

Police use stun gun to take down Hermiston robbery suspect

HERMISTON HERALD

Hermiston police reported an officer on Friday, Aug. 13, used a stun gun to take down a suspect who tried to pull off an armed robbery at a local restaurant.

Lamberto Chairez Soto, 31, of Hermiston, faces numerous criminal counts in connection to the events that began unfolding shortly after 5 p.m. that day.

According to Hermiston police, a 911 call at 5:11 p.m. from Tienda La Comadre, 547 E. Main St., Hermiston, reported a male brandishing a handgun entered the restaurant and yelled in Spanish for everyone to put up their hands.

"The armed business owner defended himself, and the suspect fled the store," according to the report from Hermiston police.

The suspect took off running northeast from the front of the business. Police began looking for a stocky Hispanic man about 30 years old wearing a white shirt and jeans, based on a description of the suspect.

Officers canvassed the area and located a 53-year-old woman who lives on the 600 block of East Gladys Avenue. She gave a similar description of the male and reported he knocked on her door.

She told police she opened the door, and a male showed a handgun and forced himself into her home, striking her in the head and demanding money. The suspect took her phone, keys and vehicle, a 2017 black Ford SUV.

Soon after, a Hermiston officer spotted the vehicle unoccupied at the Southgate Village Apartments, 1150 S. First St.

"Upon speaking with people in the area, video of the suspect exiting the car was located on a Ring camera from one of the persons living at Southgate Village and shared with responding officers," police reported.

A Hermiston officer found Soto in the potato chip aisle at Safeway and attempted to detain him. Soto, according to police, resisted and the officer tried to stun him with a Taser. The darts, however, did not make full contact and Soto fled on foot.

The officer chased Soto out of Safeway, and an Oregon State Police trooper joined the rundown. The foot chase crossed Highway 395 and entered the parking lot of Pho Quan Vietnamese, where the trooper pulled out and fired a Taser.

"The deployment was successful and the suspect was taken into custody," Hermiston police reported.

Police identified the man as Soto, and found he had a no-bail warrant out of the Oregon Department of Corrections. Police booked Soto in the county jail on numerous counts. The Umatilla County District Attorney's Office on Aug. 16 brought the following preliminary charges against Soto: three counts of first-degree robbery, two counts of unlawful use of a weapon and one count each of first-degree theft, vehicle theft and second-degree theft.

Soto's next court event is probable cause hearing on Aug. 23 in Pendleton.

Morrow County School District announces new leaders

HERMISTON HERALD

The Morrow County School District has a trio of new administrators for the 2021-22 school year.

The district in a press release on Tuesday, Aug. 17, announced the hires.

Erin Stocker, executive director of human resources, said the leadership and skill set within the district continues to be a source of amazement.

"These new administrators bring with them proven track records of being student-first educators, as well as the willingness to take on new challenges," Stocker said in the press release. "I look forward to the upcoming school year for Morrow County School District with the addition of these leaders to our team."

Jami Carbray is the new vice principal at Sam Boardman Elementary School. Carbray has an extensive background in education, which spans more than 25 years. Her teaching background includes 20 years in primary grades as a classroom teacher and as a literacy intervention specialist for five years. A Boise State University graduate, Carbray has two master's degrees, one with an emphasis in math and reading from Walden University and an education specialist degree in building leadership and administration from Northwest Nazarene University.

She recently relocated from Nampa, Idaho, to Boardman.

"I am eager to learn all about Morrow County School District and the community of Boardman," Carbray said.

Steve Sheller is the new vice principal at Riverside High School.

He has 20 years of teaching experience in math, science and photography, and previously worked in the Hermiston and Morrow County school districts as a teacher.

Sheller received his master's in educational administration from Grand Canyon University. For the last three years, he was the principal at Stanfield Secondary School. During that time, Sheller and staff focused on improving graduation rates and implementing highly effective teaching strategies. As a result, Stanfield's graduation rate exceeded 94%, which was an improvement of more than 10%.

"I am excited to work with the students, administrative team and staff at Riverside Jr./Sr. High School," Sheller said. "Go Pirates!"

Marissa Turner, a long-time MCSD special education teacher, will be stepping into the role of special education coordinator and vice principal at the Morrow Education Center. Turner has 10 years of teaching experience at MCSD, all in special education and encompassing kindergarten through 12th grade, including life skills and alternative school.

In addition to her K-12 special education experience, she has a strong background in behavior protocols and working with classroom staff to develop plans to support student success.

