NEWS AND PROFILES CONNECTING THE LATINO AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN MINNESOTA



**Latino Future Leaders...Class of 2020** 

# Pathway to Success at Cristo Rey High School



Students from Cristo Rey Jesuit High School celebrate their successful college acceptance rate!

By Claud Santiago

For thousands of Twin Cities High School graduates Covid-19 canceled their graduation celebrations because of the restriction of public gatherings.

Cristo Rey Jesuit High School - Twin Cities had a special reason to celebrate. On March 10, 2020 they learned that all their 124 seniors student had been accepted to college, their 9th consecutive year of 100% college acceptance. That same week, Covid-19 became the dominant news of 2020.

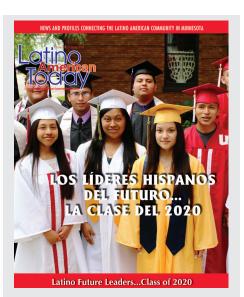
Traditionally, they celebrated their college success at their annual Pathway to Success event. Due to COVID-19 and recent public health declarations, the Pathway to Success event scheduled for May 20 was held virtually. While the families and friends of the graduates were disappointed they couldn't be together they still were very proud of this amazing success.

Cristo Rey High School has a very high percentage of Latino students. As Minnesota Education struggles with the achievement gap for Latino students, one of the worst in the country, Cristo Rey continues to set the bar for other schools to follow. We at *Latino American Today* congratulate Cristo Rey their staff and students for their Pathway to Success.

At this time of the COVID-19 crisis we wish all our readers, supporters, and advertisers good health and to stay safe!



Rick Aguilar Founder and Publisher Latino American Today



On The Cover Latino Future Leaders....Class of 2020



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FAMILY VALUES

#### LATINO AMERICAN TODAY

**JUNE 2020** 

# Junio es el mes de papá



Por Saúl Carranza

Hemos escuchado eso muchas veces. Sobre todo, cuando los comerciantes quieren que compremos regalos en su negocio. Y un buen padre merece ese homenaje y muchos más. Que importante es reconocer el esfuerzo y dedicación de quien ha cumplido varonilmente con esa responsabilidad.

Ser padre es cosa de valientes. Porque la paternidad no es solo asunto de procrear, eso lo pueden hacer casi todos los varones. Es asunto de formar. Todo niño debe crecer en estatura, en conocimiento, crecer socialmente y espiritualmente. Y todo de una forma sana, para ello necesita una imagen paterna que le guie con el ejemplo. Un hombre que de seguridad a su infancia y juventud.

En el año 1909 la Señora Sonora Smart Dood promovió que se hiciera un homenaje a los padres. Ella pensó que sería justo homenajear a su propio padre quien quedó viudo cuando su esposa murió al dar a luz a su sexto hijo y desde ese día Henry Jackson se hizo cargo de criar a sus seis hijos. Y junto con él celebrar a todos los padres. La idea tuvo gran aceptación en Estados Unidos y pronto en otros países hasta llegar a ser una celebración mundial. En Estados Unidos se celebra el día del padre el tercer domingo de junio desde 1966 cuando el Presidente Lyndon Johnson lo proclamó oficialmente.

Y es que, ser un buen padre no es fácil. Un padre debe ser provisor, líder, consejero, amigo, sacerdote y ejemplo de su familia. Debe proveer no solo el recurso económico sino también seguridad, estabilidad y amor. Es por ello que muchos huyen cobardemente de las responsabilidades y privilegios de la paternidad. Ningún hombre es perfecto y nadie espera que lo sea. Pero toda familia espera que el padre haga su mejor esfuerzo para ser el hombre que ellos necesitan. Aquél que esté presente en los momentos alegres como en los tristes, en la abundancia como en la escases. Cuando se siembra y cuando se cosecha. Una familia sin padre es una familia incompleta.

