FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW TEXT ALERTS SIGN-UP FOR MACKINAC BRIDGE ANNUAL WALK

August 20, 2018 -- For the second time, Mackinac County 911/Emergency Management and the Mackinac Bridge Authority are offering text updates for this year's Annual Bridge Walk.

Mackinac County 911, using its RAVE Alert System, will send updates and information from the MBA to users' cell phones now through Labor Day. Alerts will focus on event schedule reminders, traffic notifications, weather updates, and emergency notifications.

"The bridge walk has some significant changes again, so we want to make sure we can reach as many people as possible with information about the event," said Bob Sweeney, executive secretary of the MBA. "We really appreciate Mackinac County 911/Emergency Management's willingness to make this system available for notifications again this year."

There is no cost to receive these updates, aside from any texting fees from the participant's mobile coverage plan. The system will automatically shut down on Sept. 4.

To opt in to this text alert system:

1. Text "MBW2018" to 67283
2. Users will receive a reply "Welcome to the Mackinac Bridge Walk 2018 text alerting system," verifying participation in the text alerting system for the event.
3. Users can opt out by sending a reply "STOP MBW2018" if they no longer wish to receive text messages/alerts. Messages will automatically stop on Sept. 4.
A video posted on the MBA website at http://www.mackinacbridge.org/walk explains how the walk has changed, including the elimination of busing and starting the walk from either St. Ignace or Mackinaw City.

Walkers essentially have three main options, outlined in the video:

- Starting from either end of the bridge and walking toward the center, turning around at the midpoint and returning to the city they started from. The turnaround points will move toward the ends of the bridge beginning at 10 a.m., but walkers can walk at least a portion of the bridge as long as they start by 11:30 a.m.
- Walking the entire length of the bridge, starting from either end. Those who choose this option must reach the midpoint before 10 a.m., or they will be turned back. Anyone who walks the entire bridge must arrange their own transportation back to the side from which they started once the bridge reopens to public traffic at noon.
- Walking the entire length of the bridge, starting from either end, and then turning around and walking back to the side from which they started. In this option, walkers will need to cross the midpoint on their return trip by 10 a.m., or they will be turned back and need to find their own transportation back across the bridge after it reopens at noon.

The bridge will be closed again to public traffic during the 2018 walk, from 6:30 a.m. to noon on Labor Day, Sept. 3., based on recommendations from the Michigan State Police and U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Emergency vehicles will still be permitted to cross the bridge, but no public vehicles will be allowed until the walk concludes and participants are off the bridge.

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