

NEWS AND PROFILES CONNECTING THE LATINO AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN MINNESOTA

December 2022 Issue 423
**Latino
American
Today**
www.latinoamericantoday.com

M E R R Y
Christmas!

**FELIZ
NAVIDAD**
*y Prospero
año nuevo*



Thanks to Latino American Today Staff and Contributors!

As we look back at 2022, we want to take time to thank the staff and contributors of Latino American Today for their efforts in producing our publication each month. Thanks to all and we look forward to 2023!



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all our readers, advertisers, and supporters.

– Rick Aguilar, Publisher
Latino American Today

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Christy Ana



Deborah Locke



On The Cover

¡Feliz Navidad y prospero año!

Merry Christmas!

Latino
American
Today

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El Mensaje De La Navidad A Un Mundo Convulsionado



Por Dr. Saúl Carranza

Coordinador de ministerios multiculturales de la Iglesia del Nazareno y Director del Centro Nazareno de compasión Agape en Minnesota

La Navidad es la festividad religiosa más conocida por toda la tierra. También, la más celebrada en el mundo occidental donde es considerada como una época de paz, de amor, fe y regocijo que recuerda el nacimiento de Jesús. Es una celebración cristiana que sin embargo alcanza con su espíritu a muchas personas de diferentes

países, razas y credos religiosos.

La navidad es la celebración de un nacimiento, no de un cumpleaños. De allí el nombre “Natividad” de donde se deriva. Recuerda el nacimiento de Jesús, el hijo de María que fue engendrado por el Espíritu Santo. Un evento que históricamente puede situarse alrededor del año uno de nuestra era en la región de palestina. Pero que fue anunciado desde muchos siglos antes. En el mismo jardín del edén, Dios da esperanza a la humanidad manifestándoles que tendrán una simiente y que alguien de esa simiente corregirá el daño ocasionado por el pecado.

Es interesante como el relato de ese nacimiento se ajusta a profecías proferidas cientos de años antes de que sucediera. Será un niño varón, descendiente de Abraham, de la tribu de Judá y del linaje del Rey David. Que nacerá de una virgen

en la ciudad de Belén y Reyes le traerán regalos. Pero lo más importante. Que ese niño será la presencia misma de Dios con los seres humanos. De allí su nombre “Emanuel” que significa Dios con nosotros. Un mensaje que en si mismo es una buena noticia para la humanidad. Aún los que no comparten la fe cristiana son beneficiados por el alcance de este hecho y comparten la paz y felicidad de este tiempo.

Hoy, en un mundo convulsionado por una guerra injusta que amenaza volverse mundial. Con una escalada galopante de los costos de vida y la economía en crisis. Con pandemias globales, el planeta sobrepoblado, sobreexplotado y calentándose. Con los valores humanos debilitándose, realmente necesitamos esperanza, paz, amor y buena voluntad. Esos es lo que la navidad nos recuerda.

Si, el mundo está mal. Si, hay problemas. Si, la humanidad se pierde en egoísmo maldad e ignorancia. Pero en medio de todo eso; “Dios está con nosotros” y su presencia anuncia que hay bondad, que hay fe, que hay amor y que podemos ser mejores y ayudarnos unos a otros para alcanzar la paz y vivir de una mejor manera. Lo que el niño de Belén vino a mostrarnos fue el ejemplo que todos debemos imitar. Nos enseñó: “Ámense unos a otros”, “perdónense”, vivan vidas puras y rectas. Por todo eso. El mensaje de la Navidad debe ser compartido no solo de palabras, sino también de hecho. Siguiendo el ejemplo del que nació la primera navidad.

Feliz Navidad y un muy bendecido 2023 para todos.

The Message Of Christmas To A Troubled World

By Dr. Saul Carranza

Coordinator of Multicultural Ministries for the Church of the Nazarene and Director of the Agape Nazarene Compassionate Center in Minnesota

Christmas is the most well-known religious holiday on earth. Also, the most celebrated in the western world where it is considered a time of peace, love, faith and joy that celebrates the birth of Jesus. It is a Christian celebration that always reaches many people from different countries, races and religions with its spirit.

Christmas is the celebration of a birth, not a birthday. Hence the name “Nativity” from which it is derived. Remember the birth of Jesus, the son of Mary who was begotten by the Holy Spirit. An event that, historically, can be located around the year one of our era in the Palestinian region. But that was announced many centuries before. In the same Garden of Eden, God gives humanity hope by telling them that they will have a seed and that someone from that seed will correct the damage caused by sin.

