

MILITARY

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about the military.

"I went to an Air Force recruiter, who told me I'd have to graduate high school to go," she said.

She began attending night school full time, while working with a recruiter, and left for training in July 2001.

Jody Frost, who oversees child welfare in Umatilla and Morrow counties for the Department of Human Services, was in the Marine Corps from 1981 to 1984.

For her, joining the military was initially a way to escape.

"I was involved with drugs and alcohol, and was making really poor life choices," she said. "I had to get out of town quickly. I had people looking for me."

Frost, then living in Portland, enlisted, and went to boot camp in Paris Island, South Carolina. She was then assigned to work as a truck driver at Camp Pendleton, California. She also worked as a training and education non-commissioned officer.

Frost said at the time she enlisted, women were almost absent from her station.

"When I arrived, there were 633 men, and me and two other women," she said. "It was pretty discriminatory against women."

Tile Hamilton, who works as a special education assistant at Sandstone Middle School, enlisted in the Navy in 1993. She was 27, and had felt she wanted to do something more with her life.

"I didn't feel like I was doing all I could do," she said. Though she was born in Samoa, her family had moved to the U.S., and instilled a sense of patriotism in her. She recalls they were a little apprehensive about her going into the military, but supported her when she went.

Hamilton served for eight years, and worked as a Personnelman, processing people as they came in and out of the Navy.

She said her experience was overwhelmingly positive, but recalled that women were largely outnumbered, and there were some jobs they couldn't do, such as working as a submariner.

Randall worked on the civil engineering squadron, working on water breaks, digging up water lines and operating backhoes.

"I loved what I did," she said. "It was very hands-on."

She was one of only two women in her field, which she said led her to push herself to keep up with the men.



Jody Frost, director at DHS child welfare for Umatilla and Morrow counties, served in the administrative capacity for a U.S. Marine Corps motor transport battalion at Camp Pendleton, California.

STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Amber Randall in her U.S. Air Force basic training photo taken in Lackland Air Force base in San Antonio, Texas, in July of 2001.



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS
Amber Randall, a Child Protective Services worker in Hermiston, served in the Air Force in the early 2000s.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Jody Frost in her U.S. Marine Corps basic training photo taken in Parris Island, South Carolina, in July, 1991.

"My mom was a tradesman, in road construction," she said. "What she did teach me is that I'm capable of anything."

Frost said hurdles that existed for women when she entered the military are still there.

"I experienced one rape," she said. "And that's still happening. Sexual assault in the military — it's still difficult for women to report rape because of retaliation by others."

She said while some of her friends "took care of" her assailant, she didn't report it to the authorities.

"You just learned to keep it a secret, because women who did go through the proper channels — life got very difficult for them," she said.

Twenty years later, Randall said even some of the female supervisors did not take sexual harassment

seriously. Working in the male-dominated civil engineering squadron, Randall said such misconduct was rampant.

"I talked to my supervisor, who was a woman, and she asked me what I was doing to cause it," Randall said. "As I was talking to her, a guy walked up and made a sexual reference to me in front of her. I asked her, 'what was I doing then?'"

Randall said the supervisor didn't take any action.

"She just wanted to be accepted," Randall said. "Nobody wants to rock the boat."

Still, Randall said, she spoke out, and found that once she did, the harassment decreased.

"It was a struggle, but hopefully it set a good example for women to follow me, because I was able to stand up for myself," she said.

Hamilton said she knew of women who had experienced sexual harassment during their service, but didn't face it herself.

"Maybe it's because I was older," she said. "I never felt that — and if I did, a couple times where I felt someone was standing too close, I was very vocal about things like that."

Hamilton met her husband while they were both serving, and they got married while still enlisted. He got out shortly after, which alleviated some of the challenges of taking care of their children. Hamilton had her first daughter while still in the Navy, and then got out on an honorable discharge and medical discharge a few

years later.

Randall had some challenges as she became a parent while serving. Even with a newborn, she said, she always had to be ready to deploy.

"We'd go out onto the tarmac, process the line, and wait for the plane to come. And we never knew if we'd have to get onto that plane or not," she said. "Fortunately, I didn't go."

Randall said she was supposed to go to El Salvador, but never deployed because her sister was terminally ill. She left the military shortly after to care for her.

But she said enlisting was the best decision she ever made.

"I was not independent when I went in," she said, noting her lack of direction. "I likely would have ended up in jail."

Instead, the guidance and structure she received in the military led her to pursue a college degree and a job she feels is her calling.

Frost said despite the traumatizing incidents, joining the military was the right choice — both for the benefits she received afterwards, like VA services and college, and the skills she gained. She said it gave her a sense of responsibility, and led her to stop using drugs.

She noted that the discipline she learned at boot camp has helped her in all subsequent jobs, whether at DHS, working in the prison, or working with the homeless in Portland.

She said she didn't start out with any patriotic intentions, but they've developed over time.

"It's only as I've gotten older that I've really valued and respected our country," she said.

Hamilton said she still misses the sense of camaraderie, and encouraged those who are thinking about it. She said she enjoyed the opportunity to learn about new places and people, and liked the way service members look out for each other.

"Navy takes care of Navy," she said. "Military people take care of military."

BTW

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classrooms, helping with sporting events, doing security walks around school facilities and more. They do not proselytize.

Highland Hills has yet to be adopted this year, and the committee is also willing to take additional help from churches that would like to support efforts at other schools. Schools have been adopted by **First Assembly of God, Oasis Vineyard Church, Living Faith Church, Our Lady of Angels Catholic Church, Rekindle Church, Iglesia Adventista, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Living**

Faith Church, First Christian Church and Church of the Nazarene.

For more information contact James Lafolette at city@hermiston.or.us.

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Creativity ruled during the **Umatilla Chamber of Commerce & Visitor's Center** pumpkin carving contest. **Jordan Robertson** placed first in the adult division and **Valerie Campos** was tops in the 12 and under group.

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Hermiston salad shop Veg Out is open at its new location.

It opened last Wednesday next to city hall at 140 N.E. Second St.

The new location adds indoor and outdoor seating

for the previously delivery and take-out only business, and an expanded kitchen that will help speed up the salad-making process.

The menu remains mostly the same, with the Orchard Harvest and Berry Nutty salads added for fall. Soups will be added back onto the menu again soon for winter.

Hours also remain the same, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and 12-7 p.m. on Saturdays.

For more information visit the Veg Out Facebook page or call 541-561-9231.

You can submit items for our weekly By The Way column by emailing your tips to editor@hermistonherald.com.

FFA

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There's a math section, where students have to solve problems, such as how much medication to give an animal based on their weight. A written portion asked students to discuss opioids and how veterinarians have to consider human abuse of the drugs when administering them to animals.

There was a multiple choice test, a practicum portion, and an extemporaneous speaking portion. In the latter, students had to work in a group to prepare a presentation about "fear-free feline medicine," which

discusses the ways vets can reduce stress and anxiety for animals going to the veterinarian. That anxiety, in turn, leads to longer recovery times for animals.

Though not all of the students want to become veterinarians, some hope the skills they're learning in FFA will transition to their desired careers.

"I'd like to be a ruminant nutritionist," said Tejada Urenda. "Developing feeds for cattle, lambs, anything with a four-chamber stomach."

Baker does want to be a veterinarian, and has started looking at colleges.

"This is what I want to do with my life," she said.

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