

December 2024 Issue 446
Latino
American
Today
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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 2024, 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 2025!



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

– Rick Aguilar, Publisher Latino American Today

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On The Cover

¡Feliz Navidad y prospero año!
Merry Christmas!



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El mundo tiene Esperanza.



Por Dr. Saúl Carranza

Estamos por empezar un nuevo año, con nuevas autoridades y en medio de un mundo convulsionado por un sinfín de guerras y problemas. Delincuencia, cambio climático, inflación, epidemias, sobrepoblación y una sociedad cada vez menos consciente de su realidad y los problemas que la rodean porque la desinformación juega a favor del mejor postor. ¿Podrá describirse un peor panorama? O quizás la pregunta es: ¿Hay esperanza para nuestro mundo? La mayoría probablemente solo dirá "Talvez".

Las probabilidades pueden ser muchas o pocas, pero siempre dejan un espacio para creer. Por ejemplo, hay una entre 140.000.000 de probabilidades de sacarse la lotería. Pero aun así la gente sigue comprando los números y alguien siempre gana por lo que eso hace a muchos tener una ilusión y a muy pocos ganar mucho.

A diferencia de la nada realista y efímera esperanza de cambiar la vida sacándose la lotería. La Navidad habla de la esperanza real para la humanidad. 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. Ofrece a todas las personas la oportunidad de un cambio real y una esperanza viva.

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 se discute si sucedió en

By Dr. Saul Carranza

We are about to start a new year, with new authorities and in the midst of a world convulsed by endless wars and problems. Crime, climate change, inflation, epidemics, overpopulation and a society that is increasingly less aware of its reality and the problems that surround it because misinformation plays in favor of the highest bidder. Can a worse scenario be described? Or perhaps the question is: Is there hope for our world? Most will probably just say "Maybe."

The probabilities can be many or few, but they always leave room for belief. For example, there is a one in 140,000,000 chance of winning the lottery. But even so, people continue buying the numbers and someone always wins, so that makes many have an illusion and very few win a lot.

Unlike the unrealistic and ephemeral hope of changing one's life by winning the lottery, Christmas speaks of real hope for humanity. Christmas is the most well-known religious holiday on earth. It is also the most celebrated in the Western world, where it is considered a time of peace, love, faith and joy that remembers the birth of Jesus. It is a Christian celebration that, however, reaches many people from different countries, races and religious creeds with its spirit. It offers all people the opportunity for real change and a living hope.

Christmas is the celebration of a birth, not a birthday. Hence the name "Nativity" from which it is derived. It remembers the birth of Jesus, the son of Mary who was conceived by the Holy Spirit. An event that is historically disputed whether it happened in the year 1 AD or in the year 6 BC. But it happened, and it happened just as it was announced many centuries before.

It is interesting how the story of that birth fits with prophecies announced hundreds of years before it happened. It will be a male child, descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah and of 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 thing is 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 event and share the peace and happiness of this time.

el año 1 d.C o en el año 6 a. C. Pero sucedió, y sucedió tal y como fue anunciado desde muchos siglos antes

Es interesante como el relato de ese nacimiento se ajusta a profecías anunciadas 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 sí 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.

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 y quien constituye la mejor esperanza que los humanos tenemos. Por medio de él la humanidad cambia y mejora cada día y persona por persona. "he aquí os doy nuevas de gran gozo, que serán para todo el mundo. Os ha nacido un Salvador que es Cristo Jesús".

Feliz Navidad y un muy bendecido 2025 para todos.

El Dr. Saúl Carranza es pastor general de la Iglesia Familia de Dios en Dayton MN. Y director del Centro Nazareno de Compasión Agape Inc. Organización no lucrativa que apoya a la comunidad hispana de los Estados Unidos.

The world has hope.

Yes, the world is wrong. Yes, there are problems. Yes, humanity is lost in 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 of Bethlehem came to show us was the example that we should all imitate. He taught us: "Love one another", "forgive one another", live pure and upright lives. For all that. The message of Christmas must be shared not only in words, but also in deeds. Following the example of the one who was born on the first Christmas and who constitutes the best hope that humans have. Through him, humanity changes and improves every day and person by person. "Behold, I bring you news of great joy, which will be for the whole world. A Savior has been born to you, who is Christ Jesus."

Merry Christmas and a very blessed 2025 to all.

