

# Save the Date for Michigan’s County Courthouses at the Annual Luncheon

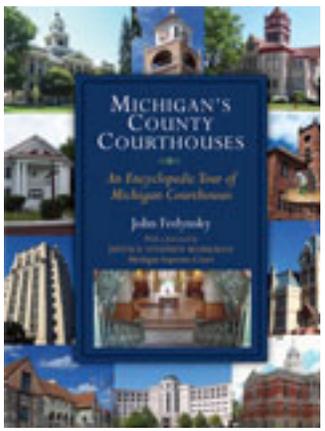
The 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Luncheon of the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society will be hosted at the Detroit Athletic Club on Thursday, April 29, 2010. The luncheon begins with cocktails at 11:30 a.m. followed by lunch and a legal vignette.

This year’s luncheon presenter is John Fedynsky, whose forthcoming book is entitled *Michigan’s County Courthouses*. Both the book and Mr. Fedynsky’s presentation examine the 83 county courthouses in Michigan with a special 84<sup>th</sup> chapter that focuses on Michigan’s One Court of Justice—the Hall of Justice in Lansing.

Mr. Fedynsky writes “These buildings are symbols: physically they stand, but figuratively they speak. They embody the purposes for which they were created: law, order, justice, and the promise of a better tomorrow.”

Mr. Fedynsky conceived his project while in law school at the University of Michigan, and during four years of research visited every courthouse in the state,

shooting nearly all of the 248 photos that are included in the book. Both interior and exterior shots are included whenever possible.

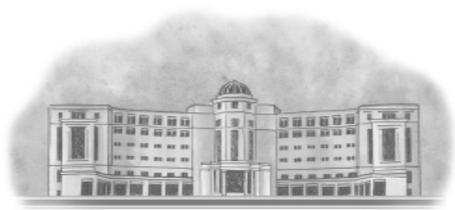


Mr. Fedynsky is a former research attorney for the Michigan Court of Appeals in Detroit and Grand Rapids, Michigan. He also served as a law clerk to the Honorable Robert H. Cleland, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. Mr. Fedynsky currently practices civil law as an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Michigan.

The 344-page book includes a foreword by Michigan Supreme Court Justice Stephen Markman, who will introduce Mr. Fedynsky at the luncheon as well. The Annual Luncheon is traditionally attended by all of the justices of the Michigan Supreme Court, who are the honored guests.

Tickets to the luncheon are still available and can be purchased via our website at [www.micourthistory.org](http://www.micourthistory.org). Individual luncheon tickets cost \$35; a table for eight is \$280.

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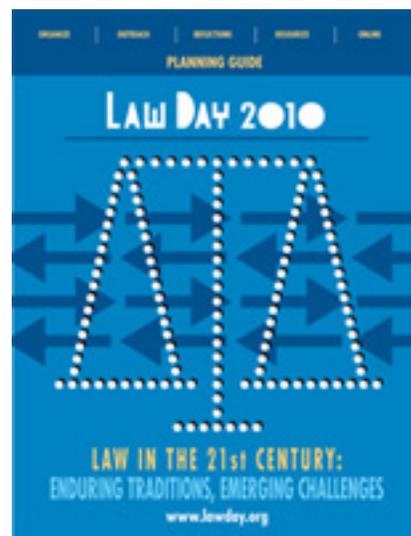
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# Law Day 2010: Law in the 21st Century

In 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower designated May 1 as Law Day. This day is an opportunity to strengthen our great American heritage of liberty, justice, and equality under the law.

The theme of Law Day 2010 is Law in the 21st Century: Enduring Traditions, Emerging Challenges.

As we begin the second decade of the twenty-first century, the law is changing dramatically as it seeks to shape and adapt to new conditions. Economic markets are becoming global, transactions require cultural adaptation and understanding, populations are more mobile, and communication technologies such as the Internet bridge distances and time zones to form new communities around the world. In such a world, all of us must renew our commitment to the enduring principles of law, become knowledgeable about other legal systems, recognize the need to adapt our practices, and acquire new cultural understandings. In a global era, matters such as human rights, criminal justice, intellectual property, business transactions, dispute resolution, human migration, and environmental regulation become not just international issues but shared concerns.



The Hall of Justice Learning Center will celebrate Law Day 2010 by hosting special tours on Monday, May 3, 2010. Law Day activities at the Learning Center will highlight the importance and challenges of providing access to justice in the 21st century. Students will study the exhibits in the Learning Center to identify how they demonstrate the core democratic values of justice, equality, and diversity. The discussion will center on how courts apply the core democratic values to ensure a fair system with equal access to justice for all. The Learning Center will open a new permanent exhibit on Access to Justice later this summer.

Each year the State Bar of Michigan and the Michigan Lawyers Auxiliary sponsor an essay contest for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students to attend. There are three winners from each grade level. The State Bar will host an awards luncheon on Monday, May 3, 2010, in Lansing for the winners of the essay contest and their parents, teachers, and school principals. Chief Justice Marilyn Kelly is the guest speaker.

Students participating in this year's essay contest were required to think critically about the issues in one of the following U.S. Supreme Court opinions: *O'Connor v. Ortega*, *Tinker v. Des Moines School District*, *Sheppard v. Maxwell*, or *Smith v. Phillips*. All of these cases dealt with issues that have arisen in relation to new technology such as cell phones, texting, and email messaging, and social media websites like Facebook and Twitter.