El mejor ejemplo de Padre es Dios mismo, quien nos ama con amor eterno, quien nos cuida y disciplina con amor y sabiduría y quien provee medios para que nos desarrollemos y crezcamos de acuerdo al potencial que en su infinita gracia ha dado a cada uno de nosotros. Y el más grande desafío para todo padre humano es reflejar en su familia el cuidado y amor del Padre Celestial. Si Dios nos ama con amor eterno, y demanda a cada padre amar de igual manera a su familia. Es por eso que los padres esforzados y valientes, aquellos que siempre cuidan de su familia, los que saben dar amor y disciplina merecen mucho más que un buen regalo. Merecen una familia que los reconozca y honre. Feliz día del Padre.

Saúl Carranza es originario de Guatemala y pastor de la Iglesia Cristo Para Todas Las Naciones en Crystal, MN. Tel. 763-245-2378, correo electrónico: saulcarranza@yahoo.com

## June is Dad's Month

By Saúl Carranza

We have heard this a million times. Especially when companies want us to buy gifts from them. The truth is a good father deserves that recognition and much more. It is to important to recognize the effort and dedication of those who have courageously met that responsibility.

Being a father is for those who are brave. Fatherhood is not just a matter of procreating—that could be done by almost any man. It's a matter of nurturing. Every child must grow in stature, in knowledge, socially and spiritually. All of this in a healthy way, and for this they need a fatherly image to guide them by example. A man who will protect them during their childhood and youth.

In 1909, Mrs. Sonora Smart Dodd promoted a tribute to parents. She thought it would be fair to honor her own father who was widowed after his wife died giving birth to their sixth child and from that day Henry Jackson took charge of raising their six children. Together with him she wanted to celebrate all fathers. The idea was widely accepted in the United States and soon in other countries until it became a worldwide celebration. In the United States, Father's Day is celebrated on the third Sunday in June since 1966 when President Lyndon B. Johnson officially proclaimed it.

Being a good father is not easy. A father must be a provider, leader, counselor, friend, priest, and example to his family. He must provide not only economically but also provide security, stability and love. This is why many cowardly flee from the responsibilities and privileges of fatherhood. No man is perfect, and nobody expects him to be. But every family expects their father to do his best to be the man they need. The one who is present in the happy moments as in the sad ones, in the abundance as in the scarcity. When it is the time to sow and time to harvest. A family without a father is an incomplete family.

The best example of a father is God himself, who loves us with eternal love, who cares for us and disciplines us with love and wisdom, who provides means for us to develop and grow according to the potential that in his infinite grace. The greatest challenge for every human father is to reflect in his family the care and love of the Heavenly Father. God loves us with eternal love, and demands that each father love his family in the same way. That is why hard working and courageous parents, who always take care of their family, who know how to give love and discipline deserve much more than a good gift. They deserve a family that recognizes and honors them. Happy Father's Day.

Saul Carranza is originally from Guatemala and pastor of the Church Christ for All Nations in Crystal, MN. Tel. 763-245-2378, email: saulcarranza@yahoo.com

### What Will YOUR New Normal Be?



Marci Malzahn

By Marci Malzahn

We talk about the "old normal" and the "new normal," but what will YOUR normal be once the pandemic is over? The pandemic will end, and our lives will continue moving forward. But we have choices to make. One of them is how your new life will look like.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has forced Americans to pause. Or as some are saying, we have experienced "the Great American Reset." Working hard and being busy is rewarded in the American culture. But this culture caused our daily lives to

become so busy that there is barely enough time to think. Now that we've had the opportunity to slow down to zero in some areas of our lives, I ask you this question: Do you want to go back to your "old normal"? I say it's time for a change.

There is a way of budgeting called "zero-base budgeting." This practice asks the questions: I) If your company didn't have this particular product, project, initiative, division, department, etc. would you start it now? And 2) Is this initiative crucial to the rest of organization? Or is it a CEO's "shiny object" (meaning it's a distraction to the organization's resources but the top leader wants it)? Answering these questions takes courage from the leaders of an organization as the result could be lost jobs and lower employee morale. On the other hand, it could mean the company's *only* chance for survival if certain areas are not restarted after the pandemic.

