

Mackinac Bridge Responsibilities

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place during the Labor Day weekend and includes a fireworks display over the Mackinac Bridge. Ms. Jeff will participate in the Bridge Walk Monday, September 6.

MDOT also is working with Michigan Air National Guard to have a fly over during the Labor Day Bridge Walk at approximately 8:30 a.m. and, on the second pass, the planes would tip their wings to the walkers.

In conjunction with the Bridge Walk, Mr. Sweeney said last year a wind monitoring device was installed at White Shoals Lighthouse, 20 to 30

miles west of the bridge. This provides the Bridge with wind speeds before they reach the Bridge and will allow the Authority to delay the walk if winds become dangerous.

On Tuesday, August 2, the Authority received a reading at the Lighthouse of 60-mile-per hour winds, yet wind speeds were calm at the Mackinac Bridge, he said. This information allowed them to advise maintenance crews to stop work and set up lane closures for high profile vehicles. He said there are plans to install another warning device at Bois Blanc Lighthouse to the east in the future.

Mr. Sweeney said that he has been meeting with Governor Jennifer Granholm's staff to coordinate activities for the Bridge Run to be held just before the walk. He said 350 runners, selected at random, will take part, including 26 state employees.

The Bridge Authority has contracted 111 buses to transport walkers and approximately 200 National Guard troops will help monitor walkers along the Bridge, he said.

The Mackinac Bridge Authority Board is composed of seven members appointed by the Governor, except for Ms. Jeff, who serves as the state transportation director. Other board members include Chairman William Gnodtke, Vice-chair Elsa Schaller, Angelo Lanni, Murray Wikol, Patrick Gleason, and Barbara Brown.

The next scheduled Authority meetings are November 1 and 2 in Detroit, March 9 and 10 in Lansing, and June 15 and 16 on Mackinac Island.



Judge Edward "Ned" Fenlon, former state legislator, received a plaque from Mackinac Bridge Authority (MBA) in recognition of his accomplishments in helping secure funding to build the Mackinac Bridge in the 1950s. He was honored at a dinner reception at Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island last week but could not attend. Mr. Fenlon was presented his plaque Monday, August 15, at MBA headquarters in St. Ignace. Pictured are (from left) Mike Lilliquist of the St. Ignace Welcome Center, Jim Brown, Michael Litzner of MBA, Mr. Fenlon, Meryl Hankey, his long-time friend, his son, Michael Fenlon, and his cousin Jack Fenlon.

Judge Edward 'Ned' Fenlon, 101, Honored for Mackinac Bridge Work

Judge Edward "Ned" Fenlon already has a number of achievements of which to be proud. He was the instrumental player in the construction of three bridges, established Michigan State Police posts throughout the state, served in the state legislature, and improved relationships with Native American tribes. Monday, August 15, he received a plaque in honor of just one of those accomplishments.

In 1933, Judge Fenlon introduced legislation to begin the construction of the Mackinac Bridge. He also helped to obtain funding for the engineering of the structure, and the Mackinac Bridge Authority, during a meeting on Mackinac Island August 11 and 12, recognized his contributions to the bridge. He couldn't attend the meeting, having just returned from California, but came to the Mackinac Bridge headquarters in St. Ignace Monday, August 15, to accept the resolution.

Larry Rubin was the first executive secretary of the Mackinac Bridge Authority, and said that although he has been working on the bridge since 1957, and has worked with Judge Fenlon, it was not until recently that he recognized all that the former state legislator had done to further the cause of the bridge.

"I was executive secretary for 35 years and I never knew all the things he did, and I never took too much interest because I was wrapped up in other things," said Mr. Rubin. "I always regretted that I didn't weave him into the Bridge Authority. We just never gave Ned Fenlon the credit he was due."

In addition to being a key factor for the bridge, those who knew him also presented accolades toward his character and personality, calling him kind, modest, and dedicated.

"He is one of the kindest, softest spoken, most pleasant men I have ever encountered," Mr. Rubin said. "He is eminently fair, and I consider him one of the true gentlemen of our time."

Mr. Fenlon, who is 101 years old, served for six years as one of the youngest Michigan Legislature representatives, representing a district that included Emmet and Mackinac counties. He served for 24 years as the 33rd Judicial Circuit Judge for Mackinac, Cheboygan, Emmet, and Charlevoix counties. He now resides in Petoskey, though he still makes occasional forays to his hometown of St. Ignace, often entertaining residents of the Mackinac Straits Hospital Long Term Care Facility on his banjo.

The Mackinac Bridge Authority resolution reads:

Whereas, Ned Fenlon, during his term as State Representative for the Mackinac-Emmet district of the State of Michigan, did work to initiate enabling legislation that led to the creation of a Mackinac Bridge Authority, and

Whereas, The success of that legislation served to significantly bring attention to the possibility that a bridge could span the Straits of Mackinac, and

Whereas, Mr. Fenlon persevered through that time when few believed that the bridge could be built and many members of the Michigan Legislature strongly opposed his idea, and

Whereas, He worked tirelessly to persuade governors, senators, and representatives of the great State of Michigan to support the legislation, we the undersigned of the Authority commend his enthusiasm, dedication, and devotion to the Mackinac Bridge and the State of Michigan.

Now therefore be it resolved that the members of the Mackinac Bridge Authority formally express their gratitude to Ned Fenlon for his tremendous efforts in obtaining funding for the engineering feasibility and the construction of the Mackinac Bridge, and wish him and his family the very best in the years to come.

Adopted by the Mackinac Bridge Authority on August 12, 2005.

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