2014 Worker Memorial Day

April 29, 2014

Commemorating workers who died in Washington State in 2013 as a result of job-related injuries and illnesses.

Charles H. Ahrenius ▪ Jose De Jesus Alcazar Ochoa ▪ Terry L. Andersen

Martha Araceli Benavides ▪ Carl A. Barnfield ▪ Bradley E. Bean ▪ Michael J. Carpenter

Bryan T. Crawford ▪ Jerry L. Day ▪ Verna M. Day ▪ Henri-Claude DeGuchi ▪ Donald C. Ellis, Jr.

Charles P. Eschbach ▪ Darrel R. Fleck ▪ Oleph J. Fugate ▪ Michael P. Gallagher

Robert Garza Valdez ▪ Steven A. Green ▪ Daniel J. Hall ▪ Robert W. Hamel ▪ John E. Hammack

Donald S. Hanson ▪ Albert B. Hillaire ▪ Arthur H. Himmler ▪ Gale J. Johnson ▪ Nels J. Johnson

Earl S. Jones ▪ Jin Y. Kim ▪ Mark A. Kirchberg ▪ John F. Knighten ▪ Stuart G. Lacy

Larry R. Langdon ▪ Kapno Lopeti ▪ Brian F. Love ▪ Kristine N. Lynch ▪ John W. Marker

Gary E. McRoberts ▪ Erica L. Meier ▪ Timothy R. Morris ▪ James C. Morton ▪ Carl Murray

Albert A. Nejmeh ▪ John T. Norman ▪ Sean M. O'Connell ▪ Howard W. Oliver ▪ Roger L. Peterson

George W. Pratt ▪ Michael G. Rongey ▪ John Salas ▪ Daryl R. Schinnell ▪ Kyle M. Schlesser

Robert W. Schmidt ▪ Richard A. Stefanson ▪ Ronald D. Stultz ▪ Jeff A. Surber ▪ Stanley O. Swindler

Ayenachew B. Taddese ▪ Max A. Talley ▪ Shawn W. Tolbert ▪ Louis L. Walters ▪ Steve A. Weil

Mark E. Wooster ▪ George D. York ▪ Boguslaw A. Zak ▪ Donald W. Zoda

2014 Worker Memorial Day

April 29, 2014 | L&I Auditorium

Posting of the colors
Thurston County Sheriff's Office Honor Guard

Invocation & Benediction
Chaplain Bill Terhune
South Bay Fire Department

Welcome
Joel Sacks
Director, Department of Labor & Industries

Governor Jay Inslee

Jeff Johnson
President, Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO

Gary Chandler
Vice President, Association of Washington Business

Kris Tefft
Executive Director, Washington Self-Insurers Association

Special Musical Tribute "Goodnight Dear Heart"
Tumwater High School's "Noteables"

Memorial reading of names

Bell Ringers, Tumwater Local 2409
Washington State Council of Fire Fighters

Sign Interpretation
Johnne Angel Boivin

Bagpiper
Shawn Lamb

Memorial Garden Bell Ceremony
Director Sacks

Thoughts and photos provided by families of workers lost in 2013

Terry Lee Andersen, 51, Bridge Construction

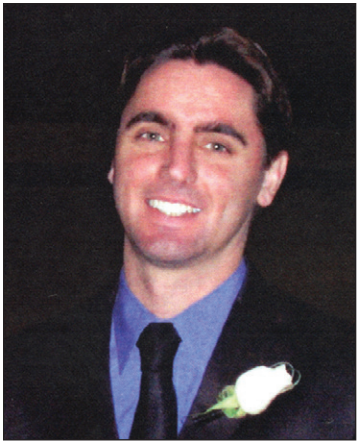
Terry left us on March 29, 2013. He left behind a huge legacy. He was fearless in everything he did. His boys say he lived the life of three men, and called him "the Cyborg," due to his toughness. His pride and joy were his three boys, Dustin, Nicholas and Kanan, and four grandbabies. He is greatly missed by his wife and best friend of 28 years, Delyn. He was a wilderness man and lived in the country with his family and enjoyed fishing and hunting with his boys. He worked building bridges in California, Oregon, Washington and Alaska. He was always on the A-Team and often held the title of foreman. Everyone loved working with Terry. His family and friends will always and forever love and miss him.