Now let's apply this concept to your personal life. Examine your life in the "old normal." Make a list of all the activities you were involved with. If you have children (especially if they don't drive), include all of their activities. Then ask yourself the questions: I) Do the kids need to be involved in all of these activities? Are these activities enriching their lives or making them more stressful?

Sometimes parents enroll their kids in certain sports they dreamed of playing or lessons for instruments they wanted to play. I've heard many stories where people are asked, "Would you have chosen that sport, that degree, that instrument, the choir, etc.? and they say, "absolutely not, I did it only because

it was my dad's dream or my mother's wishes..." Now is the time to avoid these situations in your children's lives.

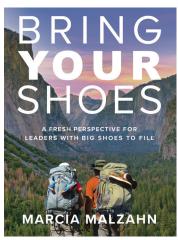
When our kids were in high school (before they drove) we asked them to choose the *one* sport they loved. We could no longer sustain the level of commitments they had which involved the entire family. I challenge you to do the same with your school-age children.

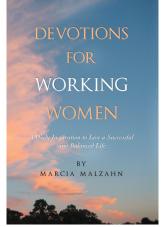
I asked myself the same questions and have decided to avoid traveling on Sundays if I can help it. I found myself doing that often last year and I was missing my time at home. Below are ideas to help you decide:

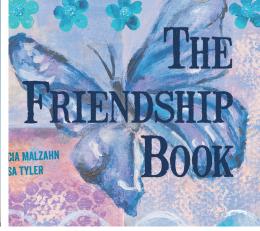
- **I.** If working from home is working well for you, then ask for that flexibility going forward. Many organizations will be looking for volunteers to avoid having too many people in the office at the same time so this may be a great opportunity to ask.
- **2.** Have your kids choose *one* sport to focus on, *one* instrument to play, or choose other activities *they're* passionate about. The point is, they can't be involved in everything at the same time.
- **3.** Align your volunteer activities with your core values and focus on those nonprofit causes.
- **4.** Reduce your involvement in other activities where you are not fulfilled.
- **5.** Start having at least one dinner per week with the family. A simple picnic in the summer can be a very fun activity that refreshes the entire family.

I hope this message encouraged you to reflect on your "old normal" and helps you choose YOUR new normal.

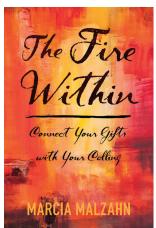
Marcia Malzahn is president and founder of Malzahn Strategic a community financial institution consultancy focused on strategic planning, enterprise risk management, treasury management, and talent management. Marcia is a professional keynote speaker and published author of four books. You can contact Marcia for speaking engagements through her website at https://crowning-achievements.com/ or email her at mmalzahn@crowning-achievements.com. You can purchase Marcia's books at Malzahn Publishing or Amazon.











POLITICS



# Mariah de la Paz Endorsed for House 52A Seat



Mariah de la Paz

By Claud Santiago

Mariah de la Paz was endorsed by the GOP to run for the House of Representatives in District 52A that is made up of West St. Paul, Mendota, Lilydale and the northern part of South St. Paul. Mariah lives in West St. Paul and is a professional who currently works in the senior health care system. She is a conservative who has been active in politics and in 2018 served as campaign manager for a congressional race in St. Paul. Mariah is a single mother who still finds the time to be active in the community working with various organizations to encourage Latino youth to stay in school and graduate.

Latino American Today will be presenting various candidates who are running for office in 2020.

52A is home to a large Latino community: West St. Paul is currently made up of 22% Latinos, South St. Paul 14%, and 4% in Mendota.

Mariah is running for office because she believes that the current DFL 52A incumbent house representative, who has held office since 2004, has been part of the DFL administration who has given us the failed MNLAR and MNSURE systems, costing tax payers millions of dollars.

Mariah's twenty-year career in health care gives her insights into the current Department of Health and Human Services disaster that has seen overpayment of millions of tax payer dollars and a leadership who resigns and is unable to explain to the public why or who the overpayments went to.

"We need our current 52A house representative Rick Hansen to explain to us how and why he stood by while tax payers paid out millions and millions of dollars to these failed programs," Mariah stated in a recent interview with Latino American Today.