Turner recently received her administrative degree from Lewis & Clark College. A Morrow County native, Turner said, "I am excited to continue the commitment to serve all our district's communities and work with staff on the continued improvement of our SPED and behavior programs."

All of the new administrators began their contracts on July 1.

Latino Night strums up tunes for Umatilla County Fair

By NICK ROSENBERGER
STAFF WRITER

HERMISTON — Music almost is synonymous with the Umatilla County Fair and, after COVID-19 forced the cancellation of the event last year, music was back on the table as the fair roared back to life Wednesday, Aug. 11, and finished Aug. 14.

Starting at 9 p.m. the first day back, fans were welcomed with a free concert featuring Stone in Love, a Journey tribute band, then Everclear on Aug. 12 and Frankie Ballard on Aug. 14. The widest mix of the music events, however, was the county fair's Latino Night on Aug. 13, which saw a slew of Spanish-speaking musicians and bands perform.

Running from 8 p.m. until 1 a.m., and headlined by Tierra Cali, attendees had the opportunity to listen, dance and sing along with Diana Reyes, Alfa 7 and Fortaleza De Tierra Caliente — a Hermiston band.

"We try to hit all the major genres," said Andy Wagner, the fair's music director, but mentioned the fair tries to get classic and upcoming country, rock and Latino music.

The organizers have their work cut out for them.

Latino music alone is a vast genre that spans continents and centuries, with sounds ranging from modern pop and reggaeton, which blends hip-hop and dancehall, to sounds such as banda, bachata and duranguense.

Miguel Velasco, the main Latino talent scout for the fair for more than a decade, looks at what groups people want to hear and groups that have a good following, said his son Mike. The Velascos, who own Velascos Used Cars in Hermiston and sponsor the event, formerly owned a nightclub in Hermiston where the Ixtapa Mexican Restaurant stands. Through their contracts and connections from the nightclub, they are able to find acts for Latino Night.

As long as it falls within their budget, Wagner is happy to let Velasco do his thing and pick acts he thinks are a good fit. After reaching out



Ben Lonergan/Hermiston Herald
Members of Fortaleza De Tierra Caliente perform Friday, Aug. 13, 2021, during Latino Night at the Umatilla County Fair in Hermiston.

to promoters, Velasco "gets contracts, tells us what they need, how it's gonna work and then we're good to go," Wagner said.

As for the genres they pick, "It just depends," Mike Velasco said. "Every year is different."

But, he mentioned they aim to get a variety of groups and something that everyone will like. This year's headliner, Tierra Cali, which is comprised of five brothers from Michoacan, highlights the regional genre called Tierra Caliente — the band's namesake.

The genre has origins in technobanda and heavily uses keyboards, drums and bass. Alfa 7 is similar to Tierra Cali, said Velasco, but it does a lot of romantic music as well.

"They've been around for a long time," he said. "They have really good music."

Diana Reyes, meanwhile, is a well-known singer throughout Mexico who performs duranguense — an upbeat genre with a type of dance that has people moving and spinning with partners.

Fortaleza de Tierra Caliente, the local band from Hermiston, plays a little bit of

everything, from romantic to Tierra Caliente and more, said Velasco. He mentioned there is a reason popular Mexican songs stay in demand here.

"You really have to make a hit in Mexican music," he said, "for it to stand the test of time."

\$80,000 MONEYBALL MANIA

WINNERS PLAY FOR A CHANCE TO WIN \$10,000 CASH

DRAWINGS EVERY 30 MINUTES
FRIDAYS-SATURDAYS, 8-11pm | SUNDAYS, 3-10pm

2X ENTRIES On Thursdays and Sundays!

10X ENTRIES On Sundays when you swipe at any e-STATION, both days of the week!

BINGO is Back!

It's a GO for BINGO!

For session dates and information visit wildhorseresort.com.



PRIORITIES
A hundred years from now it will not matter what My bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove... but the world may be different because I was important in the Life of a Child.

EMERALD CLUB

DISCOUNTS - REWARDS - AND MORE!

Club Wild members 55+ receive special offers and discounts on Tuesdays!

Play a FREE e-STATION game, save on food, hotel, and MORE! Join Emerald Club by visiting Club Wild.

CASINO • HOTEL • GOLF • CINEPLEX • RV MUSEUM • DINING • TRAVEL PLAZA • FUNPLEX

800.654.9453 • PENDLETON, OR • I-84, EXIT 216
wildhorseresort.com • Owned and operated by CTUIR

Management reserves all rights to alter, suspend or withdraw promotions/offers at any time.

WILDHORSE RESORT & CASINO

CATI0269-4