

PATH

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Melanson's family moved frequently, sometimes one to three times a year, and while her three sisters were outgoing and made friends easily, she said she was on the quiet side as a teenager.

"I came out of high school very undecided as to what I wanted to do," she said. "When I decided to join the Marines, my dad was shocked."

She said at first he wasn't sure she could do it.

"I came out of my shell and enjoyed most of my tours in the service and loved meeting all the people that I did," she said.

The Marines, where she ranked sergeant E-5, brought adventure, including rappelling off buildings, driving a tank, shooting an M-60 on top of the tank, and shooting a .45 caliber pistol.

Her job was mainly administrative, and she spent time in Yakima, Wash., training 200 reservists in a tank battalion for wartime, who were later mobilized.

Boot camp was in Paris Island, SC, and she was also stationed at Camp LeJeune,



Contributed photo

Hugh Laurance, second from left, receives an Army promotion during a ceremony at Munich, Germany, his daughters, Patricia and Judy standing at his side.

NC.

She spent seven years in the service, and she currently is a cook at Blue Mountain Hospital.

Melanson's sons have also

chosen a military path.

Jason, 23, joined the Air Force three years ago and currently works in a hospital in Dover, Del., and is an E-4.

Ryan, 20, is an E-3 mortar

man in the Marines, trained for combat.

"He got back from Kuwait in October after six months," she said.

"I'm very pleased with

their choices," she said, adding they each had their reasons behind joining the service, interested in serving their country, traveling and gaining a college education.

When asked what advice she has for others considering the military option, she said, "Do the research."

She said it's important to find the jobs available and know what direction to take.

"Don't go in open contract, because they will put you where they want to," she said, adding, "If you have some college, you could be a candidate for officer candidate school."

Melanson said her dad was "the catalyst" for 12 members of her family in three generations serving in the military.

She said her family didn't see her dad a lot until they moved to Germany when she was 13 years old.

"We moved overseas to be with him," she said.

She added, "As a military family, we were given the opportunity to do so many things, travel through Europe, including Italy, France and Germany, and learn the language."

Through it all her mom kept the family going, she said, getting the house packed up and everyone where they needed to be, sometimes on short notice.

"I'd like to recognize my mom, too," she said. "She was such a trooper all those years."

HEALTH

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Mental health counselor SaraJane Moore, also a new staff member, is available Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays 7:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Winegar said mental health counseling is a welcome and much needed addition to the health center, with Moore available to help with mental health crises on a routine basis.

The health center offers sports physicals, vaccinations and well-child visits.

Patient care also includes: primary care, strep test, rapid flu test, throat cultures, as well as help for headaches, freezing off moles, checking for infection in wounds, and checking iron level, hearing vision, height and weight.

Winegar stated they do not distribute condoms or other forms of birth control at the school.

School vaccinations are given mainly on Tuesday afternoons.

"Twelve-year-old students will need to be up-to-date on Tdap shots by January, and they'll be excluded from school if they don't have them by February," Winegar said.

She noted they will visit outlying schools on Nov. 16



Staff at the School-based Health Center located at Grant Union include family nurse practitioner Karen Triplett, left, coordinator and registered nurse Jessica Winegar, support staff Cindy Baker, and mental health counselor SaraJane Moore.

The Eagle/Kim Kell

in Long Creek, Monument and Dayville to offer flu shots and school required vaccines.

Winegar has taken over where Lindsay Maghan left off as coordinator last school year.

"Karen Triplett and Lindsay Maghan worked very hard to get this going, along with other Grant County Health Department and Community Counseling Solutions staff," Winegar said. "They did a wonderful job, and I'm happy to be a part of the Grant County Health Department."

The medical sponsor for the health center at Grant Union is the county health department.

Winegar said appoint-

ments may be made by calling the health department at 541-575-0429, and walk-ins are also welcome.

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