"I am running for office so that our residents, business owners and families in 52A have a house representative who is for a smaller and more responsible, organized government, reduced taxes, less regulations so that more businesses open, better schools, and a safer community. I look forward to meeting with our community in the upcoming campaign to ask for their vote to give me the opportunity to serve them at the State Capitol."



Mariah with MN Rep. Eric Lucero

# Jimenez Announces the Endorsement of his Wife, Sandra, for Minnesota House Seat 57B



Jose and Sandra at the El Burrito Mercado

Jose Jimenez, candidate for Minnesota Senate District 57, announces his wife Sandra's endorsement on Thursday with the following statement:

"I am excited to announce the GOP endorsement of my wife, Sandra Jimenez, for Minnesota House seat 57B.

As we embark on this journey together, we are excited at the opportunity to serve the families of Senate District 57 and all of Minnesota. Now more than ever, we need leaders in Saint Paul who understand fiscal responsibility and who will fight for the values Minnesotans care about most.

We need leadership that achieves meaningful results for our community and State. I look forward to fighting for you as your next senator."

About Jose: Jose lives in Rosemount with his wife, Sandra. They are small business owners who raised their four children in the community they love. He has been a patent attorney for over 30 years and is founder of the Jimenez Law Firm. Jose has a Juris Doctor degree from the John Marshall Law School in Chicago, Illinois; a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from Northwestern University and an MBA from the Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University. He is also a member of the Rosemount Lions Club.



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### COMCAST EXTENDS COMPREHENSIVE COVID-19 RESPONSE POLICIES TO JUNE 30

Continues Commitment to No Disconnects or Late Fees, Keeping Business and Outdoor Xfinity WiFi Hotspots Open Nationally for Free, Giving Customers Unlimited Data, and 60 Days of Free Access for Low-Income Families through Internet Essentials

As shelter in place continues to be the norm and schools remain closed across the country, Comcast announced today it will extend its commitments for Xfinity customers through June 30 to help ensure students can finish out the school year from home and remain connected to the internet during the COVID-19 crisis.

Originally announced on March 13, Comcast made the following commitments that will now be extended into the summer:

- No Disconnects and Waiving Late Fees: We will not disconnect a customer's Xfinity Internet, Xfinity Mobile, or Xfinity Voice service, and we will waive late fees if they contact us and let us know that they can't pay their bills during this period. Our care teams are available to offer flexible payment options or help find other solutions.
- **Xfinity WiFi Free for Everyone:** Xfinity WiFi hotspots in business and outdoor locations across the country will be available to anyone who needs them for free including non-Xfinity Internet subscribers. For a map of Xfinity WiFi hotspots, visit www.xfinity.com/wifi.
- Pausing Our Data Plan: With so many people working and educating from home, we want our customers to access the internet without thinking

about data plans. While the vast majority of our customers do not come close to using ITB of data in a month, we are pausing our data plans to give all customers unlimited data for no additional charge.

• Internet Essentials: Internet Essentials is the nation's largest and most comprehensive broadband adoption program. We are extending our offer of 60 days of complimentary service for new customers through June 30. Internet Essentials is normally available to all qualified low-income households for \$9.95/month.

For more information, visit www.internetessentials.com.

"These extended measures will continue to keep Americans safe and ensure that households are equipped for students to learn and stay informed at home as the nation copes with this unprecedented disruption to our daily lives," said Dave Watson, Comcast Cable Chief Executive Officer. "Our services have never been more important, and we're doing everything we can to keep people connected to the internet."

For more information and updates from Comcast related to Coronavirus, visit: http://www.comcastcorporation.com/COVID-19/



INTERNET ESSENTIALS" DE COMCAST INTERNET DE ALTA VELOCIDAD ECONÓMICO

Internet Essentials te da acceso a Internet de alta velocidad económico. Podrías calificar si tienes al menos un niño elegible para el Programa Nacional de Almuerzos Escolares, recibes asistencia para viviendas públicas o HUD, o eres un veterano con bajos recursos económicos que recibe asistencia federal y/o estatal.



