



# 2025 WORKER MEMORIAL DAY

APRIL 24, 2025

Commemorating workers who  
died in Washington as a result of  
job-related injuries and illnesses.







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April 24, 2025 | L&I Auditorium

## *Welcome*

**Joel Sacks**, Director, Department of Labor & Industries

## *Posting of the Colors*

**Washington State Department of Corrections**  
**Honor Guard**

## *Invocation and Benediction*

**Jeffrey Jones**, DOC Chaplain,  
Cedar Creek Corrections Center

## *Speakers*

**Governor Bob Ferguson**

**April Sims**, President,  
Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO

**Lindsey Hueer**, Government Affairs Director,  
Association of Washington Business

**Matt Saxon**, Past President,  
Washington Self-Insurers Association

**Heidi Bryan**, Mother of worker who died in 2014

**Nghi Tran**, Pension Adjudicator Supervisor,  
L&I Insurance Services

**Karen Michael**, Industrial Hygiene Manager,  
L&I's Division of Occupational Safety and Health

## *Musical Tributes*

**Scott Casebolt and Shawn Lamb**,  
Puget Sound Firefighters Pipes and Drums  
**Tumwater High School Noteables**

## *Bell Ringers*

**AC Bates**, Battalion Chief, Tumwater Fire Department  
**Scott Kennedy**, Lieutenant, Tumwater Fire Department



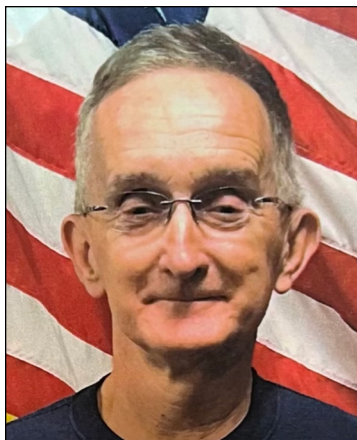
*Tributes provided by  
family and friends of  
workers lost in 2024*



**Brian Annis-Levings, 52**

Brian died from cancer caused by hazardous materials he was exposed to as a firefighter. He was an ardent adventurer, diligent learner, problem solver, intentional, calming, doting, compassionate, hopeful, generous, bold leader, courageous speaker, and patient teacher. A beloved son, brother, husband, father, and friend. We were blessed by Brian's beautiful smile and warmth. He dearly loved working alongside his fellow firefighters and found fulfillment in serving the public with them. His favorite Bible verse was Romans 1:16 — "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also the Greek." Love you Brian. We will see you again!

— Nissa Annis-Levings, wife



### **Charles "Ron" Cato, 73**

Ron, better known as "Captain Cato," dedicated his life to serving his community, working at all levels of fire and EMS services. He passed away from service-related brain cancer after years of exposure to hazardous materials as a firefighter. He touched the lives of thousands of patients and fellow EMS partners throughout his career at Spokane County Fire Department, as an EMS evaluator, fire department explorer post advisor, director of Spokane Valley ambulance, and battalion chief at Pend Oreille County Fire District 2. Ron was a loving husband for 50 years, an amazing father to his son Chris and daughter Sarah, and a fantastic papa to Charlie, Joey and Brennen. He is deeply missed.

— Debra Cato, wife



### **Mark E. Haubrick, 62**

The best way to describe Mark in one word is "classic". He appreciated classic cars, classic guns, classic rock and even classic jewelry. He was an avid hunter with a larger-than-life spirit. He enjoyed driving his Corvette and wearing his "cowboy stuff." He especially found joy in spending time with his family — his beloved wife, two sons, seven daughters, and 22 grandchildren. Mark's genuine love for life touched everyone around him. Though profoundly missed, his spirit lives on in our cherished memories. Until we meet again.

— Gina Haubrick, wife



### **Daniel L. Hoffer, 65**

Danny passed away from exposure to hazardous chemicals as an auto-body painter. He survived his extreme health issues with a huge smile on his face and a deep love for everyone he met. Danny loved guns, guitars, motorcycles, and cars. He learned to build and repair guitars after surviving the first round of complete kidney failure. It became his passion and he left behind a beautiful collection. He also loved his 1972 El Camino and his custom Harley. We took many adventurous road trips creating beautiful memories. He truly was the best part of my life and I have never felt more loved and cared for. I am forever changed by Danny. His passing leaves a shadow where there once was sunshine. He will truly be missed by many.

