

Monday, December 13, 2021

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FROM A1



EagleHerald/Ann Meyer

Lou Ann Borski, president of the Menominee County Historical Society Board of Directors, received a birthday gift and appreciation at the group's annual meeting Wednesday. She is shown between Secretary Katherine Murwin and Executive Director Michael Kaufman.

HISTORY:

4,364 visits were recorded, historical guides organized by Tina Prood and Donna Suchovsky, and special projects at the Anuta Center, including research for the 150th anniversary of the Great Peshtigo Fire.

The group also recognized President Lou Ann Borski and celebrated her birthday.

In a slide presentation to members, Executive Director Michael Kaufman spoke of Menominee's transition from its pioneer days in the mid-1800s, when commercial fishing was the largest industry, to a lumber town after 1850. The growth of the lumber industry brought the railroads and more people and housing.

The population expanded from three white men in 1830 to 1,895 people in 1870, including a wide variety of tradesman and professionals, Kaufman said. "You're really building a town here. There was nothing," Kaufman said, showing slides of some of the earliest homes.

In 1859, Eleazer Ingalls arrived at the Menominee River settlement after serving as a miner in the California Gold Rush in 1849. He would become the first attorney to practice in Menominee. He also launched the Menominee Herald in 1863, which used the original spelling of the city in its nameplate — Menomonee, Kaufman said, noting the second "O" instead of an "i," which apparently was due to a misinterpretation of Ingalls' handwriting.

As the city grew, property values rose. Charles Spies paid \$8,000 in 1892 for land on 1st Street and 10th Avenue that William Lehmann had purchased for \$50 in 1862. Kaufman said when inflation over

the years is considered, the \$8,000 is the equivalent of about \$242,000 today.

After Wisconsin resident Anson Bangs attempted in 1858 to create a new county called Bleeker with the county seat near Little River, a group of Menominee business leaders met at Quimby's Tavern to come up with another plan. In 1862, they sent Ingalls to Lansing to lobby for an act to create Menominee County. The Michigan State Legislature passed the required bill in 1863, and the county was formed with the county seat located in the 500 block of 1st Street. The county had two townships—Menominee, where Sam Stephenson was elected Town Supervisor and Cedarville, where Josiah Brooks was elected Town Supervisor.

The Kirby Carpenter Company built three mills on the river from 1853 to 1884, and by 1890, it was thought to be the largest lumber company in the world, saving 120 million board feet annually, Kaufman said.

A dozen mills were built prior to the Great Peshtigo Fire of 1871, which destroyed several of them—the Hawthorn Mill, the William McCartney Mill, the Ludington Wells & Van Schaik Co. mill and one owned by William Bagley & Daniel Corry.

Fires weren't unusual. Ludington Wells & Van Schaik Co. built a mill in 1863 that burned the next year and was rebuilt in 54 days. The second mill burned in 1871 and was rebuilt. Kaufman concluded the presentation with maps showing how the City of Menominee expanded north and west from the Bay of Green Bay.

By Special to the EagleHerald

PESHTIGO — Gail Schick of Menominee recently spoke with Peshtigo freshmen about suicide awareness and prevention.

In 2005 Schick's son, Bryant, committed suicide as a freshman at age 15. After this incredibly painful life-altering event, Schick turned her focus to helping prevent others from experiencing the same pain she's had to endure.

She was invited to speak to Sheri Morrell's freshmen health classes, and Healthy Youth Coalition students.

"Having experienced loss from suicide directly, made her presentation much more meaningful for students," Morrell said.

"If I can make a difference for one person, I'm going to continue to get out of my comfort zone," Schick said.

Schick is a member of the Suicide Prevention Network of Marinette and Menominee Counties, which is a nonprofit organization working to reduce suicide.

"We were very fortunate to have Gail take time out of her busy schedule to help our students understand more about suicide and how it can be prevented," Morrell said.

