process,” Mora said.

But the deadline also means something for the average citizen: It’s time to start paying attention to and learning about the candidates running for political office.

“The elections are coming soon,” said Rep. Richard Raymond, D-La-

redo. “Folks here need to start paying attention to the issues.”

This political season, the Democratic primary will occur on March 2. Primary voting will begin in February.

To get listed on the ballot, a candidate must fulfill certain requirements, which differ depending on the position the candidate is running for.

The candidate must also either pay a filing fee or collect signatures. The filing fee differs depending on the position. As far as signatures are concerned, the candidate must collect at least 2 percent of the total people who voted for that position in the region in the last gubernatorial race.

Mora said he wants to see a “good, clean race.”

“There’s a lot of serious issues facing our community,” Mora said. The gravity of the election is such that Mora believes smear tactics and other dirty political moves will harm the community and discourage legitimate discussion.

Mora’s Democratic Party Precinct chair seat will be empty. Mora said the chairs are a great place for younger people interested in getting a start in politics, as a way of gaining experience and also assisting the Democratic Party.

Candidates can file in the Elections Office at the Webb County Administrative Building.

*(Zach Lindsey may be reached at 728-2538 or zach@lmtonline.com)*