

**Awards:**

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community and hopes to encourage more Latino events in Umatilla," the chamber stated.

**2019 award winners**

Marcelino Cruz was named Umatilla Citizen of the Year for 2019.

Cruz is the owner of Novedades Cruz in Umatilla, a local convenience store. According to the chamber, he was nominated for his support and involvement in the community over the past decade, particularly when it comes to school events and the area's Latino residents.

"Novedades Cruz has helped our community for many years," the chamber stated.

Banner Bank was recognized as Umatilla Business of the Year for 2019.

According to the chamber, the bank was nominated for "outstanding customer service skills" and a friendly atmosphere.

"Customers enjoy Banking at the Umatilla Banner Bank and the staff are involved in supporting community events like Landing Days, Trick or Treat on 6th Street, and most charitable events," the chamber stated.

**Bridge Builder Award**

Last week, Umatilla School District also recognized its Bridge Builder Award winners. The award honors staff who exemplify the school district's motto, "Building bridges to successful futures."

According to Superintendent Heidi Sipe, the winners not only perform their work well, but go above and beyond to contribute to the success of students.

April Dirksen, dean of students for Umatilla High School, was recognized for her "contributions to a positive school culture." According to descriptions Sipe wrote up for each winner, Dirksen has helped the district promote health and engage in healthy competitions together all school year.

Chelsea Kik-Whitbeck, a specialist with the district, was recognized for her work with the Youth Transitions Program, helping students develop job-ready skills and secure employment after high school.

David Lougee, English Language Learner director, was recognized as a strong advocate for students, who has "consistently provided innovative leadership" and helped create new programs for students.

Jennifer Franks, who runs student data services for the district, was recognized for "springing into action" when COVID-19 hit to create new data systems for tracking instructional models, new reports and using models during the pandemic.

Stacy Skerjanec, maintenance director, was recognized for helping his team through a tumultuous year that included flooding, windstorms and COVID-19 all in a period of three months. Despite the difficulties of juggling so many challenges and responsibilities, Sipe wrote, he is seldom seen without a smile on his face.

Tricia Lorence, a teacher at McNary Heights Elementary, was recognized for a deep impact on the school in a variety of ways, including her work to secure several grants to support students and the way she is always thinking of others and how she can make the school get better beyond just her own classroom.



Jennifer Franks



Tricia Lorence



Janet Leitch



Chelsea Kik-Whitbeck



David Lougee



April Dirksen



Stacy Skerjanec

**BRIEFS**

**Umatilla man tased and arrested after fighting police officer**

A man who fought a police officer in Hermiston on Monday, April 5, was arrested on charges of disorderly conduct, resisting arrest and assaulting a public safety officer, according to Oregon State Police records.

The man was arrested, according to records, after he was tased.

Ramon Viesca, 30, of Umatilla, was stopped by an officer for walking in the road and "causing a hazard" around 6 p.m. on West Robnett Street. The officer, Josiah Smith, told Viesca to get out of the road, though he initially did not listen, according to records.

Smith attempted to stop Viesca and a fight broke out between them. Smith then tased Viesca, who was arrested and later booked in the Umatilla County Jail, according to records.

**Young adult actors needed for summer feature film**

A casting call for a road trip movie that will film in Central Oregon in the summer of 2021 is seeking teens and young adults ages 18-25 of all backgrounds, ethnicities and walks of life to be a part of the movie. Individuals, groups of friends, siblings and couples are encouraged to audition, and no acting experience is necessary.

According to a news release, the as-yet untitled movie, directed by Bill and Turner Ross, will follow four teenager friends as they set off on an unforgettable adventure across the Pacific Northwest to chase down their own version of the American Dream. The Ross Bros. filmmaking style is a hybrid of fiction and non-fiction, and the production company is seeking people who connect with the story to play themselves. Daredevils, fearless outcasts, misfits and strong personalities are encouraged to audition.

Auditions will be scheduled through April and May 2021, and the project will film for approximately 8 weeks over June and July 2021. All roles will be paid, and all travel costs will be covered by the production.

To apply for an audition, submit your name, age, hometown and a photo or selfie to [www.cargobuhl.com/submit](http://www.cargobuhl.com/submit), or text to Jesy at 504-233-0016.

For more information, call Jesy or email [cargobuhlcasting@gmail.com](mailto:cargobuhlcasting@gmail.com).

**Kindergarten registration set for Hermiston School District**

Hermiston School District will open online registration for next year's kindergarten class on Monday, April 12.

Students eligible for kindergarten during the next school year are those who were born on or before Sept. 1, 2016.

Parents should start by filling out a registration form online at [hermiston.k12.or.us/apps/pages/registration](http://hermiston.k12.or.us/apps/pages/registration). Afterward, they will need to bring a birth record, proof of residence (such as a utility bill in the parent's name) and immunization records to the school where their child will attend.

The district will offer in-person registration assistance on Tuesday, April 20, and Thursday, April 22, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Parents can also call the district office at 541-667-6000 on weekdays if they have questions or issues.

**Pacific Power offering financial help**

Pacific Power is offering customers in Umatilla County and elsewhere in the state options for recovering after falling behind on their power bills due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

New programs went into effect on April 1 to help with bills, according to a news release. The company plans to reach out to customers in general with the information, as well as working with specific communities hit particularly hard by job loss and illness during the pandemic.

Eligible customers may receive help from one of the Assistance Plus options for their primary residence. For the instant grant option, customers can receive a one-time bill credit of up to \$500. For the extended payment match option, customers can enroll in a payment arrangement to get caught up and Pacific Power will match the monthly installment until the money owed is paid in full, 12 months pass or the customer reaches the \$1,000 limit.

For more information or to apply, visit [pacificpower.net/assistanceplus](http://pacificpower.net/assistanceplus) or call 888-221-7070.

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