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Se aplican restricciones. No está disponible en todas las áreas. Limitado al servicio de Internet Essentials para nuevos clientes residenciales que cumplan con ciertos requisitos de elegibilidad. El precio anunciado se aplica a una sola conexión. Las velocidades reales pueden variar y no están garantizadas. Tras la participación inicial en el programa de Internet Essentials, si se determina que un cliente ya no es elegible para el programa y elige un servicio de Xfinity Internet diferente, se aplicarán las tarifas regulares al servicio de Internet seleccionado. Sujeto a los términos y condiciones del programa de Internet Essentials. Hotspots de WiFi: Los hotspots solo están disponibles en áreas selectas. Se requiere una laptop o cualquier otro equipo móvil con capacidad para WiFi. Se limita a cuarenta sesiones de 60 minutos, el periodo de 30 días por persona/cuenta. Si la sesión se termina antes de 60 minutos, el tiempo restante vencerá. El tiempo no usado no se transfiere a sesiones o períodos de 30 días siguientes. No responsable de los datos perdidos por terminarse la sesión de Internet o cualquier otra razón. Se pueden registrar un máximo de hasta 10 equipos a una ada cuenta de Xfinity WiFi On Demand. No se puede combinar con otras ofertas. Llame al 1-855-765-6995 para obtener las restricciones y detalles completos o visite es.InternetEssentials.com. © 2018 Comcast. Derechos Reservados.



COMMUNITY NEWS

# Enfermedad del Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19)

La enfermedad del coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) es una enfermedad respiratoria en humanos causada por un nuevo virus. Puede transmitirse de persona a persona.

Debido a que este es un nuevo virus, todavía hay cosas que no sabemos, pero todos los días, aprendemos más sobre el COVID-19.

La comunidad de salud pública de Minnesota está trabajando arduamente para frenar la propagación del COVID-19 en nuestro estado, y necesitamos la colaboración por parte de todos.

Evite las suposiciones acerca de quién cree que puede tener esta enfermedad. Los viruses no discriminan.

#### Síntomas

Las personas que tengan confirmación de estar infectadas con COVID-19 manifiestan una afección respiratoria de leve a grave con síntomas de

- Fiebre
- Tos
- Dificultad para respirar

Las personas con COVID-19 que están levemente enfermas pueden permanecer en casa durante el periodo de enfermedad. También deben limitar las actividades fuera de casa, excepto para obtener atención médica. Llame a su proveedor de salud si necesita atención médica.

### Protéjase a sí mismo y a su comunidad

La mejor manera de protegerse contra el COVID-19 es hacer las mismas cosas que usted hace para protegerse contra los resfriados y la gripe:

- Lávese las manos a menudo con agua y jabón.
- Si está enfermo, quédese en casa.
- Cúbrase la boca al toser.
- Limpie y desinfecte los objetos y superficies que toca con frecuencia.

Por favor tenga cuidado con la información que obtiene sobre el COVID-19. Hay información falsa que promete una "cura" o garantiza una forma para prevenir del todo el COVID-19. Hasta el momento no existe una vacuna contra el COVID-19. Le pedimos que siga utilizando las páginas que se encuentran en internet de MDH y CDC para mayor información sobre la prevención del COVID-19.





# Minnesota State Fair 2020 is Cancelled!



By Carter Jones - Digital Producer, Minneapolis / St. Paul Business Journal

# The 2020 Minnesota State Fair is canceled, the fair board announced Friday.

Minnesota State Fair General Manager Jerry Hammer said it was impossible to guarantee the safety of fair goers and the vast network of agriculturists, vendors, artists, entertainers, competitors, amusement operators, sponsors that pack into the fair grounds every August. More than 2.1 million people attended last year, and six of the fair's 12 days posted new daily records.

"No one knows what things will be like at fair time, but we need to make

decisions now based on what we know today, not how we hope things will be in August," Hammer said.

"And right now, all of the science says that if things go well, we'll still be walking very carefully in three months. That's far from ready to run a mass gathering marathon like the State Fair."

