

NEWS AND PROFILES CONNECTING THE LATINO AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN MINNESOTA

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DIA DE LOS MUERTOS

Day of the Dead

Día de los Muertos: Celebrando la vida a través de la memoria

El Día de los Muertos es una tradición mexicana vibrante y ancestral en la que las familias recuerdan y celebran a sus seres queridos que han fallecido. Celebrada principalmente el 1 y 2 de noviembre, la festividad se caracteriza por su alegría y colorido, representando la unión entre la vida y la muerte. A diferencia de Halloween, que tiene un tono más sombrío, el Día de los Muertos es una ocasión alegre para recibir a las almas de los difuntos que, según la creencia popular, regresan a visitar a sus familias.

Orígenes y evolución de la tradición

Esta celebración tiene raíces profundas que combinan antiguas tradiciones indígenas mesoamericanas con las festividades católicas que los españoles trajeron en el siglo XVI.

- **Raíces indígenas:** Los pueblos indígenas, como los aztecas, ya honraban a la muerte y tenían rituales para la diosa Mictécacihuātl, la Dama del Inframundo. Celebraban sus festividades durante el verano, creyendo que los huesos de los ancestros se usaban para crear nueva vida.
- **Influencia católica:** La llegada de los españoles resultó en la fusión de estas costumbres con las celebraciones católicas del Día de Todos los Santos (1 de noviembre) y el Día de los Fieles Difuntos (2 de noviembre). El resultado es el sincretismo cultural que hoy conocemos.

Elementos clave de la celebración

La esencia del Día de los Muertos se manifiesta a través de varias costumbres y símbolos:

- **Las ofrendas y los altares:** Son el elemento central de la celebración. Se construyen altares en los hogares para recibir a las almas de los difuntos. Se decoran con fotografías, velas, incienso, papel picado y objetos personales del fallecido.

- **Flor de Cempasúchil:** Estas vibrantes flores de color naranja, también conocidas como “flor de muerto”, se utilizan para guiar a los espíritus de regreso a casa con su aroma y color.

- **Comida y bebida:** Las familias preparan y colocan en el altar la comida y bebida favorita de los difuntos, como pan de muerto, calaveras de azúcar, tequila y atole. Comparten la comida con sus seres queridos, tanto vivos como muertos.

- **Las Calaveras y La Catrina:** Las calaveras, o calacas, son figuras de esqueletos decoradas y coloridas. La Catrina, una elegante figura de esqueleto, se ha convertido en un símbolo icónico de la festividad.

- **Visitas al cementerio:** Las familias limpian y decoran las tumbas con flores y velas, y a menudo pasan la noche en el cementerio, compartiendo historias y música.

Significado y mensaje cultural

Más allá de la decoración y el festejo, el Día de los Muertos transmite un mensaje profundo sobre la vida, la muerte y la memoria.

- **La muerte como parte de la vida:** La festividad enseña que la muerte no es el final, sino una parte natural del ciclo de la vida. Es una oportunidad para sanar el dolor y celebrar el legado de los que ya no están.

- **Honrar a los seres queridos:** El espíritu de la celebración se centra en mantener vivo el recuerdo de los difuntos. Como dice un popular dicho mexicano, “los muertos mueren cuando los vivos los olvidan”.

- **Unión familiar:** La tradición fortalece los lazos familiares al reunir a las generaciones para compartir historias, comidas y recuerdos en honor a sus antepasados.



On The Cover:

Día de los Muertos

Day of the Dead

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DÍA DE LOS
MUERTOS
A CELEBRATION OF LIFE



El agradecimiento toca el corazón de Dios.



Por Saúl Carranza.

En los relatos del Evangelio, encontramos historias poderosas que no solo muestran milagros, sino también profundas lecciones de vida. Una de estas historias es la del leproso que regresó a dar gracias a Jesús. Esta historia revela el valor de la gratitud, la fe y cómo una actitud agradecida puede incluso sorprender al mismo Jesús.

