

# Voters approve Peshtigo school referendum

Officials predict completion in three years

By ERIN NOHA  
 EagleHerald Staff Writer

PESHTIGO—Voters finally approved the Peshtigo Middle/High School building referendum on the ballot Tuesday, locking in \$39.95 million for a remodel. The Peshtigo School

District's referendum passed 1,751 to 982, with 64.07% voting in favor, according to unofficial election results from Marinette County. The referendum passed in all seven voting districts, with 100% of precincts reporting. The tax rate for the referendum will be \$29 per \$100,000 of assessed home value.



Rau

"It's just a great reflection on the community on the overwhelming support of students," said Peshtigo School District superintendent Patrick Rau. This is the fifth referendum since 2015. Four previous referendums have failed in the past seven years. Peshtigo school board president

Gary Larsen said he's been doing this for 20 years and has only seen one referendum pass, which was for the elementary school. The reality of passing this referendum hasn't set in yet. "I'm kinda numb. I never expected this to pass by this much," Larsen said. "I really want to thank the community and volunteers who worked so hard on this project. I think

finally they realized that we do need this." Rau said the hours put in by the advocates made a difference. "With the staff, school board members and parents out there communicating, I think people trusted the plan. They felt that the time was right on the financial side of it," Rau said.

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Good morning, **Sharon Peterson!** Thank you for subscribing to the EagleHerald

**DEATHS**  
 none reported



**TODAY'S WEATHER**  
 High 66 | Low 35  
 Partly sunny with a chance for a t-storm.  
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# Menominee Korean War veteran opens up

Veteran says he remembers people most

By ERIN NOHA  
 EagleHerald Staff Writer

MENOMINEE—Finally putting a voice to things he's tried to forget for 70 years, the Korean War veteran talks about the people he saw.

"The thing that I remember more than anything else about the war is these people," Wally Shier said, nodding to the album he keeps, housing photos he took during his service from 1951 to 1953.

The mother is frozen in time in a black and white photograph, separated from his lens by a barbed wire fence barrier in North Korea. The woman holds up a tin can for food while holding a baby to her breast. Another shows hundreds of starving North Korean people lined up outside, hoping for food. He has hundreds of photos.

"I had never saw that before. We didn't have it in our country."

Wally, 88, sits in his kitchen with his wife, Kathleen Shier, in Menominee as he recounts his time serving in the 179th Regimental Company, 45th Division. He can't remember much else from his time, but



EAGLEHERALD/ERIN NOHA

Wally Shier, Korean War veteran, poses with the photo he used to enlist in the army. He said he still remembers the North Korean people and has a photo album during his time in the service, numbered with hundreds of photos.

he does remember the people, he said. He also thinks they should've let them finish the Korean War.

In 1953, an armistice was signed, ending combat and leaving the fate of the Korean people in a gray area. He said the people still haunt him to this day, and he feels the conflict has been unresolved.

His trip on the honor flight in October has brought many

of these feelings back to the surface. The Southeast Wisconsin Old Glory Honor Flight is an organization that flies veterans on a one-day trip to Washington, D.C. to see the war memorials. Wally was one of six Korean War veterans on the flight. He went with Kathleen's daughter, Melissa, as a sponsor.

"He never ever talked about Korea. He showed me

these pictures, but he never talked about it or anything," Kathleen said. "The flight made a difference in his outlook. It was an awakening."

Wally joined the army just before his 17th birthday. He enlisted because it was something to do, he said. He changed his birth date from 1933 to 1932 to join.

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# State reps in this area score big wins

## Behnke, Mursau notch lopsided victories

By DAN KITKOWSKI  
EagleHerald Editor

The state representatives in our area scored convincing victories Tuesday, while a new state rep in the Upper Peninsula also won big.

State Rep. Elijah Behnke, R-Oconto, defeated Jane Benson, a Democratic website developer from Suamico for the District 89 Assembly seat. Behnke received 64% of the vote with 86% of precincts reporting. This will be his first full two-year term. He won a special election in April 2021 to replace long-time representative John Nygren, from Marinette, who resigned to take a job in the private sector. Nygren held the seat from 2006 to 2021, while Peshtigo Republican John Gard occupied the

position from 1992 to 2006. District 89 covers southern Marinette County, the eastern part of Oconto county and a small portion of Brown County.