In a Q&A on the Fair's website, organizers said they explored countless scenarios to modify the fair, but ultimately determined limited attendance and instituting social distancing guidelines wasn't feasible. The fair has been canceled a handful of times before, including during a polio epidemic in the mid-1940s.

"A fair under these severe restrictions is not the Great Minnesota Get-Together that we all love," reads the answer.

When it returns in 2021, the "great Minnesota get-back-together" could be more popular than ever. Fair organizers have worked to maximize space for crowds that top over 250,000 people per day.

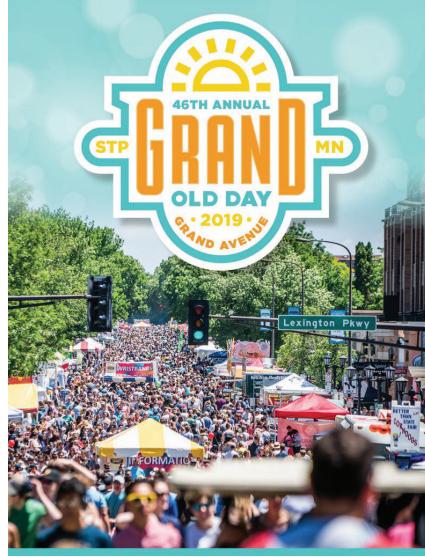
Over 20 county fairs across the state have also been cancelled, including the Ramsey and Sherburne county fair.

### Due to Covid-19 the following events have been canceled or postponed:

Grand Old Days, Twin Cities Pride, Rock the Garden the MSP International Film Festival, Irish Fair, Hmong Sports Festival, Highland Fest, Twin Cities Jazz Festival, and the Lowertown Blues Festival.







# How Female Hispanic Business Owners Are Fueling the Economy



By Patricia Guadalupe Freelance writer

Marleny Rivas was at home one night watching television and trying to figure out what to do next after getting laid off from her job at a major corporation in California. Rivas had been selling her very popular homemade Salvadoran food on the side to friends and coworkers, making a good amount of extra money. She had been thinking about possibly doing it full time but wasn't sure how to go about it.

Then, she saw a commercial for free and low-cost business classes at her local community college focusing on the nuts and bolts of entrepreneurship, and that turned things around for her. "I took classes on everything about starting a new business, how to put a business plan together, what kind of loans might be available, all of it," she says.

### **A Fast-Growing Segment**

Not long after launching, Rivas had three locations and a lunchtime food truck, a mere 12 years after immigrating to the United States from El Salvador. This way, Rivas joined the fastest-growing segment of the small business industry in the United States—Latina-owned businesses.

There are over two million Latina-owned businesses in the country, a growth of more than 87% since 2007, according to the National Women's Business Council. These businesses are helping to fuel the U.S. economy. Nonetheless, many potential Latina business owners—and even those who already have a business—aren't sure of the options available to help them get started or to reach the next level.

### The First Building Block: Education

Looking at programs that can help you achieve the dream of owning your own business is the key to getting started. "We're not talking about the traditional K-I2 kind of education, but rather business education, such as understanding a financial statement, how to access capital, how to grow your business," says Lea Márquez Peterson, who owns a public relations firm in Arizona.

She has experience working in non-traditional endeavors, such as owning and managing several gas stations and convenience stores, as well as business brokerage (buying and selling businesses), which are all male-dominated industries. "As a woman, I was very unusual," Márquez Peterson says. If you educate yourself as much as possible in your particular business, it's easier to confront the challenges of starting and running a business, especially for Latinas who choose to take that non-traditional business path.

### **Getting Funding**

Like so many other would-be entrepreneurs, the biggest challenge for Latina business owners is access to funding. "I got turned down at first," says Rivas. "One bank said they wouldn't lend me the money because I needed to be in business at least two years and show a profit, so I ended up using some savings and tax refunds to get started."

According to Márquez Peterson, "Access to capital is the number one issue for Latina-owned businesses." She adds that "A lot of Latinas start real [sic.] small, with microbusinesses, such as [working] online, on weekends or at night. The challenge then becomes how to grow your business."

