

A RESOLUTION

NO. _____

WHEREAS, Owen Thomas Ditchfield, son of the late Emer Patricia and Thomas Joseph Ditchfield, was born July 7, 1939 in Chicago, IL, and passed away on June 8, 2016. He was raised in southern California and graduated from Saint Bernadine's High School; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Ditchfield attended school at the University of Montana with a major in Journalism. That's where he met his future wife, Mabel, and received a ROTC commission as an Infantry Officer; and,

WHEREAS, Owen and Mabel were married in 1962. He came to Fort Benning in 1962 to attend Infantry Officer Basic Course, followed by Airborne and Ranger Schools; and,

WHEREAS, he was in the Infantry for ten years and served two tours in Vietnam, receiving two Purple Hearts and two Bronze Stars. He faced certain death seven more times, but, by the grace of God, survived, leading him to believe God had more for him to do; and,

WHEREAS, he left the service in 1972 to become an elementary school teacher in the Fort Benning School System and retired in 2008; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Ditchfield taught English at Don C. Faith Middle School, fifth-grade at Frank Lloyd Elementary School, and was a Media Specialist the final 21 years at Edward A. White Elementary School; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Ditchfield was the first volunteer to sign up at the National Infantry Museum and Soldier Center, leading many tours of the museum, and, was also the Polar Express Conductor there; and,

WHEREAS, he was deeply involved in numerous civic organizations and campaigns in Columbus over the years to include Muscogee Educational Excellence Foundation, Columbus South, Inc., South Columbus Concerned Citizens, CIRCLE (Mayor's Sister City Program), Cool Our Kids Committee, Fair Tax Committee, Keep Columbus Beautiful, Columbus Beyond 2000, Curbside Recycling Task Force, Columbus Area Habitat for Humanity, where he helped build the first 50 homes, Chattahoochee Valley Bee Keepers' Association, Columbus Library Board, Chattahoochee Regional Library Board and South Columbus Concerned Citizens; and,

WHEREAS, he was also very involved at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, co-leading the Folk Group, teaching high school CCD, lecturing at Mass, serving as a Eucharistic Minister, helping start the Men of Lourdes group and more; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Ditchfield was a 1996 Olympic Torch Bearer when it went through Columbus. In 2000, he was elected to a four-year term on the Muscogee County School Board. In 2006, Mr. Ditchfield was elected Educator of the Year by Keep Columbus Beautiful, and one of the three recipients of the LIBRA Award by Chattahoochee Area Library Association; and,

WHEREAS, in 2008, he was inducted into the Columbus State University College of Education's Teacher Hall of Fame; and,

WHEREAS, he won two awards from Keep Columbus Beautiful for his environmental work including Educator of the Year and Individual Urban Forestry award; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Ditchfield received the 2013 Rotary Club Dan Reed Award for service above self.

NOW THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA, HEREBY RESOLVES:

In honor of Mr. Owen Ditchfield, the Board of Honor has approved an honorary designation, to be named the "Follow Me Trail Bridge". The Engineering Department is hereby authorized to erect appropriate signage at the entrance of the Follow Me Trail Bridge.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia held on the 10th day of October 2017 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of ____ members of Council.

Councilor Allen voting _____.
Councilor Baker voting _____.
Councilor Barnes voting _____.
Councilor Davis voting _____.
Councilor Garrett voting _____.
Councilor Henderson voting _____.
Councilor Huff voting _____.
Councilor Pugh voting _____.
Councilor Thomas voting _____.
Councilor Woodson voting _____.

TINY B. WASHINGTON
CLERK

TERESA PIKE TOMLINSON
MAYOR