Dr. Saul Carranza is the senior pastor of the Family of God Church in Dayton, MN. He is also the director of the Agape Nazarene Compassion Center, Inc., a non-profit organization that supports the Hispanic community in the United States.

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Merry Christmas!



Marcia Malzahn

By Marcia Malzahn

Merry Christmas! I recently worked on a project for a family-owned community bank and the project involved reviewing their Employee Manual. When I read the cover page, I stopped and reflected on this statement:

“If you do not look after your own family, who will?”

I work with many family-owned community banks. But this was the first time I saw this powerful statement communicated to all employees. This institution treats their employees – owners or non-owners – as family. I held discovery sessions with several employees and the main theme that rose up was, “We are treated like family.” This family-oriented culture creates loyalty and dedication that goes beyond an employer-employee relationship. It creates long-lasting success.

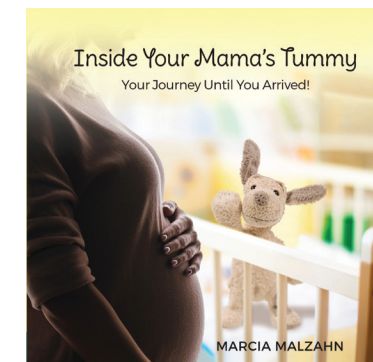
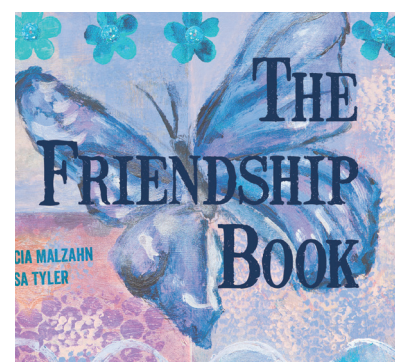
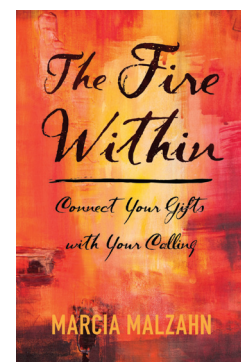
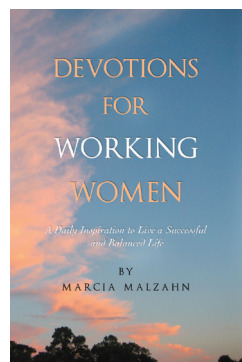
Christmas is an opportunity to gather with our family and to reconnect with those we haven't seen for a while. Many people travel long distances to meet with their loved ones because that's what you do when you belong to a family. Unfortunately, some people don't feel accepted or loved within their own family, which creates division and deep wounds. But I have good news for you!

Jesus came to change all of that! And we celebrate Christmas to remind us that regardless of who your earthly, blood family is, you will always be welcomed to join the family of God. It's free and there are no deeds required to earn God's love as your Father. All you must do is believe that God sent His only Son Jesus to save you. **Romans 10:9-13 (NLT)** tells us that, *If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”*

Salvation is the perfect gift that God gave each one of us for Christmas. Jesus Christ is that perfect gift! And you can freely share it with your family and friends at home and throughout the world as your Christmas gift to them!

I John 3:1 says, *See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are! But the people who belong to this world don't recognize that we are God's children because they don't know him.* This Christmas I encourage you to take care of your own family by simply reaching out to those you don't see often. Invite your family to spend time with you. Attend the events that you're invited to and participate. Engage with your family members that you don't see often and get to know them better. Make your family feel welcome and that they belong with you. And if you have an opportunity, introduce them to Jesus so they can belong to the family of God too. After all, if you do not look after your own family, who will?

I wish you a Merry Christmas with your family and loved ones!



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.

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



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Latina Highlights



Latina, Erica Schwartz Will Represent Her District At The State Capitol!