### **Alternative Resources**

There are several options you can consider to address the challenge of obtaining funding to either to grow a business or get one off the ground. The U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Women's Business Ownership offers a variety of programs, including training and mentorships, and ways for Latina entrepreneurs to apply for loans.

Another good option is Fundera, a New York City-based organization that acts as a one-stop-shop and funding matchmaker of sorts for small businesses, pairing entrepreneurs with lenders. Fundera does not charge small businesses to access their information and apply for loans—the company receives a fee from the lenders—and its most popular feature is the convenience of having a variety of alternatives listed under one roof.

The important thing is not to give up, says Márquez Peterson. "Whether it's other women business owners, family members or a Chamber of Commerce, there has to be a place where you can go to determine what your vision is and what you aspire to be," she says.

"As a group, Latinas are very entrepreneurial. We push ourselves to get ahead," says Rivas. "Some of us come from very humble means, and if we don't push [ourselves] to get ahead, we literally don't eat. We have a survivor instinct."

The sentiment is echoed by Márquez Peterson, "Hispanic culture is very entrepreneurial. I grew up in a family with a father who had his own business, and my mom had her own business. I was told that if you want to make more money, [you need to] work harder, and if you're already working full time and you can't take on more hours, then it comes down to starting your own business. I think that's what has motivated so many Latinas across the country to launch businesses."

### **Summertime Barbecues**



Chef Amalia in the kitchen

By award-winning author and chef Amalia Moreno-Damgaard (AmaliaLLC.com)

Cummertime is for having fun in the sun in the company of family and friends enjoying delicious foods.

Every summer I look forward to the endless possibilities of preparing the season's harvest quickly and easily using herbs and spices to enhance the flavor of grilled meats and vegetables. One advantage of cooking outdoors is that the whole experience can happen on your deck or at the picnic table making cleanup easier.

In many countries and in the United States people venture outside as soon as the weather is pleasant and look for parks with gathering spaces with grills and benches to celebrate birthdays and other special events. This is such a great way to connect with nature in a wholesome and inexpensive way.

When was the last time you and your family organized a family reunion in a pot luck fashion? What a great opportunity to enjoy a variety of foods under the sun! Minnesota has many picturesque places and lakes to enjoy the warm weather which can be conducive to turn a party into a fiesta. Think food, cool drinks, music, and dance.

Marinating chicken, meats, and other proteins is a time saver and a flavor booster. For best results, immerse your proteins in a Ziploc bag with plenty of the sauce you are using and marinate in the refrigerator for 2-3 days. Then

complement your menu with grilled corn, grilled vegetables dressed with herbs and lemon juice, leafy greens salads, and light fruit desserts. I can't think of a healthier way to embrace nature! Below is a recipe to get you started.



### Ensalada Al Flash

### By Chef Amalia Moreno-Damgaard

Serves 4

I avocado, pitted, in cubes I vine ripened tomato, diced I head of romaine, torn into small pieces ½ cup shaved red onion

I bunch parsley leaves, roughly chopped

Dressing: the juice of 2 lemons (or limes),

2 tbsp olive oil, salt and pepper

Prepare the vegetables and combine in a bowl.

Toss with the dressing right before serving.

### **About Amalia**

Amalia Moreno-Damgaard is an award-winning author and chef born and raised in Guatemala City. Amalia creates awareness about Latin culture's nuances through consulting, bilingual speaking and writing, and healthy culinary experiences. Her book Amalia's Guatemalan Kitchen-Gourmet cuisine with a Cultural Flair is a nine-time award-winner and best seller. Learn more about Amalia and her upcoming events at AmaliaLLC.com.



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### LATINO AMERICAN TODAY

# Why the Turtle Crosses the Road



Snapping Turtle On Road

This female turtle has just laid eggs in sandy soil along a road near wetlands. Will she make it safely back to her home in the water?

By Harland Hiemstra, Minnesota DNR

Want to help preserve one of the coolest parts of Minnesota's natural history, something that pre-dates dinosaurs but still can be found all across the state?