It is interesting how the story of that birth conforms to prophecies proffered hundreds of years before it happened. He will be a male child, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Judah and from the lineage of King David. That he will be born of a virgin in the city of Bethlehem and Kings will bring him gifts. But the most important. That this child will be the very presence of God with human beings. Hence his name “Emanuel” which means God with us. A message that in itself is good news for humanity. Even those who do not share the Christian faith are benefited by the scope of this fact and share the peace and happiness of this time.

Today, in a world convulsed by an unjust war that threatens to become global. With skyrocketing costs of living and the economy in crisis. With global pandemics, the planet is overpopulated, overexploited and heating up. With human values weakening, we really need hope, peace, love, and goodwill. This is what Christmas reminds us of.

Yes, the world is wrong. Yes, there are problems. Yes, humanity is lost in its selfishness, evil and ignorance. But in the midst of all that; “God is with us” and his presence announces that there is goodness, that there is faith, that there is love and that we can be better and help each other to achieve peace and live in a better way. What the child from Bethlehem came to show us was the example that we should all imitate. He taught us: “Love each other”, “Forgive each other”, live a pure and righteous lives. For all that. The Christmas message must be shared not only in words, but also in deed. Following the example of the one who was born the first Christmas.

Merry Christmas and a very blessed 2023 to all.



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The Return on Investment (ROI) of Your Time – Merry Christmas!



Marcia Malzahn

By Marcia Malzahn

This Christmas, I encourage you to give your loved ones the gift of your *time*. The ROI of your time will be the biggest gift you receive this season! As you invest your time in others' lives, will you expect a return on your investment? Or will you expect nothing in return?

Investors invest their money in business ventures hoping it will produce a positive return on their investment. Otherwise, they would not do it and many businesses

may not exist if no one invested in them at startup. Investors know their expectations for their Return on Investment (ROI). But what if that investment is your time, an intangible yet your most valuable asset? Should you expect a return on your time too? I do and I encourage you to expect a return as well.

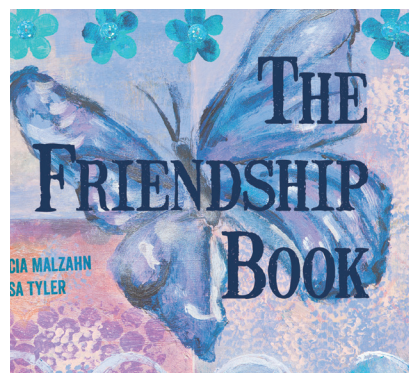
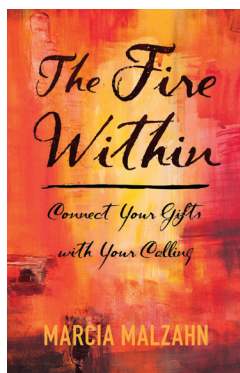
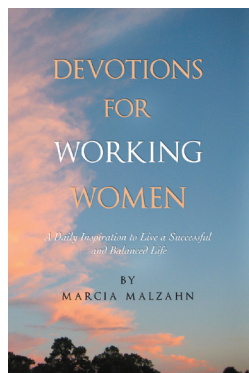
Let me explain. While the ROI on your time may never be a financial return, your ROI will always be something. At the least, you will feel like you helped someone – even if that person never even says “thank you” to you. At the most, you will see the fruit of your investment of time by how you were able to impact that person's life. And sometimes the return on your investment will be in the spiritual realm. You won't see it here, but you will see it when you go to heaven.

Below are some examples of how you can give the gift of your time:

- **Spend time with children:** Whether you spend time with your own kids, grandkids, or relatives, or volunteer at a nonprofit to spend time with children, this is always a good investment of your time. When you give children of your time, you are giving them special attention and they feel valued and loved.