Martha Araceli Benavides, 44, Lab Technician

Martha worked in a lab testing for Listeria. To her husband, Mario Cruz, she was a wonderful, kind, understanding and affectionate woman who is loved, needed and greatly missed. To her cousin Sandra, she was a great woman in every sense of the word – a friend, companion, sister, a joyful woman, spontaneous and social. She always tried to give her children the best. Martha will always live on in their hearts.

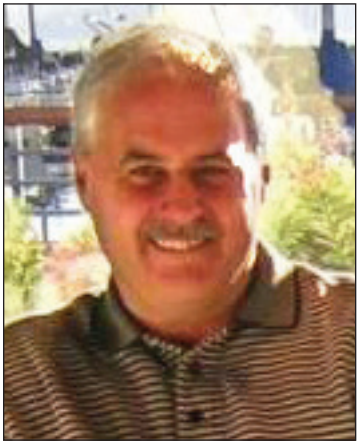
Martha Araceli Benavides, 44, Técnico de laboratorio

Martha trabajó en un laboratorio en el control de Listeria. Para su esposo, Mario Cruz, ella era una mujer maravillosa, amable, comprensiva y cariñosa a la que aman, necesitan y extrañan muchísimo. Para su prima Sandra, ella era una gran mujer en todo el sentido de la palabra – una amiga, compañera, hermana, una mujer alegre, espontánea y sociable. Siempre trató de darle a sus hijos lo mejor. Martha siempre vivirá en sus corazones.



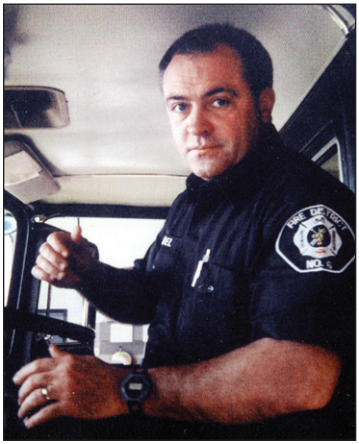
Bradley Eric Bean, 36, Jet Center Manager

Brad's life was forever changed when he was injured in January 2012. He missed so many things, especially the aviation work that was his life's passion. He is missed for his work ethic, dedication and dependability. Brad was a caring, nurturing, encouraging friend who helped people to accept themselves for who they were. His parents, Tom and Debra Bean, miss his laughter, his hugs, his patience, independence, resilience and competence. Aviation was his life—and now he soars!



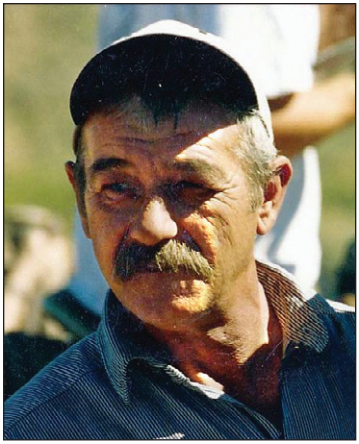
Darrel R. Fleck, 62, Electrical Engineer

Darrel was a kind and compassionate man, a loving husband and father. Darrel enjoyed the outdoors, hiking, camping, biking, fishing and playing golf. He had a thirst for knowledge and was always reading about something and could talk to people about anything. Darrel worked at Boeing for 36 years in the Defense and Space Program. He is greatly missed by his wife Nancy and son Aaron and by all who knew him.



