

3 LOCAL NEWS

Veteran journalist Marco Gramacho joins Hermiston Herald as reporter

BY YASSER MARTE

Hermiston Herald

The Hermiston Herald has added a new member to its team.

Marco Gramacho, 47, of Pasco by way of Brazil, joined the Herald on Aug. 16. He already has covered a number of significant events and is delving into larger stories in Hermiston and the surrounding area.

"I'm kicking back to my origins, which is exactly how I started my career, a general reporter," Gramacho said. "But now I have way more experience."

Gramacho was a journalist in his hometown of Salvador, Brazil, and at times had to cover stories in the cities of Sao Paulo and Rio. During his career, he would report on a wide range of subjects, including general news, politics, technology and fashion.

Although he began his writing career in newspapers and magazines, his journey into journalism took a few turns along the way.

He moved to the United States after getting accepted to the University of Florida where he pursued a Ph.D. in art history and delved into the spiritual world of Aztec and Mayan culture.

With his knowledge, he got accepted into Washington State University, where he finished his degree in cultural studies and social thought education, which focused on the issues of culture and power in the contemporary and historical contexts of education.

"As a journalist in Brazil, with more than 20 years of experience working with newspapers and magazines, I wanted to share a different understanding of reading and writing of the world," Gramacho said. "Through that program, I found my path."

Gramacho's culture is deeply rooted in Salvador, Brazil.

Through his upbringing in South America and residency in the United States, Gramacho is able to speak three languages — Portuguese, Spanish and English.

Gramacho lives in Pasco and works in Hermiston, which he said has similarities to his hometown.

"My father's origins are from the



Marco Gramacho, 47, the new reporter for the Hermiston Herald, conducts an interview Thursday, Aug. 25, 2022, at the Cathy Wamsley Center for Early Learning for Umatilla-Morrow Head Start in Hermiston. "I'm looking forward to getting to know more of the community," Gramacho said.

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— Marco Gramacho, Hermiston Herald reporter

countryside of Brazil. I grew up going to my grandparent's farm," Gramacho recalled.

"Although this is a completely different country, I feel that the country's soul is similar. It's a familiarity that reminds me of when I was a kid. It's personal in a way that pleases me being in a small town and covering these stories."

Gramacho said seeing and understanding the differences between a developed versus undeveloped country

has had an effect on his worldview, such as understanding the economic struggles in the United States in comparison to the hardships of Brazil.

"It's very different. I'm learning a lot, it's fascinating," he said.

Hermiston Herald editor and senior reporter Erick Peterson remains out while attending to a health issue.

The Herald and East Oregonian are part of the EO Media Group. As a reporter for the Herald, Gramacho also is

part of the EO news team.

"Marco brings a real passion for journalism," EO Regional Editorial Director Andrew Cutler said. "I think he has a unique background in newspapers, and I think it will serve Hermiston very well and he will do a fantastic job."

As Gramacho takes on reporting local news, he immerses himself in getting to know and understand the community of Hermiston.

"That's the nature of journalism, every day we travel to different things. I research as much as I can before an interview, and when meeting different sources everybody's been nice," Gramacho said.

"I'm looking forward to getting to know more of the community."

Boardman coal stack comes down Sept. 15

Hermiston Herald

The 656-foot-tall stack and boiler at the decommissioned Boardman coal plant is coming down.

Portland General Electric, the plant's owner, announced contractors the morning of Sept. 15 are knocking down the last coal fired power plant in Oregon.

"Careful placement of explosives, handled by engineers and explosive specialists, will allow the stack and boiler to complete a controlled fall within a specified location," according to PGE's announcement. "Explosives placed at the base of the stack and around the supporting structure of the boiler will be triggered within seconds of each other, causing the stack and boiler to come down quickly; the demolition is expected to take less than a minute."

The Boardman plant provided energy to Oregon from 1980 to 2020, when PGE ceased operations at the facility.

"Boardman's closure has been factored into PGE's plans since 2010, and the utility has implemented solid resource plans to ensure an ongoing reliable supply of power for customers," according to PGE. "These plans focus on renewables and other non-emitting, clean energy resources, including Wheatridge — a first-of-its-kind wind, solar and battery storage plant less than 30 miles away."

Leading up to the milestone event of the plant coming down, PGE is holding a ceremony featuring remarks from Eastern Oregon community representatives and local clean energy leaders.

BRIEFS

Attack at soccer tournament leads to two arrests

Hermiston police reported arresting two men after an attack on two others Sunday, Aug. 28, at an adult soccer tournament.

Andres Chales Lorenzo, 29, and Rufino Mejia Ramirez, 19, are in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, on one count each of third-degree assault and riot as well as two counts of second-degree criminal possession of a forged instrument.

Police Chief Jason Edmiston reported multiple 911 callers at 11:46 a.m. reported a person at Sandstone Middle School, 400 N.E. 10th St., was trying to fight people.

Officers arrived and discovered the incident

occurred during the tournament, according to police. Witnesses stated Chales, Ramirez and three other unidentified males arrived at the tournament and jumped Patricio Ramirez, 25, and Edwin Pablo, 18, both of Hermiston. Ramirez suffered an injury to the back of his neck when he was struck with a glass bottle.

All suspects were gone prior to law enforcement arrival, but police a short time later found and arrested Chales and Ramirez and booked them into the county jail.

During processing, according to Edmiston, law enforcement found the pair were in possession of counterfeit documents.

The case remains under investigation.

— Hermiston Herald

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