



STATE of MINNESOTA

Proclamation

WHEREAS: In 1943, almost 3,000 men answered President Franklin D. Roosevelt's call for a secret, "dangerous and hazardous" mission. This unit of United States Army volunteers landed in Bombay, India on October 31, 1943, and was officially designated on January 1, 1944, as the 5307th Composite Unit Provisional, later nicknamed "Merrill's Marauders" after their commander, General Frank D. Merrill; and

WHEREAS: On May 17, 1944, Merrill's Marauders walked almost 1,000 miles, trudging behind enemy lines to capture the only all-weather airstrip, at Myitkyina, Burma, enabling the Allies to begin flying supplies into Burma so roads could be connected and opening a crucial pathway into China; and

WHEREAS: The Merrill's Marauders unit of the China-Burma-India Theater of Operations was disbanded on August 10, 1944, after defeating the Japanese 18th Imperial Division. Jungle diseases ravaged their numbers so only about 300 of the approximate 1,300 remaining were fit for combat when they reached their objective. These men later went on to join replacements who continued to fight in Burma as the 475th Infantry, which became part of the Mars Task Force; and

WHEREAS: Merrill's Marauders were awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for their accomplishments, and have the rare distinction as recipients of the Bronze Star Medal. Members were also awarded six Distinguished Service Crosses, four Legions of Merit, and 44 Silver Star Medals, and twenty-five Merrill's Marauders have been inducted into the Army Ranger Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS: The Merrill's Marauders' legacy continues to be honored today by members of the 75th Ranger Regiment who wear the Marauder patch as their crest.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MARK DAYTON, Governor of Minnesota, do hereby proclaim Sunday, August 10, 2014, as:

WWII MERRILL'S MARAUDERS DAY

in the State of Minnesota.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Minnesota to be affixed at the State Capitol this 8th day of August.


GOVERNOR


SECRETARY OF STATE