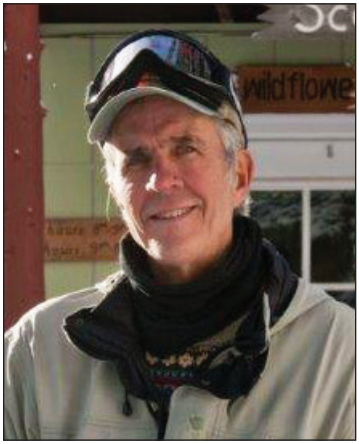
Robert W. Hamel, 59, Firefighter

Robert loved his firefighter job with Clark County Fire District 6. He was a certified whitewater rescue instructor and was on the Tactical Rescue Team. He taught the high school cadet program for several years and taught CPR classes in the community. He enjoyed driving the old fire engines in community parades. Robert's happiest times were spent with his grandchildren, and he was sad to learn he would not be here to take his grandchildren fishing and boating and to see them grow up. He fought a hard eight-month battle with cancer. Robert is survived by his wife of 40 years, Renae, his daughter Julie, son Andrew, and three grandchildren.



John Earl Hammack, 58,
Timber Faller and Wildland Firefighter

John spent a good part of his life working in the woods and was killed doing what he loved on Aug. 1, 2013. His loss is overwhelming, and he is deeply missed by his wife and family. John was larger than life and lived true to his beliefs. He enjoyed helping kids of all ages reach their goals in the rodeo arena (and other arenas of life) and was a mentor to numerous children. Our salvation is the fact that John loved the Lord, and we know we will be with him again.



Don Hanson, 65, Lodge Owner

Don had a love for life and work, and great compassion and empathy for people. He shared his love of the backcountry at Scottish Lakes High Camp. He is remembered dearly by The Edge Youth Group, which he founded and ran for 11 years. He was a dedicated teacher and principal. The Leavenworth community benefitted from Don's work with the food bank, affordable housing and community relations. He supported and worshipped with the United Church of Christ. Don is missed by his mother Lucy, his wife Christine, his children Erik and Bryce, his daughters in law, Lena and Katy, his grandchildren Eva, Sierra, Audrey and Renate, his brother Al and sister Karen.

Dr. Arthur H. Himmler, 68, Superintendent

Born and raised in Illinois, Art dedicated his life's work to the education of children across the globe. An explorer by nature, he taught music in Thailand and Hong Kong before returning to Washington State to serve as Superintendent for Steilacoom and Omak School Districts. Art was insurmountably cheerful and compassionate to all who entered his world. You could always count on him to provide a wise word of council, or an action-packed fishing tale delivered with a twinkle in his eye, depending on which you needed! Art was a fisherman, a hunter, an outdoors enthusiast, a husband, a father, and a forward thinker. Art left us on Feb. 7, 2013. Although he is gone from us now, his influence is not. We love and miss you. We see you in all things.

Gale J. Johnson, 76, Professional Photographer

Gale, a Navy veteran, passed away on Nov. 11, 2013. He began his career in photography while serving in the Navy. His love of photography continued throughout his life, as a studio owner and a member of the Professional Photographers of Washington. He never left home without his camera. Gale had a wonderful sense of humor, loved spending time with his family and grandchildren, reading his Kindle with a good cup of coffee, gardening and bird watching. He looked forward to his homemade rhubarb pie on Father's Day. His family misses him dearly but knows that this year, he will enjoy a slice of pie in heaven as our guardian angel.

Nels (Jim) Johnson, 82, Welder Fabricator

Jim Johnson was a proud member of the U.S. Navy, a loving husband, father and grandfather, and "dad" to hundreds. He enjoyed coaching sports, ranching, jeep racing, hunting, fishing and a list of outdoor activities too long to list. Jim lost his life to asbestos-related disease.

John F. Knighten, 45, Firefighter

John was a city of Spokane firefighter who bravely lost his three-year battle with multiple myeloma cancer on June 30, 2013. He is survived by his loving wife, Shawna, and three daughters, Ashley, Kasey and Kiley. John was one of 12 children and is truly missed by all. Life was always an adventure to John. He enjoyed riding his motorcycle, boating, camping, road trips and anything that he could make memories with his family. John was awarded Top Recruit when he was hired, and after 19 years of dedicated service, he was awarded the fire department's Purple Heart for courage and inspiration to all who worked with him. John truly loved his job. His gregarious smile will never be forgotten.