En el paso de Jesús por los polvorientos caminos hacia Jerusalén, diez hombres enfermos de lepra salieron a su encuentro. En esa época, casi todas las enfermedades de la piel eran consideradas lepra y quienes las sufrían eran excluidos de la sociedad, obligados a vivir separados de sus familias y amigos.

Al ver a Jesús, estos hombres se detuvieron a cierta distancia – pues no podían acercarse – y gritaron: “¡Jesús, Maestro, ¡ten compasión de nosotros!” Ellos necesitaban desesperadamente un milagro que les diera una nueva oportunidad de vida. No tenían alternativa, sabían que solo Jesús podía hacer ese milagro.

Jesús, lleno de compasión, les dijo: “Vayan y preséntense a los sacerdotes”. Esta instrucción era significativa porque, según la ley judía, solo los sacerdotes podían declarar a un leproso limpio y permitirle regresar a la comunidad. Mientras ellos caminaban hacia el templo, algo extraordinario sucedió: todos quedaron limpios de su lepra. Sus cuerpos, antes marcados por la enfermedad, se restauraron completamente.

Gratitude touches God's heart.

By Saul Carranza

In the Gospel accounts, we find powerful stories that not only show miracles, but also profound life lessons. One such story is that of the leper who returned to thank Jesus. This story reveals the principles of gratitude and faith, how a grateful attitude can even surprise Jesus himself.

As Jesus traveled along the dusty road to Jerusalem, ten men suffering from leprosy came out to meet Him. At that time, almost all skin diseases were considered leprosy, and those who suffered from them were excluded from society, forced to live apart from their families and friends.

When they saw Jesus, these men stopped at a distance – for they could not get close – and cried out, “Jesus, Rabi, have mercy on us!” They desperately needed a miracle that would give them a new chance at life. They had no alternative; they knew that only Jesus could perform such a miracle.

Jesus, filled with compassion, said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” This instruction was significant because, according to Jewish law, only priests could declare a leper clean and allow him to reintegrate to the community. As they walked toward the temple, something extraordinary happened: they were all cleansed of their leprosy. Their bodies, once marked by the disease, were completely restored.

However, the story does not end here. Of the ten men who were healed, only one, realizing that he had been cured, ran back. He fell on his knees at Jesus’ feet and, with deep emotion, thanked him. This man was a Samaritan, someone considered a foreigner and marginalized by the Jews. Jesus asked in amazement, “Weren’t there ten who were cleansed? Where are the other nine? Only this foreigner returned?” Jesus’ words highlight the importance of a grateful attitude. The fact that only one returned to give thanks surprised Jesus. To this man, Jesus said, “Get up and go; your faith has saved you.”

The story of the leper who returned to give thanks teaches us that gratitude transforms the heart and creates a special bond with God. Sometimes, in life, we receive blessings and miracles, but we forget to thank the giver. This man was not only healed physically, but he also received a deeper salvation, the fruit of his faith and gratitude.

Being grateful is one of the most powerful virtues we can cultivate. The leper who returned reminds us that, even being in the midst of a crowd, a grateful heart can touch the heart of God and of people. May this story inspire everyone to always return, give

Sin embargo, la historia no termina aquí. De los diez hombres sanados, solo uno, al darse cuenta de que había sido curado, regresó corriendo. Cayó de rodillas a los pies de Jesús y, con profunda emoción, le dio las gracias. Este hombre era samaritano, alguien considerado extranjero y marginado por los judíos. Jesús preguntó con asombro: “¿No fueron diez los que quedaron limpios? ¿Dónde están los otros nueve? ¿Solo este extranjero regresó? Las palabras de Jesús resaltan la importancia de una actitud agradecida. El hecho de que solo uno volviera para agradecer sorprendió a Jesús. A este hombre, Jesús le dijo: “Levántate y vete; tu fe te ha salvado”.

La historia del leproso que regresó a dar las gracias nos enseña que la gratitud transforma el corazón y crea un vínculo especial con Dios. A veces, en la vida, recibimos bendiciones y milagros, pero olvidamos dar gracias al dador. Este hombre no solo fue sanado físicamente, sino que recibió una salvación más profunda, fruto de su fe y agradecimiento.