House District 18A – In south central Minnesota, Republican Erica Schwartz defeated DFL Rep. Jeff Brand in a competitive race in the district that has gone back and forth politically in recent years. Erica is working Mom who decided she wanted to get involved and she ran an amazing campaign to win. **The American Dream is alive and well!**

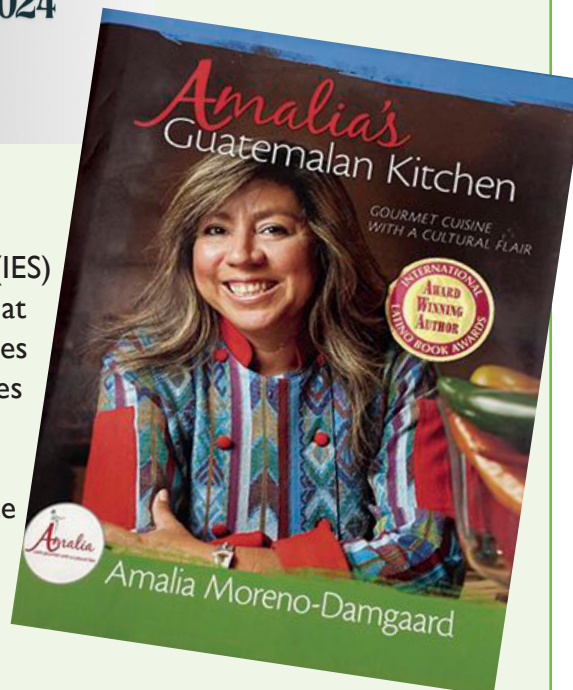


Patricia Tototzintle's leadership at St. Paul-based Esperanza United has boosted it to become a nationally recognized Latina organization. After 23 years of driving organizational growth Tototzintle is retiring. From its beginnings as a shelter in St. Paul, Tototzintle saw the potential for Esperanza to be a catalyst for leadership. Under her direction, the organization expanded its programs, including research, advocacy, training, and direct services, all toward the goal of mobilizing the Latina community to end gender-based violence. **Congratulations and a sincere thank you from the Latino community of Minnesota!**



Amaila Moreno Damgaard, Twins Cities favorite Chef/Author received the National Immigrant Spirit Award at the 2024 17th Annual Immigrant Entrepreneurs Summit in Ankeny, Iowa.

The Immigrant Entrepreneurs Summit (IES) is a remarkable event that unites over 800 attendees representing 50 countries of origin, celebrating the power of diversity, innovation, and resilience in entrepreneurship.



Magical Holiday Events

Night Trains

Saturdays through Feb 22 (plus bonus dates around Christmas/New Year's) | **Twin City Model Railroad Museum**

For more than 80 years, the Twin City Model Railroad Museum has created to-scale displays of trains and depots. The annual Night Trains events illuminate these tracks at this great family outing. Tickets must be purchased in advance.

GLOW Holiday Festival

Select dates November 20 - January 5 | **CHS Field**

Stroll through a dozen seasonal scenes featuring over a million holiday lights, sELFie Plaza, Enchanted Forest, Bright Bikes, Tremendous Tree, and so much more! Plan a stop by the GLOW Gift Shop to stock up on unique gifts from local artisans. This brilliant event is fun for the whole family.

European Christmas Market

November 29 - December 22, Weekends | **Union Depot**

This European-inspired, open-air market and magical Christmas Village at Union Depot is the most authentic Christmas Market in Minnesota. More than just a market, you can hop on the holiday carousel, be in awe over the holiday train, and enjoy kids activities and 50 acts of live entertainment.

North Pole Express

December 6-8 & 12-15 | **Union Depot**

All aboard! The North Pole Express is chugging into Union Depot the first two weekends of December. Take a short train ride to the North Pole, meet Santa and his elves and enjoy meeting some entertaining characters along the way! Tickets must be reserved in advance.

Christmas in Germany

December 7-8 | **Germanic-American Institute**

Experience German holiday traditions during his two-day event featuring authentic food and drink, local vendors and fun activities for all ages. An outdoor food market will have beer, hot mulled wine, bratwurst and German cake.

Santa's Workshop

December 15 | **Landmark Center**

Get a free photo with Santa, and stay for games, gift making for loved ones, JB Eckert reading classic children's Christmas stories and a festive holiday setting at Landmark Center.

Holiday Tree Lighting & Movie Night

December 7 | **Union Depot**

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the 2012 Union Depot building restoration, and the tree lighting includes a special celebration. The evening includes the unveiling of the St. Paul Winter Carnival 2024 button followed by live entertainment from The Mistletoes and the Tree Lighting Ceremony. Finish the evening with the classic holiday movie, Elf. The tree will be lit through the remainder of December on the North Plaza, the perfect backdrop for family holiday photos!