Stuart Lacy, 49,
Fire Suppression Systems Specialist

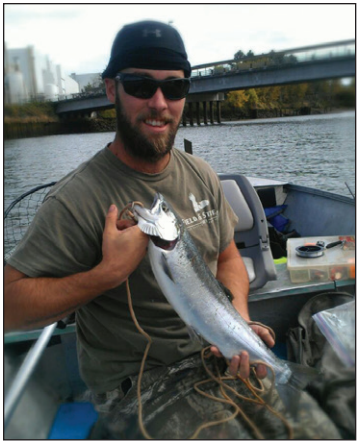
Stuart Lacy was a proud family man with two children, Christopher, 28, and Jessica, 25. He was married to Amy Lacy for 27 years, and left behind a mother, Patricia Lacy, sister Candace, and brother Gary. He was the beloved "papa" to granddaughter Isabelle Connelly and loved spending time with her. Stuart was passionate about military aircraft, spending many hours studying and building models of them. He was a gentle soul who cared for both people and animals. He worked with fire suppression systems his entire career and was very proud of his work. He is missed greatly.

Larry R. Langdon, 74, Construction Laborer

Larry Langdon passed away on Sept. 5, 2013. After his service years in the U.S. Army, he returned home and began working as a hod carrier and construction laborer, which is what he did for his entire career. Larry loved to fish, loved to fish, loved to fish, and work in his shop. He generously gave his time to help his friends and family, whether it was trimming trees, building fire pits, working on a tractor or creating and welding his great ideas. He never shied away from hard work. Larry is survived by his wife, Beverly Langdon, and many family and friends. We miss him every day.

Brian F. Love, 56, Taxi Driver

Brian had a variety of jobs and many interests in his life. He loved reading, music, history, politics, downtown Auburn, and his fiancée Sheryl Combs. He was generous with his time and friends and everyone he met. Brian had been very involved with the youth organization at his church. He worked at the Spoken Word Lab (SPLAB), giving voice to poetry. From his street-front studio, Brian's baritone voice became very well known on the radio. He emceed the Auburn Good Ol' Days parades and the Red Hat Ladies' show. He was also well known at the Rainbow Café in Historic Downtown Auburn. Brian had many loving friends and is dearly missed.

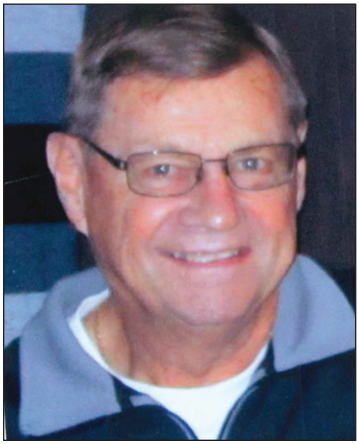


Michael Rongey, 33, Cell Tower Climber

Michael's loss has changed our lives and his loss will remain with us forever. The love and compassion he had for family and friends will always be remembered. He was a very happy, kind and loving person who would help anyone who needed it. He loved his job and was dedicated to it. He loved working side by side with his brother. He loved the challenge of his job climbing cell towers. Unfortunately, we lost him to an accident he did not expect. His love of life, family and friends was first and foremost outside of his job. And that boy loved to fish! Mikey's loss left a great void in our hearts. We know he is under God's guidance and good graces. We love you son!

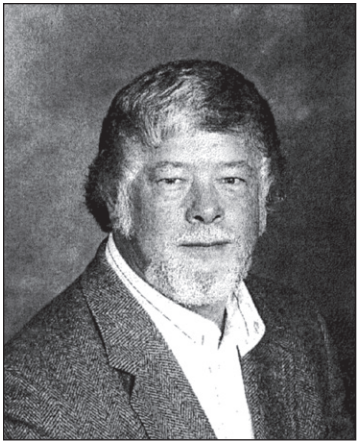
Robert W. Schmidt, 50, Firefighter/Engineer/EMT

Bob was a 23-year, well-respected veteran of the Kent Fire Department RFA. He brought a positive attitude to work each day, demonstrating eagerness and commitment to high standards. He was grateful to be part of the fire service. Bob met the love of his life while attending Ballard High School in Seattle and married Kim in 1985. They would have celebrated 28 years of marriage just six days after his death. They have two sons, Alex, 26, and Erik, 22. Bob collapsed a few hours after finishing a 48-hour shift on June 26, 2012. He succumbed to cancer on April 21, 2013. Bob was compassionate to those he cared for, no matter what their situation. His infectious smile will be greatly missed.



