

No. 2000-61

AN ACT

SB 1130

Designating certain interchanges on the Mon-Fayette Expressway, SR 43, in Washington and Fayette Counties as the Sergeant Archibald Mathies Interchange, the Colonel Mitchell Paige Interchange and the Corporal Alfred L. Wilson Interchange; designating a bridge in Fayette County as the Point Marion Area Veterans Memorial Bridge; designating a proposed intersection on State Route 43 with State Route 51 in Allegheny County; designating an intersection on State Route 43 (Mon-Fayette Expressway) with Interstate Route 70 in Washington County; and designating a portion of State Route 2027 in Westmoreland County as Charles Houck Road.

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

Section 1. Interchange designations.

(a) Sergeant Archibald Mathies Interchange.—Exit 48 on SR 43, the Mon-Fayette Expressway interchange with SR 1006 in Washington County, is hereby designated as the Sergeant Archibald Mathies Interchange.

(b) Colonel Mitchell Paige Interchange.—Exit 39 on SR 43, the Mon-Fayette Expressway interchange with SR 2025 in Washington County, is hereby designated as the Colonel Mitchell Paige Interchange.

(c) Corporal Alfred L. Wilson Interchange.—Exit 8 on SR 43, the Mon-Fayette Expressway interchange with SR 3029 in Fayette County, is hereby designated as the Corporal Alfred L. Wilson Interchange.

(d) Biographies.—The General Assembly hereby finds that:

(1) Born in Scotland, Sergeant Mathies entered military service at Pittsburgh in World War II and served with the 510th Bomber Squadron, 351st Bomber Group, over Europe. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for his conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at risk of life and beyond the call of duty. The citation reads:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at risk of life above and beyond the call of duty in action against the enemy in connection with a bombing mission over enemy-occupied Europe on 20 February 1944. The aircraft on which Sgt. Mathies was serving as engineer and ball turret gunner was attacked by a squadron of enemy fighters with the result that the copilot was killed outright, the pilot wounded and rendered unconscious, the radio operator wounded and the plane severely damaged. Nevertheless, Sgt. Mathies and other members of the crew managed to right the plane and fly it back to their home station, where they contacted the control tower and reported the situation. Sgt. Mathies and the navigator volunteered to attempt to land the plane. Other members of the crew were ordered to jump, leaving Sgt. Mathies and the navigator aboard. After observing the distressed aircraft from another plane, Sgt. Mathies' commanding

officer decided the damaged plane could not be landed by the inexperienced crew and ordered them to abandon it and parachute to safety. Demonstrating unsurpassed courage and heroism, Sgt. Mathies and the navigator replied that the pilot was still alive but could not be moved and they would not desert him. They were then told to attempt a landing. After two unsuccessful efforts, the plane crashed into an open field in a third attempt to land. Sgt. Mathies, the navigator, and the wounded pilot were killed.

(2) Born in Charleroi, Washington County, Colonel Paige, now 81 years old, was awarded the Medal of Honor for his extraordinary heroism and conspicuous gallantry in action while serving as a marine noncommissioned officer in the Solomon Islands in World War II. The citation reads:

For extraordinary heroism and conspicuous gallantry in action above and beyond the call of duty while serving with a company of marines in combat against enemy Japanese forces in the Solomon Islands on 26 October 1942. When the enemy broke through the line directly in front of his position, P/Sgt. Paige, commanding a machine gun section with fearless determination, continued to direct the fire of his gunners until all his men were either killed or wounded. Alone, against the deadly hail of Japanese shells, he fought with his gun and when it was destroyed, took over another, moving from gun to gun, never ceasing his withering fire against the advancing hordes until reinforcements finally arrived. Then, forming a new line, he dauntlessly and aggressively led a bayonet charge, driving the enemy back and preventing a breakthrough in our lines. His great personal valor and unyielding devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Naval Service.

(3) Born in Fairchance, Greene County, Corporal Wilson served with the Medical Detachment, 328th Infantry, 26th Infantry Division, near Bezange la Petite, France, in World War II. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for his distinguished devotion to duty and personal sacrifice which helped to save the lives of at least ten wounded men. The citation reads:

He volunteered to assist as an aid man in a company other than his own, which was suffering casualties from constant artillery fire. He administered to the wounded and returned to his own company when a shellburst injured a number of its men. While treating his comrades he was seriously wounded, but refused to be evacuated by litter bearers sent to relieve him. In spite of great pain and loss of blood, he continued to administer first aid until he was too weak to stand. Crawling from one patient to another, he continued his work until excessive loss of blood prevented him from moving. He then verbally directed unskilled enlisted men in continuing the first aid for the wounded. Still refusing assistance himself, he remained to instruct

others in dressing the wounds of his comrades until he was unable to speak above a whisper and finally lapsed into unconsciousness. The effects of his injury later caused his death. By steadfastly remaining at the scene without regard for his own safety, Cpl. Wilson through distinguished devotion to duty and personal sacrifice helped to save the lives of at least ten wounded men.