- **Listen to a widow or widower:** People who have recently lost a spouse need special attention and love, especially during the holidays. Often, we don't know what to say to someone who's lost a loved one, not realizing that what they need is not for us to say anything. They just need us to listen to them as they process their grief.
- **Spend time with your parents:** If you're blessed to still have your parents alive, make the effort to call them, visit them, or do a virtual call if they live away. The special time you spend together will help you create memories that will last a lifetime. If you no longer have your parents, encourage others to connect or reconnect with theirs as we never know if there will be a “next time.”
- **Nurture your friendships:** Time spent with dear friends rejuvenates you and increases your happiness. Sharing laughter and sometimes tears create a special bond that deepens your relationship.
- **Share the Gospel:** As a follower of Jesus, I invest my time sharing the Gospel of hope with my friends who may not know how to incorporate Jesus in their everyday life.
- **Spend time with God:** God, your Father, yearns for your time. God rejoices when you spend time with Him, simply worshipping Him, reading the Bible, or bringing your prayer requests for others to Him.

I hope these ideas inspire you to give of your time this Christmas season. Your gift of time will get you the biggest return on your investment you've ever imagined – whether it's here on earth or in eternity later.



Marcia is an inspirational keynote speaker and published author of five books: A daily devotional – *Devotions for Working Women*, *The Fire Within* – to help you find your purpose, friendship poems in *The Friendship Book*, also in Spanish *El Libro de la Amistad* (poemas de Amistad), and *Bring YOUR Shoes* to help emerging leaders with tools on how to lead. In her latest grandma baby book, *Inside Your Mama's Tummy*, Marcia inspires grandparents to form a bond with their grandchildren.

You can contact Marcia for speaking engagements through her website at <https://crowning-achievements.com/> or email her at mmalzahn@crowning-achievements.com. Marcia Malzahn is also president and founder of Malzahn Strategic a management consulting firm for community financial institutions.

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¿Cuenta con cobertura de Medical Assistance o MinnesotaCare?

Si usted cuenta con Medical Assistance o MinnesotaCare, actualice su dirección, número telefónico y correo electrónico hoy. Es importante que lo haga para que podamos contactarlo cuando sea tiempo de renovar su seguro de salud.

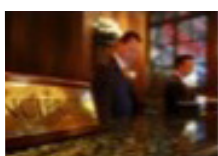
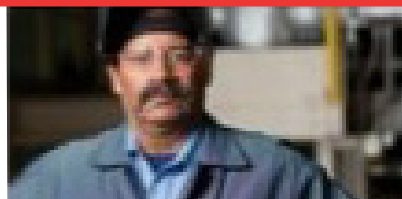
- Si cuenta con Medical Assistance, contacte a su condado o tribu.
- Si cuenta con MinnesotaCare, contacte a la Atención al Consumidor de Cuidados de Salud al 651-297-3862 o al 800-657-3672.

Visite mn.gov/dhs/mycontactinfo



para aprender cómo mantener su información de contacto actualizada.

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COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP OF HENNEPIN COUNTY
8800 HWY 7, #403 St. Louis Park, Minnesota 55426

Energy Assistance Phone 952-930-3541 Main Phone 952-933-9639
Contact Us Phone Hours: Monday-Friday, 8am-4pm, except holidays
In-Person Hours: 4th floor, Monday-Friday, 8am-4pm, except holidays
Community members can speak with a CAP-HC staff member in suite 403 during the hours listed.

A Self-Service Area is available for residents to pick up and/or fill out application forms during the hours listed. The Self-Service Area is not staffed. A secure drop box is available on the 4th floor near the elevator/stairs for residents to submit completed applications during the hours listed.

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Our Impact:

10 Years

of leadership in supporting digital equity

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Committed over the next 10 years

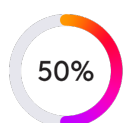
Millions

Of people reached

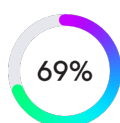
1,000+

Community partnerships

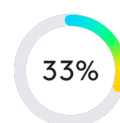
Why Project UP?



50 percent of low-income families lack access to the technology required for online education.¹



By 2030, the demand for workers with basic digital skills will increase by 69 percent.²



1 in 3 people used the Internet to find a new job or earn a higher income after receiving help from a Digital Navigator.³

Our Focus Areas:

Connectivity & Adoption

Connecting people to the Internet, technology, and resources needed to succeed in a digital world.