Rick Stefanson, 72, Sheet Metal Worker

Rick Stefanson, a sheet metal worker for 40 years, passed away on June 29, 2013, from asbestosis. He worked for Holaday Parks Fabricators for nearly all of those years as a journeyman, foreman and superintendent. Rick is missed every day by his wife of 51 years, Sheryl; his children, Kurt Stefanson, Kim Monson and Keith Stefanson; his four grandchildren, Craig, Brad, Blake and Olivia; and many other family members and friends. We love you. Rest in peace.



Ronald Dean Stultz, 75, Heat and Frost Insulator

Ron worked as a heat and frost insulator with Local #7 for 25 years, until his disability in 1983. He leaves behind his wife of 57 years, Nanette, their five children and 19 grandchildren, and a sister. Ron passed away on Oct. 11, 2013, from complications of asbestosis.

Robert "Bobby" Valdez, 37, Truck Driver

"Bobby" loved to work on his motorcycle. He was a truck driver and diesel mechanic, and trucks were his life. He grew up driving semi-trucks, starting with 10-wheelers on potato farms with his family's truck company. He was a great friend and "papi."

Steve A. Weil, 34, Farm Operations Employee

He was a loving son, father, brother, uncle, grandson, nephew, cousin, friend and coworker. He is terribly missed and will forever be!

A life so short, but filled so full
With time on the clock, no time for dull

Family, friends and time for fun
Motorcycles, jet skis and cycling with my "hun"

Don't forget the hours of work — never one to quit
If boss or friends need — I don't mind a bit

A pretty big guy, with a heart that was even bigger
Of course, he'd donate what he could –
That much we'd figure.

Mark Wooster, 50, Diesel Mechanic/Welder

Mark Wooster's greatest source of pride and love was his family. He cherished Wendy, his wife of 28 years, and his three daughters, Andrea, Heidi, and Monica. Mark loved reading, cars, sports, and coaching soccer, basketball, and softball in Vancouver for more than 12 years for all three of his daughters. He spent over 25 years in the trucking industry as a diesel mechanic and welder. Mark took great pride in his craft. He devoted long hours and epitomized dedication with each of his projects. He will be greatly missed by his family and all others who knew him.

The State of Washington

Proclamation

WHEREAS, every year job-related injuries and illnesses cut short the lives of as many as 100 workers in Washington State; and

WHEREAS, loved ones, friends and co-workers of fallen workers experience untold pain and suffering; and

WHEREAS, the families of fallen workers experience economic hardship as well as emotional devastation; and

WHEREAS, businesses, labor unions and government must remain diligent in their efforts to prevent workplace deaths, injuries and disease; and

WHEREAS, a memorial ceremony provides all Washingtonians an opportunity to pay tribute to fallen workers and rededicate ourselves to workplace health and safety;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jay Inslee, Governor of the state of Washington, do hereby proclaim April 29, 2014 as

Worker Memorial Day

in Washington, and I urge all people in our state to join me in this important observance.

Signed this 2nd day of April, 2014

Governor Jay Inslee

Today we honor those individuals who worked tirelessly to better the lives of their families and our community but tragically died as a result of doing their job.

Our thoughts are with you.

The Worker Memorial Garden on the grounds of the Department of Labor & Industries' headquarters in Tumwater, Washington, serves as 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 die from a workplace injury or illness. Each year at the annual Worker Memorial Day ceremony relatives ring this bell in honor of their loved one.