Ser agradecidos es una de las virtudes más poderosas que podemos cultivar. El leproso que regresó nos recuerda que, aun en medio de la multitud, un corazón agradecido puede tocar el corazón de Dios y de las personas. Que esta historia inspire a todos a regresar siempre, dar las gracias y vivir con un espíritu de gratitud. “Podemos mostrar gratitud hoy al reconocer los pequeños favores que recibimos, agradecer a quienes nos ayudan y reflexionar siempre sobre las bendiciones recibidas.”

thanks, and live with a spirit of gratitude. “We can show gratitude today by recognizing the small favors we receive, thanking those who help us, and always reflecting on the blessings we have received.”

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Pastor Saul Carranza.

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Four Ways to Prepare for Your Next Season in Life



Marcia Malzahn

By Marcia Malzahn

In this article, I share four ways to prepare for your next season in life – whatever it may be. Fall typically represents a new season beyond the obvious transition in stations. It’s almost considered as a “new year” as kids start school, and many people start new jobs “after summer.” It’s a time for new beginnings and, like during the New Year, a time for reflection on “what’s next.”

We live in difficult times where tragedy strikes unexpectedly and, while we’re still mourning, a new tragedy occurs in our country or the world. The Pandemic was a world event that ushered a new

season in all our lives – globally. In this article, however, I want to focus on your next season of life while you are also embracing a new season for humanity.

Below are four ways to prepare for your next season in life:

Know who you are.

Have you ever asked yourself, “Who am I?” Of course, the obvious answer is that you are a human being. You could move on to describe who you are professionally or based on your trade. You can also describe yourself as a husband, wife, mother, father, grandfather, grandmother, sister, brother and many other names. You could even answer based on your race, ethnic background, or age. But I want you to consider the simplest answer of all, “I am a child of God.”

I John 3:1 tells us, “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that **we should be called children of God!** Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.” But how can you be certain you are indeed a child of God? Simple, you accept His Son Jesus, as your Lord and Savior today. Now you belong to the family of God!

Know the “why” of your belief system.

Another question. Have you ever asked yourself why you believe what you believe? Where did you learn what you know to be your “core values” and your own “belief system”? You need to know the source. If a speaker says something that you choose to appropriate in your belief system, ensure you check their source. How do you know that what they’re saying is the truth? It is your responsibility to be wise and on the alert about everything you hear on the Internet or from others.

Jesus tells us in **John 14:6** (NKJ), “*I am the way, **the truth**, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*” There is no “my truth” or “your truth.” There is only *THE truth* and that is Jesus. My core beliefs come directly from the Bible. Whenever I listen to preachers, teachers of the Bible, or commentators, I check what they say for myself. I go to my source, the Word of God, to understand the concepts better and verify they’re saying the truth. If it’s not anywhere, I discard it and not make it part of my core belief system.

God is with you in every season in life.

As a person growing up from childhood to adulthood, we all experience similar seasons in our lives. We go to school and hopefully graduate from high school. Then some choose a college education while others choose a trade school or no college at all. The next season whether we like it or not is to work. Except for those who are unable to work, everyone must make a living somehow. Next, each person decides whether to marry or not, and to have children or not. If you choose to marry and have children, later you may become a grandparent. The progression continues and the expectation is to be retired someday. Although it’s appropriate to retire from a profession, I don’t believe in wasting 30 or more years of potential productivity.

Each season mentioned above comes with new challenges and expectations. You can’t expect a child to prepare for their teenage years. But as you grow up you start learning how to prepare for the next season when you prepare for college. If you decide not to attend college, then you prepare to work. If you marry young and decide to have children right away, you may be entering three seasons simultaneously. You’re starting your career, beginning your life with your spouse, and shortly after experiencing parenthood.