Skills & Creativity

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Entrepreneurism

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internet essentials



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1) <https://soeonline.american.edu/blog/digital-divide-in-education>

2) <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/skill-shift-automation-and-the-future-of-the-workforce>

3) <https://www.bcg.com/publications/2022/how-to-close-digital-divide-with-human-approach>

HOLIDAZZLE



The mpls downtown council is excited to produce **Holidazzle** this holiday season. **Holidazzle** will include food, beverages, shopping, entertainment and fun in Loring Park.

www.holidazzle.com

2022 Holidazzle dates:

Fridays through Sundays, November 25 - December 18

Friday, November 25 - Sunday, November 27

Friday, December 2 - Sunday, December 4

Friday, December 9 - Sunday, December 11

Friday, December 16 - Sunday, December 18

Fridays from **5 p.m. – 9 p.m.**

Saturdays from **12 p.m. – 9 p.m.** | **Sundays** from **12 p.m. – 6 p.m.**



School District 197 Builds Community and Family Engagement

By: Peter Olson-Skog, Superintendent

At West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Area Schools (School District 197), we believe that a big part of learning and growing together is community and family engagement. Research shows that when schools, families and communities work together to support learning, everyone benefits – students do better in school and in life, parents become empowered, schools get better and communities grow stronger.

We provide a wide range of opportunities and support that are ideal for Latino students and their families. ALMAS (Anglos Latinos Motivados A Superarse), a Two Rivers High School student group founded by Spanish teacher Robert Hanson, is a great example. According to Hanson, ALMAS was founded with the goal of reducing the high school dropout rate among Latino students. “We believe that for students to succeed we must have strong families, strong schools, and strong students,” Hanson shares. With that in mind, Hanson started ALMAS, an after-school program that empowers students to become involved in their community while providing their families with access to community resources.

At Heritage Environmental-STEM Middle School, one of our district’s middle schools, the student affinity group Mi Gente meets on Thursdays after school to celebrate different Hispanic and Latino cultures and people. Founding members from Two Rivers High School return to Heritage to mentor and lead the group each week, and we’ve heard that the group and their events are expected to expand significantly next year.

From a family perspective, our district programs such as Building Bridges and Parent Academy, as well as parent-fueled organizations like Padres Latinos en Acción, have helped parents and guardians advocate for their children. Carmen Pineda, a cultural liaison with the Early Special Education Program, has been with the Building Bridges program since its inception in 1998. “Our programs have related to parents on a more personal level as partners,” Pineda shares. “The key has been that we have empowered parents through respect, cultural sensitivity, and education.”

As a district, we are committed to helping parents access resources to navigate the school system and help them find new ways to get involved in their child’s education. We truly believe that through connection, all of our students can succeed.



NLPOA-MN Celebrates 20th Anniversary

By Claud Santiago

The National Latino Peace Officers Association, Minnesota State Chapter (NLPOA-MN) was established in 2002 by a group of pioneer police officers who share the same values, vision and mission of trailblazing founders of the National Latino Peace Officer Association of California in 1972. NLPOA-MN is a regional affiliate and subordinate to the National Peace Officers Association (NLOA). The NLPOA-MN is an U.S. Non-Profit Organization based in St. Paul, Minnesota and it’s coded as a

501(c)(3) Charity, entirely funded by volunteer labored fundraisers and donations. The NLPOA-MN does not participate in political campaigns, nor does it influence legislation at any level. Revenue generated by the NLPOA-MN is used to host community events for BIPOC and vulnerable populations and to sponsor academic scholarships benefiting college students of disadvantage. The goal for NLPOA-MN is to promote equality and professionalism of the criminal justice system through community service, education, mentorship and networking; building meaningful bridges between BIPOC vulnerable populations and law enforcement.

Congratulations to all your members and supporters

– Latino American Today



Rigo Aguirre NLPOA-MN President, accepts the La Familia Latino Heritage Award!



NLPOA-MN Membership



Donation to local non-profit

National Association of Hispanic Publications Celebrates 40th Anniversary

Celebrating 40 Years of Accomplishment For Latino Content Producers



National Association of Hispanic Publications, Inc.

The National Association of Hispanic Publications celebrated its 40th Anniversary with a Convention at the Denver Doubletree by Hilton on November 16-18. The event convened industry, business, and government leaders from around the United States and Mexico and provided NAHP members the opportunity to participate in workshops that explored best practices, research findings, advertising innovations, online strategies, business development, and ways to integrate new and social media.

Key speakers included Ramiro Cavazos, CEO of the USHCC; Steve Waldman, Report for America President; Todd Stauffer from the Association of Alternative Newsmedia; Ruben Barrales, with Wells Fargo; January Contreras, with the US Department of Health and Human Services; and Mike Coffman, the mayor of Aurora. Key new research on Reader Latinos was released by LatinoLYTICS. This was from the 2022 National Latino Media Study that was co-sponsored by NAHP Media.