(e) **Signing.**—The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission shall erect appropriate signs to indicate these designations.

Section 2. Bridge designation.

(a) **Point Marion Area Veterans Memorial Bridge.**—The bridge carrying U.S. Route 119 over the Cheat River between Point Marion Borough and Springhill Township in Fayette County is designated the Point Marion Area Veterans Memorial Bridge.

(b) **Signing.**—At each end of the bridge designated in this section, the Department of Transportation shall erect and maintain signs which display the name of the bridge.

Section 3. Captain Reginald Desiderio Interchange.

(a) **Designation.**—The proposed interchange on State Route 43 with State Route 51 in Jefferson Hills Borough, Allegheny County, is designated the Captain Reginald Desiderio Interchange.

(b) **Plaque.**—The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission shall erect a plaque indicating the accomplishments of Captain Reginald Desiderio in the Korean War which earned him the Medal of Honor as provided in subsection (c).

(c) **Biography.**—Reginald B. Desiderio was born September 12, 1918, in Clairton, Pennsylvania. He entered the Army in Gilroy, California. Desiderio served as commanding officer with Company E, 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division.

Near Ipsok, Korea, November 27, 1950, Captain Desiderio distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the repeated risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. His company was given the mission of defending the command post of a task force against an enemy breakthrough. After personal reconnaissance during the darkness and under intense enemy fire, he placed his men in defensive positions to repel an attack. Early in the action he was wounded but refused evacuation and despite enemy fire continued to move among his men checking their positions and making sure each element was prepared to receive the next attack. Again wounded, Desiderio continued to direct his men. By inspiring leadership, he encouraged them to hold their position. In the subsequent fighting, when the fanatical enemy succeeded in penetrating the position, Desiderio personally charged them with rifle, carbine and grenades, inflicting many casualties until himself mortally wounded. Spurred on by his example, Company E repelled the final attack.

Captain Desiderio's heroic leadership, courageous and loyal devotion to duty and his disregard for personal safety reflected the highest honor on

himself and was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Army. His Medal of Honor was issued under General Order No. 58, August 2, 1951.

Section 4. Colonel Walter J. Marm, Jr., Interchange.

(a) Designation.—The interchange on State Route 43 (Mon-Fayette Expressway) with Interstate Route 70 in Washington County is designated the Colonel Walter J. Marm, Jr., Interchange.

(b) Plaque.—The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission shall erect a plaque indicating the accomplishments of Colonel Walter J. Marm, Jr., in the Vietnam War which earned him the Medal of Honor as provided in subsection (c).

(c) Biography.—Walter J. Marm, Jr., was born November 20, 1941, in Washington, Pennsylvania. He entered service at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Near Ia Drang Valley, Republic of Vietnam, November 14, 1965, Colonel (then Second Lieutenant) Marm distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the constant risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. His company was moving through the valley to relieve a friendly unit surrounded by an enemy force of estimated regimental size. Colonel Marm led his platoon through withering fire until they were finally forced to take cover. Realizing that his platoon could not hold very long and seeing four enemy soldiers moving into his position, he moved quickly under heavy fire and annihilated all four. Then, seeing that his platoon was receiving intense fire from a concealed machine gun, he deliberately made himself known to draw its fire. Thus locating its position, he attempted to destroy it with an antitank weapon. Although he inflicted casualties, the weapon did not silence the enemy fire. Quickly, disregarding the intense fire directed on him and his platoon, he charged 30 meters across open ground and hurled grenades into the enemy position, killing some of the eight insurgents manning it. Although severely wounded, when his grenades were expended, armed with only a rifle, he continued the momentum of his assault on the position and killed the remainder of the enemy. Colonel Marm's selfless actions reduced the fire on his platoon, broke the enemy assault, and rallied his unit to continue toward the accomplishment of this mission.

Colonel Marm's gallantries on the battlefield and his extraordinary intrepidity at the risk of his life are in the highest traditions of the United States Army and reflect great credit upon himself and the armed forces of his country. His Medal of Honor was issued under General Order No. 7, February 15, 1967.

Section 5. Houck Road.

(a) Designation.—That portion of State Route 2027 from the intersection with State Route 981 south to the intersection of State Route 982, a distance of 2.9 miles, is hereby designated and shall be known as Charles Houck Road.

(b) Signs.—The Department of Transportation shall erect and maintain road signs which shall display the name Charles Houck Road at the beginning and the end of the section of the highway designated in subsection (a).

Section 6. This act shall take effect as follows:

- (1) Section 1 shall take effect in 180 days.
- (2) Sections 2, 3, 4 and 5 shall take effect in 60 days.
- (3) This section shall take effect immediately.

APPROVED—The 22nd day of June, A.D. 2000.

THOMAS J. RIDGE