On the other side of the journey, you could be retiring from your career. And at the same time that you’re experiencing divorce and becoming an empty nester. Or you could still be working and become a grandparent needing to help your children so they can work. At the same time, you may lose your own parents or help them during their later years in life.

When Moses died, Joshua was in charge of bringing God’s people to the promise land. This was definitely a “next season” for Joshua. And God told him, “I command you – be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” (**Joshua 1:9 NLT**)

Accept and embrace the help.

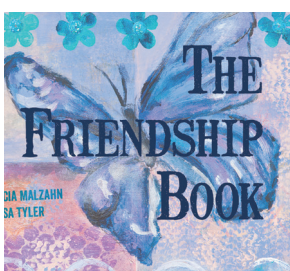
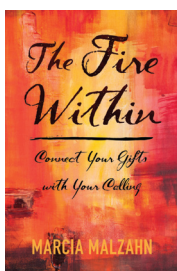
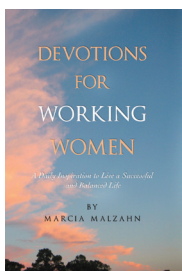
As you go through each season in your life, know that God is with you every day and every step of the way. Understanding that you are a child of God helps you to embrace change and become resilient. Learning to adapt after a major life change is a skill that we all need to practice. But depending on the situation, it may take longer than we expect, and we may need professional help to get through it. Part of embracing the new season is accepting that we may need help in more than one way. It takes humility to accept help!

I hope these four ways to prepare for your next season in life will help you in your journey. I leave you with encouraging promises from the Psalms:

In **Psalms 32:8 (NLT)** The Lord says, “*I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you.*”

Psalms 33:4 (NLT) *For the word of the Lord holds true, and everything he does is worthy of our trust.*

Psalms 37:5 (NLT) *Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him, and he will help you.*



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 [Crowning Achievements International](http://CrowningAchievementsInternational.com) or email her at mmalzahn@crowning-achievements.com.



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“Patapez,” monumental *alebrije* by Alejandro Camacho. Photo by Aaron Johnson-Ortiz for the Minnesota Latino Museum.



“Osita Emilia,” monumental *alebrije* by Miriam Salgado. Photo by Aaron Johnson-Ortiz for the Minnesota Latino Museum.



Artist Edgar Camargo with a hand-held *alebrije*.

ALEBRIJES KEEPERS OF THE ISLAND

“ALEBRIJES: Keepers of the Island,” a breath-taking outdoor public art exhibition on Raspberry Island on the Mississippi River in Saint Paul, running from June 1 to October 26, 2025. The Minnesota Latino Museum will transform the island into a fantastical dreamscape of color, fantasy, and imagination. The immersive exhibit features 16 large-scale papier-mâché sculptures – 8 “Alebrijes Monumentales,” monumental creations up to 16 feet tall; and 8 “Nahuales,” colorfully-painted fauna, up to 4 feet tall, representing Mexican spirit animals.

Open Exhibit Dates

Sunday, June 1, 2025 to
Sunday, October 26, 2025

Location for all events:
Raspberry Island, Saint Paul, MN 55107

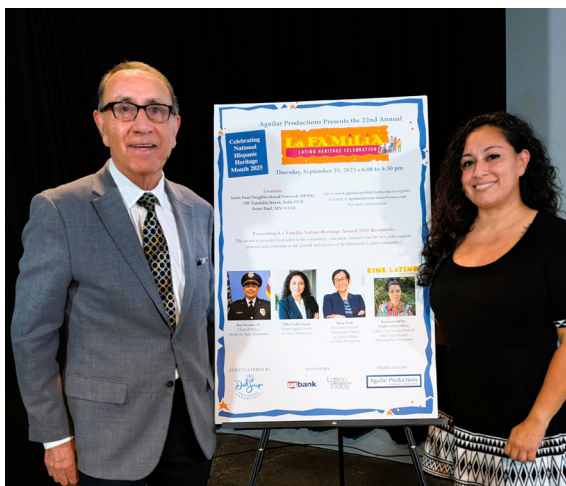
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Attendees enjoying La Familia

Candidate for School Board in District 833

Juan Huerta is running for election for an at-large seat of the South Washington County Schools.