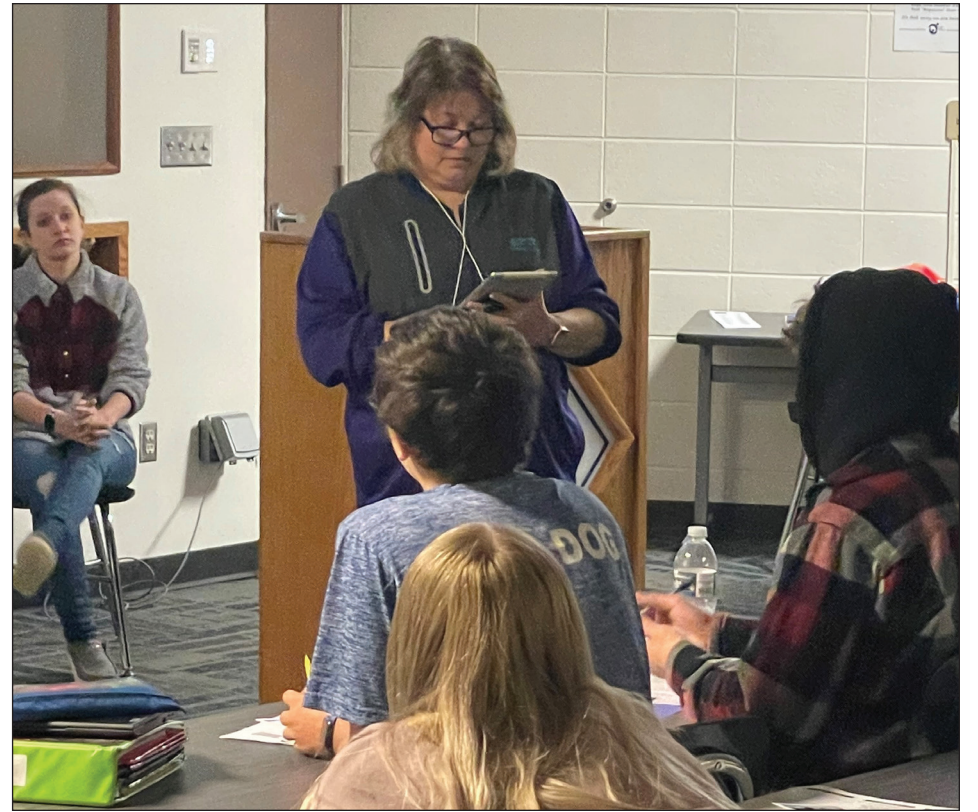
Schick emphasizes to students that "suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem," and she teaches students awareness and communication skills.

Anxiety and depression is on the rise with young people today.

"Depression is the No. 1 cause of suicide. Suicide is on the increase. It kills more people than cancer," Schick said, adding that suicide is the most preventable kind of death.

Several interventions can prevent suicide, including counseling, medication, dietary improvements, supportive relationships, exercise and learning and responding to family history.

Freshman Laurana Mines said, "It's important to have a speaker like this so we can help people get



Special to the EagleHerald

Gail Schick talks about suicide prevention recently to freshmen students at Peshtigo High School.

better."

Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) Gatekeeper Training is an hour and a half educational program to teach the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to respond. Schick became an instructor in 2011. Her daughter, Kelsey, earned her certification when she was only 12!

Schick has completed the QPR Gatekeeper training with over 600 people so far, including the teaching staff in the Peshtigo and Menominee School Districts. After completing the training and exhibiting time and commitment, students and parents can become gatekeepers.

QPR gatekeepers are trained to recognize someone at risk, intervene with those at risk, and refer them to an appropriate resource.

After Schick lost her son, she developed a mantra, "Always- not just a word, but a promise. We will always be there for each other. We will always remember. We will always do what we can so no one else has to lose a loved one or walk in our shoes."

Schick has spoken to many community members

about QPR awareness, including almost 800 students over the past seven years.

"When I talk to kids I bring real situations into my presentations, so students know this is real, and it's happening right here in our community," she said. "Good friends don't keep deadly secrets."

Schick stated that those considering suicide usually don't tell people directly, so the more people we have trained to recognize the signs, the better chance we have to intervene early on. She also emphasizes, "We are not counselors. We are simply people who care and want to listen."

She emphasized that the QPR training teaches one "to recognize the warning signs of suicide, knows how to offer hope, and how to get help and save a life." Warning signs include depression, lack of sleep, withdrawal from normal activities, threats to kill, drug use and direct verbal statements such as "I can't go on."

Most young people do NOT tell an adult if a friend talks about suicide and the QPR method encourages communication and

response.

"QPR is as important as CPR," Schick said. "Change your words, change your world," is another mantra emphasizing the importance of awareness, intervention, and referral skill development.

"Treat others with support. Be nice. Watch for signs of depression. Tell an adult. Time buys hope, hope buys time, time buys hope. ... My wish is to send a message of hope."

Morrell's freshmen are grateful for the knowledge and experiences Schick shared with them.

Evelyn Hurley said, "It's awesome that Mrs. Schick does this in her free time."

"She's good at what she does," Laila Lindbom said. "I'm glad there's someone like her in this world."

Holly Pesch adds, "She does a really good thing for humanity and she does it very well."

Plans are in place to QPR certify the Peshtigo High School Healthy Youth Coalition. The Suicide Prevention Network (SPN) will be offering training throughout Marinette and Menominee counties in 2022. People can follow them on their Facebook page.



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