— Julie Harvey-Hoffer, wife



### **Ryan T. Pleasants, 41**

Ryan was found deceased in his bed at the firehouse after working a 48-hour shift for the Walla Walla Fire Department. He'd suffered a heart attack. He focused on paramedicine and firefighting for most of his career. He earned the promotion to fire engineer on June 1, 2023. His last alarm was Jan. 7, 2024. Ryan was a man of integrity and honor with a great big heart and a smile that would light up a room. He was present and focused no matter what type of environment he was working in. He is remembered as a friend, colleague, uncle, nephew, son, brother, husband, and his most prized accomplishment — a proud and outstanding father to his two children. We love and miss you, Ryan.

— Racquel Pleasants, wife





### **Rene Rodriguez Beltran, 54**

Rene passed away after he fell while working on a construction project. He and his family moved from Ephrata to Lakewood to find job opportunities in demolition. The thing he missed the most about the eastern side of the state was the fresh fruits and vegetables. Every summer, Rene would drive over the mountains to overfill his beat-up 1998 blue Toyota truck with watermelon, cantaloupe, and corn that he would share with everyone. He left a piece of him everywhere he went, whether it was his kindness, fishing hooks, cherries, apples, and all other types of random items. Rene came to the U.S. from Mexico as a teenager for a better life. He taught himself to read, write, and speak English. Rene is the reason generations to come will have better opportunities in life. He leaves behind his wife, four children, and nine grandchildren who miss him every day.

— Yesenia Ledezma-Rodriguez, daughter



### **Ryan C. Ruckman, 29**

Ryan had a heart for serving others and dedicated his life to helping his community. He was killed in a motor vehicle accident while running errands for a client. He graduated from Seattle Pacific University (SPU) with a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology. It was at SPU where he met his wife, Jenn. Ryan spent most of his career in social services, most recently working as a mental health case manager for Downtown Emergency Service Center aiding those in the houseless community around Seattle. He also loved his family more than anything — both the one he was born into as well as his chosen family he found throughout his life. Ryan had a way of touching hearts and is deeply missed by everyone who knew him.

— Jennifer Burkland, wife



### **Robert "Mike" Spurrell, 46**

Mike passed away when his raft flipped while he was working as a river guide on a whitewater rafting trip. He died doing something he loved. The joy he found in the outdoors was surpassed only by his love for his family, especially his three daughters, and would often say he loved them 110%. His motto was, "Live Life. Love Life." And he did — to the fullest! Mike had a master's degree in special education from the University of Washington. He had a lifelong interest in helping those less fortunate and was always willing to lend a hand to anyone in need. Since childhood, Mike lived for adventure. He worked at Stevens Pass in a variety of roles as well as his job as a river guide. In addition to his family, Mike leaves behind a legion of friends, especially in the skiing and rafting communities. He will remain in our hearts forever.

— Gail Spurrell, mother



### **Ferman Stubblefield, 90**

Ferman died from a lifetime exposure of toxic chemicals. He was a pillar of wisdom for his family, a dedicated, devoted husband, and supportive father. He looked forward to church retreats and was passionate about long coast-to-coast car drives with family. He was a first class dresser who accompanied every outfit with laughter and a smile. Christmas was his favorite holiday and his effort to make each year unique and memorable was remarkable. He was a beacon of hope and inspiration to others, always ready to lend a helping hand or offer words of encouragement to those in need. His generosity knew no bounds. Though he may no longer be with us in body, his spirit will continue to live on through shared memories and the love he gave so freely. He was a shining example of what it means to live a life of purpose, passion, and integrity.

— Louise Stubblefield, wife





### **Kimberly Unti, 67**

Kim was handing out flyers for the Renton Downtown Partnership (RDP) when she was hit by a car. She died from her injuries two days later. Kim was the acting executive director for the RDP. Her family always knew she would never retire as she was hitting her stride returning to work for the RDP. She was dedicated to the people of downtown Renton and was always the first to volunteer at events even beyond her paid position. Shop owners referred to her as a “bright light” who brought joy with every visit. Kim left her mark with her kindness, creativity, and flair. In a testament to her giving spirit, Kim donated her organs to save the lives of two people. She is deeply missed by her husband, Kirby, and four daughters, Carmen, Seong, Briana, and Vanessa.