Interview with Latino American Today

I grew up in Saint Paul, Minnesota Frogtown area and attended schools in Saint Paul, finishing my last two years of High School in Circle Pines, Minnesota. After joining the Marines, I completed my bachelor's degree in criminal justice then joined the City of Leavenworth, Kansas Police Department. We have lived in Cottage Grove, Minnesota for the last 18 years. Happily married to my wife for over 22 years, we have six wonderful children, five daughters and one son. All my children have attended the 833-school district. I am currently working for a Fortune 500 company as their site security supervisor, fire chief for their onsite fire brigade and in charge of the EOC Emergency Operating Center.



Juan Huerta and family

LAT: What motivates you to want to become a board member?

I want to improve public education and serve the community. I want to be a voice for my community, work with teachers, parents, and administrators, but mostly I want to see our children succeed in the future.

LAT: What is your vision for education in this community?

My vision is to collaborate with parents and teachers to raise districts standardized test scores in reading, writing, and math. While creating a safe educational environment for our schools by collaborating closely with school officials and our local law enforcement to include more SRO school resource officers.

LAT: What do you see as the primary work of the board?

As a school board member, I would be reading over and establishing different policies that would affect our children. My vision for the school district is to ensure that the best interests for our children are being represented. Reviewing the district's budget and balance financial needs with taxpayers' affordability.

LAT: Do you have sufficient time/energy to devote to this position?

Yes, I am a motivated individual, and I am full of energy. Well organized in everything I do even had time to run a 5K for Run/Walk for Heroes in Cottage Grove MN. On 9/13/2025.



Wednesday, October 08, 2025 | 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Thursday, October 09, 2025 | 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Friday, October 10, 2025 | 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Saturday, October 11, 2025 | 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday, October 12, 2025 | 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Cine Latino returns October 8-12 to The Main Cinema for five days of Spanish and Portuguese language films, special guests, fiestas, food trucks, and more!

The 13th annual celebration of the best Latin American, US Latinx, and Ibero Cinema pays homage to the longstanding film industries throughout the Spanish and Portuguese speaking diaspora by showcasing the diversity of their inhabitants, the immense beauty of their geographies, and the magic of their many cultures through the power of film.



Trade Schools offer a pathway to well-paying jobs with practical skills

Los latinos deberían trabajar más en el sector de los oficios, como la construcción, la carpintería, la fontanería, la electricidad y la calefacción, ventilación y aire acondicionado (HVAC). Ofrece una vía de acceso a empleos bien remunerados y con gran demanda, especialmente en el sector de la construcción, donde ya están muy representados, y puede ayudar a abordar la creciente escasez de mano de obra cualificada, al tiempo que ofrece oportunidades de promoción profesional y estabilidad económica.

Puntos clave:

- **Gran demanda de trabajadores cualificados**
El sector de la construcción, uno de los principales empleadores de trabajadores latinos, se enfrenta actualmente a una importante escasez de mano de obra cualificada, lo que lo convierte en un área primordial para aumentar la participación latina.
- **Oportunidades económicas:**
Los empleos en oficios suelen ofrecer salarios y beneficios competitivos, lo que supone una fuente de ingresos estable para los trabajadores latinos.
- **Diversas trayectorias profesionales:**
Los oficios abarcan una amplia gama de especialidades como carpintería, fontanería, electricidad y calefacción, ventilación y aire acondicionado, lo que permite la progresión profesional y la especialización.
- **Impacto en la comunidad:**
Una mayor presencia latina en los oficios puede beneficiar a las comunidades locales al crear una mano de obra más diversa y apoyar los proyectos de construcción locales.

Retos a superar:

- **Barreras lingüísticas:**
El idioma puede ser un obstáculo importante para los trabajadores latinos que se incorporan a los oficios, lo que requiere acceso a formación y apoyo bilingües.