Event sponsors included Wells Fargo, API, NAHP Media, Altura Interactive, Colorado Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Colorado Media Project, Corazon Latino, Comcast, Denver Airport, Knight Foundation, United Airlines, Visit Denver, and the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.



*Brian Taylor,
La Meta Nota, OH*

*Latino Publisher
of the Year*

*Elected Region 3
Director*



*Rick Aguilar, Anita Grace, Grace Multicultural, MN,
Ruben Barrales, Wells Fargo, CA*



*Erika and Tar Macias, Hola America News, IA
Tar Macias elected Region 3 - Alternate*



Convention attendees enjoying the reception



Convention general assembly meeting

Teaching, Serving, Protecting Naturalist Jobs With State Parks Require Variety Of Skills

By Deborah Locke, Information Officer, Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources

Not long ago and while off the clock, Mike Dunker took a hike. While outside, he was recognized by a park visitor who remembered him from a naturalist program he led. The woman bubbled with good will and happy memories and Mike thought, that's the best part of my job – knowing that a visitor understood what was conveyed and gained a new perspective.

It happens every day in state parks and on state trails throughout Minnesota – the combination of park visitors with questions and park naturalists with answers. Parks and Trails naturalists serve the public as teachers and interpreters, while at the same time, working to conserve and protect public land.

Add to that their ability to creatively solve a vast range of problems, like this one: how to put together the best exhibits possible at the new Wild River State Park Visitor Center. Mike worked with Megan Johnsen, a former Park and Trails naturalist and current exhibit specialist. One of their first challenges was to develop a theme for the project that encompassed the park's ecosystems, geography and history.

Wild River State Park is about the push and pull of eco systems, Mike said. Its river, forests and prairies create a cohesive environment. Droughts and floods are part of the natural process. The visitor center's new interactive exhibits will tell the story of the park's ecological diversity for decades into the future, he said.

Mike is interested in another aspect of diversity, as well. Exhibits, signs, all attractions designed for visitors are most effective when they tell the whole story of a place, he said. "You can go through some visitor centers and only see one side of the story," he said. "If you bring other stories and people in, it gives a fuller view of the park."

Mike Dunker

Education: BS in Ecology with a minor in Parks, Recreation and Leisure Services

Years with the DNR: 14

Time spent at current job: Almost one year as a Regional Naturalist

Most difficult time on the job: During COVID.

Hobbies: camping, kayaking, gardening



His own background shows a kind of diversity. For nearly a decade, Mike worked at every aspect of small newspaper publication in Cottonwood County. He could make a living as a journalist, but his passion was for the outdoors. So Mike took a job as a naturalist who conducted prairie ecology bus tours. From those starting points he became a seasonal naturalist at Forestville/Mystery Cave State Park, and then a full-time Mystery Cave naturalist who gave cave tours.

The jobs are rewarding but demanding, Mike said. There's a tendency to overdo it yet feel that not enough was done for park visitors.

"We are our own worst critics," he said. "We feel like we're running out of time yet want to make contact with everyone all the time and it's tough to hold back on that. What I've learned is how important balance is. If I can help others see that, then I have filled an important role in this position."

Give The Gift Of Minnesota's Outdoors

By: Parks and Trails staff, MN Dept. of Natural Resources

Need a gift idea for an outdoors enthusiast? It's tough to wrap a waterfall or a scenic overlook, so how about a Minnesota state parks annual permit or gift card? Consider giving the gift with a promise to take that special someone on an outdoors adventure with you in the new year.

Minnesota state park annual permits make a great gift for everyone on your list, no matter the occasion. Permits provide access to all 75 state park and recreation areas throughout Minnesota for an entire year. The permit price is \$35, and they can be purchased online at mndnr.gov/parkpermit, or at any state park office. Permits are valid for 12 months from the date of purchase; permits purchased in December of 2022 will be valid through December 31, 2023.

If your gift recipient already has a state park permit, a gift card is another option. Minnesota state park gift cards be redeemed for camping, lodging, canoe rental, souvenirs, permits, and anything else rented or sold at state parks. Purchase online at mndnr.gov/giftcard or at a state park office. Gift cards are available as e-cards or a mailed card.



Shipping is free, but keep in mind that state park annual permits and mailed gift cards are sent through USPS, and typically take 10-14 days to arrive.

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