— Vanessa Unti, daughter



### **Rodney C. Wheeler, 46**

Rodney was working for the Washington State Department of Transportation as a bridge attendant when he fatally fell from the First Avenue South Bridge in Seattle. He was a constant jokester with a witty personality. He loved cooking, sports, traveling, and adored animals of all kinds. But, there was nothing like Rodney’s love for his three brothers. He took his early role of anchor and protector of the family very seriously. In addition to his brothers, Rodney leaves behind his parents, his fiancée, Lavina McClam, and six children whom he adored. Rodney’s exterior was stern, but his heart was pure. If you judged a book by its cover, you would have missed Rodney’s beautiful, strong, and courageous story that ended far too soon. We’ll miss him forever.

— The Wheeler-McClam Family

Brian A. Annis-Levings ▪ Rafael Arreola ▪ Gerald E. Baucum  
Paul M. Berliner ▪ Philip E. Bramson ▪ Elisha A. Brian  
Celso A. Bustos Guerrero ▪ Dvorah “Charlie” Carrasco  
Charles “Ron” Cato ▪ Alan A. Chang ▪ Karl M. Christensen  
Dakota A. Cline ▪ Sean J. Coffey ▪ Robert E. Conner  
Curtis J. Cooper ▪ James Dean ▪ Robert D. Deatherage  
Jose De Leon ▪ Robert C. Dupuy ▪ James H. Duterrow Sr.  
Jeremy D. Eaton ▪ Carlos F. Fernández ▪ Phil O. Ferrell  
Christopher M. Gadd ▪ Sharon L. Gilliland-Culbert  
Charles H. Gorr ▪ Mark E. Haubrick ▪ Benito Hernandez-Núñez  
Daniel L. Hoffer ▪ Nicholas F. Hokema ▪ Brian L. Holdener  
Justin K. Jepson ▪ Mark E. Johnson ▪ Mikiyas Y. Kebede  
Karl J. Keller ▪ Sergey M. Kubay ▪ Stephen R. Larby  
Earl K. Lehew ▪ Diane M. Llewellyn ▪ Eddie R. Long  
Leonard E. Loreen ▪ Earl S. Louderback  
José L. Martínez-Pineda ▪ Wayne E. McIntyre Jr.  
Charles L. McVey ▪ Kendall R. Meldrum ▪ Juan Meza-Rodríguez

Rhonda L. Mikels ▪ Michael P. Munson ▪ Anthony J. Nalley  
James L. Narad ▪ Ernest A. Ormsbee ▪ Michael J. Owens  
Drake E. Pilcher ▪ Ryan T. Pleasants ▪ Esther M. Powell  
Michael C. Preece Jr. ▪ James D. Prescott ▪ Robert G. Preston Sr.  
Lawrence J. Reuwer ▪ Scott A. Richey ▪ Amber M. Rodriguez  
Rene Rodriguez Beltran ▪ Wayne C. Ruby ▪ Ryan C. Ruckman  
Timothy A. Russell ▪ Eric M. Saint ▪ John R. Scerbik  
Dwight G. Schneider ▪ Abdikadir Gedi Shariif ▪ Denis Sinev  
Malkeet Singh ▪ Jerome Skinner ▪ Dennis L. Slater  
Richard G. Slocum ▪ Leslee D. Smith ▪ Robert “Mike” Spurrell  
Randall L. Strickland ▪ Ferman E. Stubblefield ▪ James H.D. Stull  
William J. Stump ▪ Laupule Talaga ▪ Gary J. Taubeneck  
James C. Thomas ▪ Otineru B. Tinifu ▪ Darrin D. Towe  
Kimberly N. Unti ▪ Mary A. Valentine ▪ Bohdan Vetrov  
Jesus Villa Ambriz ▪ Viktor A. Voloshin ▪ Dean G. Warren  
Rodney C. Wheeler ▪ Edward Wolf ▪ Alex S. Won  
Shawn J. Yim ▪ Daniel T. Zarate



The Worker Memorial Garden, on the grounds of the Department of Labor & Industries headquarters in Tumwater, is a year-round remembrance of fallen workers.

In 2007, a brass bell sculpture by artist Tom Torrens was donated by the Washington State Building and Construction Trades Council and installed in the garden.

The garden and bell are dedicated to all Washington workers who died from a workplace injury or illness. Each year at the annual Worker Memorial Day ceremony, family and friends ring the bell in honor of their loved ones.