The statement “More Hispanics should go to trade schools” is supported by the argument that trade schools offer a pathway to well-paying jobs with practical skills, which can be particularly beneficial for Hispanic communities due to factors like potential financial constraints, a focus on immediate career opportunities, and a high demand for skilled labor in certain trades; however, it’s important to consider individual career goals and ensure access to quality trade school programs for all demographics.

Key points supporting this argument:

- **High-demand, good-paying jobs:**
Many trade careers offer stable employment with competitive wages without requiring a four-year college degree, which can be particularly appealing to individuals facing financial barriers.
- **Hands-on learning:**
Trade schools provide practical, hands-on training that can be beneficial for learners who prefer a more active learning style.
- **Faster career entry:**
Trade school programs often have shorter durations compared to traditional college degrees, allowing individuals to enter the workforce sooner.
- **Community needs:**
Certain industries like construction, plumbing, and electrician work are in high demand in many communities and could benefit from a larger pool of skilled Hispanic workers.

Important considerations:

- **Access and awareness:**
Efforts should be made to ensure Hispanic communities have access to quality trade school programs and are informed about the potential career paths available.
- **Career counseling:**
Guidance is crucial to help individuals choose trade paths that align with their interests and local job market needs.
- **Addressing stereotypes:**
Combating negative stereotypes associated with trade work can encourage more Hispanic students to consider these pathways.

Naturalist-led state park programs teach, entertain, and enlighten park visitors



Kao Thao, Naturalist at Fort Snelling State Park



A Naturalist at St Croix State Park

By Deborah Locke, DNR Communications Specialist

Photos courtesy of Minnesota DNR

Are you making plans for October and November in Minnesota? Consider two factors. First, remember that Minnesotans can legitimately boast about having many of the finest state parks in the country. The state parks score high no matter how you measure excellence, whether through amenities, affordability, scenery, or availability. Second, some of those same state parks offer naturalist-led programs that teach skills, entertain, enlighten and open eyes to the magic of the outdoors.

To see a list of naturalist-led programs, go to mndnr.gov/ptcalendar for “events calendar.” You’ll find a broad array of topics like how to do prairie seed collection, where to hear a musical performance or see an art exhibit, when to join a naturalist on a fall hike, or wildlife lessons about owls, snakes, woodpeckers, beavers, bats and more. A couple of parks even ask for your help with buckthorn removal, so the parks are less burdened by that pesky invasive species.

To get a flavor of the kinds of programs offered, below is a sample of them from parks across the state. Each park website will give information on fall programming like whether registration is required, and what to bring. Nearly all programs are free of charge.

“Look to the Stars” Wild River State Park, Oct. 3; 7:30-8:30 p.m.
Basic astronomy.

“Saturday Morning Hike” Frontenac State Park, Oct. 4, 10-11 a.m.
Short hike with naturalist through upland area.

“Seed Collection” William O’Brien State Park, Oct. 5, 12:30-3 p.m.
Learn plant identification and seed collection.

“The Hidden Bog” Lake Bemidji State Park, Nov. 1, 2-3 p.m.
Learn about the rare plants and unusual wildlife at this unique wetland.

Nothing makes a park naturalist happier than that spark of interest and joy from a new park visitor who over time, becomes a frequent park visitor. While making your plans for the remaining weeks of Minnesota’s beautiful fall season, plan to attend a naturalist-led program at a state park. The broad range of topics are certain to delight visitors of every age.



For a listing of Minnesota parks, go to mndnr.gov/parkfinder. For a park program list, see mndnr.gov/ptcalendar. The majority of park programs are free, but you’ll need a \$7 daily park permit displayed on your vehicle dashboard while you’re at the park. The permits can be purchased ahead of time at mndnr.gov/permit.

The day of the park event, check the visitor alert section of the park website for any announcements. Dress for the weather and if hiking, wear good hiking shoes. Wear insect repellent. If you are new to the park and want to arrive just before a program starts, know that the visitor center could be located a mile or farther from the park entrance, so allow for extra travel time.



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¡7 DÍAS A LA SEMANA!



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