For ideas and plans on how to commemorate this day in your own community, please visit the American Bar Association website at [www.abanet.org/publiced/lawday/home.shtml](http://www.abanet.org/publiced/lawday/home.shtml) or the State Bar of Michigan's website at [www.michbar.org/projects/lawday](http://www.michbar.org/projects/lawday). Junior High and High School lesson plans are available from the Society at [www.micourthistory.org/education.php](http://www.micourthistory.org/education.php) and can be used in their entirety or as supplements.

The Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society is now on Facebook.  
Become a fan to stay up-to-date with the Society!

## Portraits of Two Justices: John Bird and Ernest Snow

**J**ohn E. Bird was the 44th Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court. Bird was born at Clayton, Michigan, on December 19, 1862. His education was acquired in the public schools, supplemented by a course in Adrian College. After leaving college he began the study of law in the offices of Messrs. Bean & Lane; was admitted to the bar in November 1888, and at once began the practice of his profession, remaining in private practice until his election as Prosecuting Attorney of Lenawee County in 1894. In 1904 he became

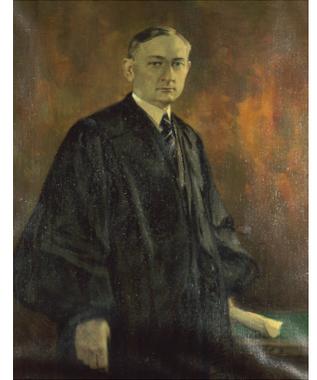


Attorney General of the State, and continued in that office until his elevation to the Supreme Bench of the State in 1910, where he remained until his death.

During his incumbency of the office of Attorney General Bird brought to a successful conclusion litigation which had been pending for many years between the railroads and the State, resulting in enriching the treasury by many millions of dollars in delinquent taxes. As a result, \$15 million was paid into the primary school fund of Michigan.

Bird died unexpectedly on February 10, 1928, and was survived by his wife Katherine Brown Bird and three grown children. His portrait was presented on June 12, 1929.

**E**rnest A. Snow was born in 1876, attended high school and later attended the law department of the University of Michigan, where he graduated in 1897, and was admitted to the Bar in the same year. He served as a member of the Constitutional Convention in 1908, and was elected Circuit Judge of the Tenth Judicial Circuit January 1, 1918. He served as Circuit Judge until his appointment to the Michigan Supreme Court by Governor Groesbeck in 1926.



As a Circuit Judge he was respected by and considered of the members of the Bar, learned and industrious, and his clear charges to the jurors always covered concisely and fairly the questions submitted to them. In his family life Snow was a devoted son and a loving husband and father.

Snow's period of service on the Michigan Supreme Court was from January 1, 1926, to October 20, 1927, and his opinions may be found in volumes 233 to 240 of our Reports. Talented and learned in the law, he achieved the unusual, and won for himself a lasting place in the legal history of our State.

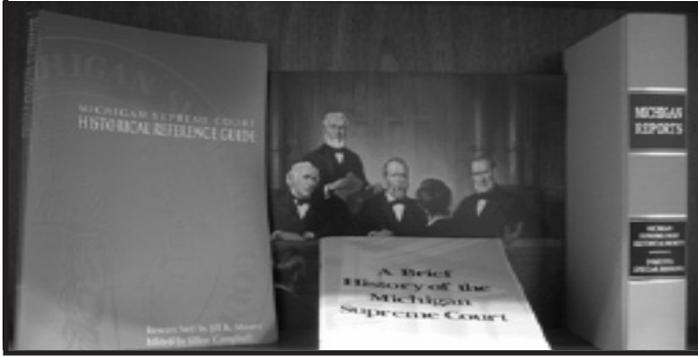
Snow died unexpectedly on October 20, 1927, at the age of 52. His portrait was presented on June 12, 1929.

### Member Spotlight: Judge Megan Maher Brennan

Judge Megan Maher Brennan has served the citizens of Wayne County Circuit Court in the Family Division since January 2006. She was first appointed to the Court in 2005, retained in the November 2006 election, and re-elected to a six-year term in November 2008. A graduate of Wayne State University Law School, Judge Brennan's career has also included roles as an Assistant Attorney General, a professor of business law, a private practitioner, and an assistant city attorney in Grosse Pointe Park. Judge Brennan began her career in the law, however, as a judicial attorney for Chief Justice Dorothy Comstock Riley from 1987-1989. And it was as a tribute to the late Chief Justice Riley that Judge Brennan joined the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society in 2001. Thank you for your continued support!

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**Mission Statement**

The Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society, a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation, collects, preserves, and displays documents, records, and memorabilia relating to the Michigan Supreme Court and the other Courts of Michigan, promotes the study of the history of Michigan's courts, and seeks to increase public awareness of Michigan's legal heritage. The Society sponsors and conducts historical research, provides speakers and educational materials for students, and sponsors and provides publications, portraits and memorials, special events, and projects consistent with its mission.

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*Society Update* is published quarterly by the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society. Writing submissions, article ideas, news, and announcements are encouraged. Contact the Society at: 1st Floor Hall of Justice, 925 W. Ottawa Street, Lansing, MI 48915 Phone: (517) 373-7589 Fax: (517) 373-7592

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