State Rep. Jeff Mursau, R-Crivitz, turned back Ben Murray, a Democrat from Marinette. Mursau received 71% of the vote with 94% of precincts reporting. Mursau, 68, has represented the district since 2005. District 36 encompasses all of Menominee County, as well as most of Marinette County and Oconto County, the southern half of Forest County, the eastern half of Langlade County and part of eastern Shawano County.

Dave Prestin, a Republican from Cedar River, is the new Michigan state representative for the 108th District. He defeated Democratic challenger Chris Lopez by an almost 2-1 margin. Prestin garnered 66% of the vote with

99% of precincts reporting. He will take over the seat of Beau LaFave, who has been in office since 2016, but the maximum limit of three two-year terms will expire.

The 108th District includes all Menominee, Delta, Schoolcraft and Luce counties and portions of Mackinac and Chippewa counties.



Prestin

Prestin, also a Menominee County Board commissioner, won a spirited primary over Mark Simon and Casey Hoffman this summer.

In other election results:  
 • **Michigan State Senate District 38:** Ed McBroom, R-Vulcan, def. Democratic challenger John Braamse, 62% to 37%.

• **Menominee County Board:** Jeff Carlson def. Gerald Piche (I), 784 to 510 in District 7; Zak Aubert def. William Cech (I), 680 to 421 in District 5; and Patricia Mueller def. Kris Rusch 390 to 279 in District 2. The

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District 2 seat has been held by longtime commissioner Bernie Lang, who is not seeking re-election.

• **Menominee County Road Commission:** James Marsicek def. Tony Kakuk. 66% to 34%.

• **Stephenson Area Public School (partial term):** Charles Cappaert, 1,141, and Steve Brock, 1,091, won two open seats. Jason Corey, 1,025, was defeated.

• **North Central Area School Board:** Kelly Plunger, 762, and Jordan St. John, 645, won two open seats. Nathan Fleetwood, 371, and Chad R.

LaFave, 335, were defeated.

• **U.S. Rep.:** Congressmen Mike Gallagher, R-Wis., and Jack Bergman, R-Mich., both won easily to maintain their seats. Gallagher received 73% of the vote in his race, while Bergman got 60% in his win.

• **Marinette County:** Randy Miller, sheriff, and Carrie Brazeau, clerk of circuit court, both received complimentary votes. Each candidate was victorious in the August primary and had no competition on Tuesday.

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## Referendum

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Larsen said he expects completion in about three years, with the building of the additions first. The referendum will increase the school's square footage with a fitness center, a two-station gym for sports and performances and a bigger technical education lab for manufacturing and construction.

"What's next is to start working on the planning and design side of it," Rau said. "There's also the financial side of it, as far as borrowing the money needed for construction."

The school board will

begin discussing how to proceed with the building improvement plan at its next meeting. After that, the district will start discussions with the administration and teachers on the finer details, like outlining the needs for the labs, Rau said.

With the referendum, the school will replace the boilers, install air conditioners and provide new upgrades for electrical and plumbing. The interior will be entirely new, with updates on ceiling tiles, carpeting, LED lighting, paint, doors and the addition of windows in classrooms that didn't

have them, Rau said.

"It's going to be a great thing for the students and the community," Larsen said.

The new school will allow them to attract better teaching talent, Larsen said, who moved to Peshtigo 26 years ago. Both of his kids graduated from Peshtigo. Rau said that graduates won't experience the newness as much, but they can still be proud of it.

"You hear parents talk about their child being in sixth grade when this

first started, and now they're already out of school," Rau said. "Maybe their kids didn't get to see it, but the next generation of kids will be able to go into the new building."

As the school makes room for renovations, there may be times when temporary classrooms are needed. Still, Larsen promises that the three years of pain will be worthwhile for decades to come, he said.

"It's all going to be a learning curve because it's been 20 years since

we've done anything," Larsen said. "This is a lot bigger project. I'm really looking forward to it."

Rau said he was cautiously optimistic about whether the referendum would pass, but his fears subsided late Tuesday night when checking

the election results. After that, he said he felt good.

"I'm very appreciative of the community's support and what everybody did to provide support."

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