Holidays on the Hill Tours

November 30 - January 5 | **James J Hill House**

Experience Christmas in 1910 – both upstairs and downstairs– in the sumptuous Gilded Age mansion of railroad titan James J. Hill. Enjoy self-guided access to holiday-themed exhibits and a 60-minute guided tour highlighting holiday stories and memories from both the Hill family and their staff.

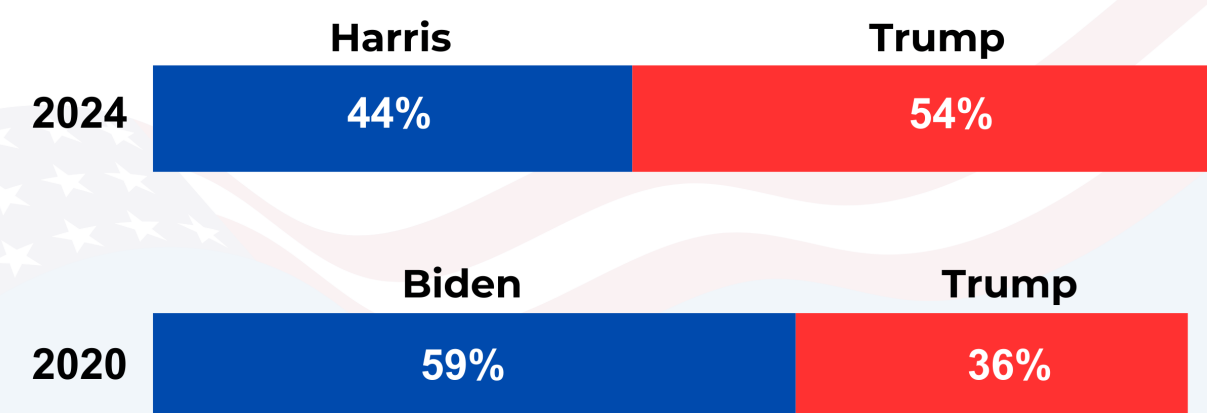


Donald J. Trump Wins Re-Election With Support From Latino Voters

Donald Trump has been declared the winner of the 2024 presidential election, marking only the second time in U.S. history a president has been elected to non-consecutive terms. His performance significantly improved over 2020, leading to a successful bid for a second term in office.

There is one group that exhibited a very dramatic change over the last election that accounts for some of the increases Trump achieved – Hispanic/Latino voters in general, and especially Latino men. Latino men represent 6% of the total U.S. voting population.

Latino Male Voters Shift Toward Trump in 2024 Election % of U.S. Latino Men who voted for...



Source: NEP Exit Poll 2024 conducted by Edison Research

In 2020, Joe Biden won among Latino men by 23 percentage points: 59%-36%. Our latest estimate for the 2024 vote among Latino men is Trump winning by ten points, 54% to 44%. This change of 33 points on the margin is a rather extraordinary shift in four years' time. While it will require more research to understand the change fully, it's worth noting that 40% of Hispanic/Latino voters named the economy as their most important issue from a pick-list of five possibilities, nine points higher than the voting population overall.

There were about 600,000 eligible Latino voters in Pennsylvania, including a significant Puerto Rican population. Exit polls suggested Latinos in Pennsylvania amounted to about 5% of the total vote. Trump garnered 42% of that vote, compared to 27% when he ran against Joe Biden in 2020.

The polls will continue to change as votes are counted, but are broadly representative of electoral trends.

In the state's "Latino belt" – an eastern industrial corridor that has shifted to the right in the last two elections – some voters said they were not surprised by the result.

"It's simple, really. We liked the way things were four years ago," said Samuel Negrón, a Pennsylvania state constable and member of the large Puerto Rican community in the city of Allentown.

Mr. Negrón, and other Trump supporters in the now majority-Latino city, listed other reasons that their community was drifting towards Trump, including social issues and a perception that their family values now align more with the Republican Party.

Winter Camping in Minnesota State Parks: How to Survive and Thrive

By Deborah Locke, Communications Specialist,
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Photos courtesy of DNR Staff

When Kurt Mead explains winter camping, you feel this urge to magically transport yourself to that snow covered, quiet place with its camaraderie, night sky, and sense of accomplishment. What he describes adds up to an experience unlike any other.

