

AN ACT

Designating the portion of State Route 2044, also known as Commonwealth Avenue, between Homestead-Duquesne Road and Hoffman Boulevard in West Mifflin Borough, Allegheny County, as the Colonel Mitchell Paige Memorial Highway.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Colonel Mitchell Paige Memorial Highway.

Findings.--The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

Colonel Mitchell Paige was born on August 31, 1918 in Charleroi, Pennsylvania, and his family later moved to the Camden Hills section of West Mifflin.

On September 1, 1936, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps at the age of 18 after graduating from McKeesport High School, and would go on to serve during World War II.

On October 26, 1942, on the small island of Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands, Colonel Paige and his 32-member unit held off more than 1,000 attacking enemy soldiers in the Battle of Guadalcanal. During the battle, all 32 Marines under Colonel Paige's command were killed or wounded so badly that they could not fire their weapons.

Colonel Paige, who was stabbed through the hand with a bayonet and wounded by shrapnel, fought on alone. When his machine gun was destroyed, he bounded to another and then another, fighting off the enemies until U.S. reinforcements arrived.

Colonel Paige then led a bayonet charge that maintained American control of Henderson Field, an important landing strip in the Solomon Islands.

For his actions, Colonel Paige received the Medal of Honor at the age of 24.

He continued to fight in World War II for the next two years, and retired from the United States Marine Corps in 1964.

After his retirement, multiple museums, schools and foundations sought him out as a speaker, numerous buildings and highways

were dedicated in his honor, and in 1998, Hasbro Inc. modeled its classic G.I. Joe action figure after Colonel Paige.

On November 15, 2003, Colonel Mitchell Paige passed away at the age of 85.

(b) Designation.—The portion of State Route 2044, also known as Commonwealth Avenue, between Homestead-Duquesne Road and Hoffman Boulevard in West Mifflin Borough, Allegheny County, is designated as the Colonel Mitchell Paige Memorial Highway.

(c) Signs.—The Department of Transportation shall erect and maintain appropriate signs displaying the name of the highway to traffic in both directions on the highway.

Section 2. Effective date.

This act shall take effect in 60 days.