Keep an eye out for turtles. They're on the move this time of year, and the biggest threat to their continued existence is something most adults use on a daily basis: the automobile.

Unlike the infamous chicken of many riddles, turtles cross roads because they actually have someplace to go. In late spring and early summer, female turtles move from the ponds, streams and wetlands where they spend most of their lives to upland areas where they lay their eggs.

When a road runs between those two places, many turtles become roadkill, because as hard as their shells may be, they're no defense against a speeding car or truck. Roadway mortality is believed to be a major factor in turtle population declines throughout the United States.

"Turtles pre-date dinosaurs by millions of years, and they've outlasted them, too," says Erica Hoaglund, a biologist with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' Nongame Wildlife Program. "But they're very poorly adapted to roads. They move slowly and when threatened, freeze and tuck up into their shells."



Smiling Turtle
A young Blanding's turtle's face almost looks like
it's smiling.

Because turtles have been around since prehistoric times, and because they're such unique creatures, carrying their house with them and living sometimes as long or longer than humans, they've figured prominently in numerous legends and myths. Some Native American tales relate how the Great Spirit created their homeland by piling soil on the turtle's back after a huge flood.

Minnesota has nine native species of turtles, two of which are on the state list of threatened species: Blanding's turtles and wood turtles. Painted turtles, with their bright reddish orange bottom shell and yellow striped head and legs, are the most commonly seen turtles in the state. Snapping turtles are the largest, with top shells typically about a foot long. The biggest snapper ever recorded in Minnesota weighed 65 pounds and its upper shell measured nearly 20 inches. They're normally docile in water, but may snap and lunge at people if they feel threatened on land.

Turtles spend all winter tucked into the mud at the bottom of a lake, pond or river, where their metabolism slows way down. They obtain needed

oxygen from the water as it contacts exposed mucus membranes in their mouth and – get this – their butts. Come spring, they move to shallow open waters and bask in the sun to warm up and get themselves going. Females leave the water in late May or June to find an upland area where they can dig a hole and lay their eggs, sometimes traveling a mile or more there and back, often crossing busy roads to do so. Eggs remain in the nest all summer. The gender of the hatchlings is affected by the surrounding temperature, with hotter weather producing more females, and cooler temps more males.



Hatchling Blanding's Turtle In Hand
The Blanding's turtle is one of nine
species of turtle native to Minnesota.
It is on the state list of threatened
species, with road mortality and
habitat loss among the main causes
of the species decline.

The prospects for baby turtles are grim. Eggs are often dug up and eaten by raccoons, skunks and foxes; in one study of nesting Blanding's turtles, 93 percent of the eggs met their fate before even hatching. After they hatch - sometime between mid-August and mid-October - the baby turtles are exposed to further perils of predation and roadkill as they crawl back to water, where they still may be eaten by large fish. Even if they do survive to adulthood, turtles don't reach sexual maturity (the age when they start reproducing) until they're between 5 and 15 years old, depending on species.

Historically, the low reproductive success of turtles has been offset by the animals' longevity – some Blanding's turtles, for instance have lived 70 years or more (turtles can be aged by counting grooves on their shells, much like tree rings). But with ongoing habitat loss and road mortality, many biologists believe turtle populations are increasingly at risk.

DNR's Hoaglund points out that the consequences of a turtle being struck on the highway go far beyond just that one individual. It also eliminates all the other turtles that individual might have produced over the decades of its life, affecting the whole population.

"Turtles are way cool," Hoaglund says. "What other critter can you think of that packs its house on its back, lives to a ripe old age, stars in lots of traditional tales, and can breathe through its butt?

Teaching About Turtles

DNR Nongame Wildlife Program biologist Erica Hoaglund teaches students about some of the unique features of turtles, a type of reptile that has been around since before the time of dinosaurs.

"This time of year, they need us to exercise a little extra caution when

we're driving, though. Keep an eye out for turtles, and give 'em a brake."

(Learn more about Minnesota's turtles and how to help them at www.mndnr.gov.)



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