Since 2015, Mead, an interpretive naturalist at Tettegouche State Park on Minnesota's North Shore, has led a day-long winter camping workshop. The workshop is only offered at Tettegouche State Park; however, more than 25 Minnesota state parks offer winter camping.

One advantage for taking a winter camping workshop is that it gives campers a chance to try it in a controlled setting with experienced Parks and Trails staff who stay on site overnight. For any new campers at Tettegouche State Park who wake at 2 a.m. and decide that winter camping is not for them, they can move to the park's heated shower building and sleep there.

The 20 or 30 people at the workshop hear instructions and advice like the appropriate clothing to bring as well as how to build a snow cave, how to dress for the weather, and supplies to bring like food and equipment. Options are discussed, like whether a camper wants to build a quinzhee ice hut or pitch a "hot" tent with a small wood burning stove.

"It takes planning," Mead said. "You want the right food and equipment, the right clothes. Maybe you are the type of person who likes a challenge and wants to up your game and take camping to the next level. It's a lot of work, but it's fun."

The workshop gives guidance on creating a quinzhee, an insulated snow cave that looks something like an Alaskan igloo. A quinzhee that sleeps four people might take about four to five hours to construct. Once you are out of the wind and inside, body heat naturally warms up the interior of both tents and quinzhees. Mead remembers one instance where it was ten degrees below zero outside the quinzhee, but 45 degrees on the inside where four people slept.

On average, winter campers stay two or more nights. They ice fish, cross country ski or hike when they're not maintaining the camp site. The entire experience from arriving to departure takes a lot of energy. One outcome is guaranteed. You will sleep soundly after a day at a winter camp.

Here's another guaranteed outcome: a unique kind of camaraderie. Mead has fond memories of sitting around a campfire after supper, drinking cocoa and talking with friends under a clear winter sky. He pointed out that we humans tend to isolate ourselves from winter, preferring modern amenities over extended time outdoors when the temperature goes south. Winter camping offers a polar opposite experience to inactivity.

"When it's cold out, everything you do is an effort," he said, adding that there's a sense of satisfaction when you crawl into sleeping bag at the end of the day with a fatigue born of hard work. Sleep comes easily. He said that feeling of satisfaction helps him to appreciate winter more in a place where a clear night sky provides aesthetic entertainment. At night up north, away from the urban lights, the sky is bright and close. Snow against boots makes a squeak sound and it's the only noise around. Following a last meal prepared over the fire, campers may gather in an ice hut or tent for an hour or two of card playing by lantern light.

"Winter camping helps us jar ourselves out of winter hibernation mode," Mead said. "Twenty-four hours without indoor heat is a rewarding experience."

To see a map of where the parks with winter camping are located, go to: mndnr.gov/winterguide. Registration is required. Call the park ahead of time to be sure that the camp area has been plowed. Always check the park website for visitor alerts before you leave home. For information on the Feb. 8, 2025 winter camping workshop at Tettegouche State Park, go to the Tettegouche State Park website and park events. For a listing of all state park and trail events throughout the winter months, go to mndnr.gov/ptcalendar.



Eric Pelto of the Parks and Trails staff helps conduct the winter camping workshop at Tettegouche State Park



Interior of quinzhee snow cave

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📍 Visita una tienda Xfinity

📱 Escanea el código con la cámara de tu teléfono

Se aplican cargos estándares por la transmisión de datos.



Internet Essentials Plus:

\$29⁹⁵
al mes

Empezar es fácil con equipo incluido sin costo extra.

- Bueno para hasta 5 equipos a la vez
- Haz streaming y descarga música y videos
- Mantente conectado dondequiera que vayas con más de 20 millones de hotspots de WiFi en todo el país

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Se aplican restricciones. No está disponible en todas las áreas. Limitado a clientes residenciales de Internet Essentials (IE) de al menos 18 años de edad que cumplan con ciertos requisitos de elegibilidad. Si se determina que un cliente ya no es elegible para el programa de IE, se aplicarán las tarifas regulares al servicio de internet seleccionado. Sujeto a los términos y condiciones del programa de Internet Essentials. Instalación profesional es extra. El precio anunciado se aplica a una sola conexión. Las velocidades reales varían y no están garantizadas. Para factores que afectan a la velocidad, visite es.xfinity.com/networkmanagement. ©2024 Comcast. Derechos Reservados.