

# An Eagle Lands in Region 9

**I**t's eyes observe the world like no other. Its strong body reveals its fearlessness and its wings give it the guidance to soar high above the earth. An eagle conveys the powers and messages of the spirit. It is a symbol of freedom and courage to look ahead.

For those in UAW Region 9, this year the eagle represents the spirit of the brothers and sisters who lost their lives in the workplace. It is with the strength and courage to keep our work places safe and prevent future tragedies.

UAW Region 9 sponsored a beautiful bronze eagle, unveiled during the Niagara-Orleans AFL-CIO Labor Council's Annual Workers' Memorial Commemoration held in Reservoir State Park in Niagara Falls, New York. The eagle is a tribute to our union brothers and sisters who lost their lives on the job. And, for the family members who watched their

loved ones go to work but never to return.

"Our sponsorship of this memorial is our sincere dedication to the workers who never came home to their families. We honor the dignity of work with a constant focus on keeping our members safe," said UAW Region 9 Director Jeff Binz.

UAW members Stewart Brown, Robert Keller, Michael Bedford, William Ramming and David Mesi are five names engraved on the beautiful stone memorial which sits in front of the eagle. Their names were read out loud along with 48 other union members at the Memorial Commemoration. Those 53 men and women remind us of lives being lost to workplace accidents.

According to the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA) there are 155 million workers in the U.S. and an average of 14 work-related deaths per day. If you think about it, 14 people will pack their lunch today, kiss their loved ones goodbye and they will not



**Members of UAW Local 686 raise the flags at the Niagara/Orleans AFL-CIO Workers Memorial Commemoration.**

come home tonight. It's a sad reminder of how important the labor movement is to our safety. "We cannot let the death of one single worker become a statistic. The only thing that can work to stop this is government regulations and collective bargaining agreements." WNY AFL President Richard Lipsitz, said during the ceremony.

Hopefully, there will a day where we no longer will add any names to the wall. Where the eagle will be at peace, looking over the ones who were lost and our brothers and sisters will be able to go to work knowing they will come home.

Until then, the UAW and other unions around this country will continue to fight for job safety through negotiations and collective bargaining. As Mary Jones, an American labor organizer once said, "Mourn the dead and fight like hell for the living!"



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