

# MetroWest

*September 2014*

## **A Day to Celebrate the American Worker**

The first Monday in September is more often than not, recognized as a public holiday and a day to escape the stress of the workweek. However, Labor Day is much more than that.

Labor Day has a rich history centered around workers. The first American Labor Day was celebrated in New York City on Sept. 5, 1882, before the federal holiday was passed as a law. The celebration was planned by the Central Labor Union. New York workers staged a parade, even though few, if any, workers got the day off. Most were warned against participating with the threat of getting fired. Despite the warnings, more than 10,000 workers showed up.

Labor Day became an official federal holiday on June 28, 1894, when Congress passed an act designating the first Monday of September to be the legal holiday. However, prior to that, at the state-level, bills were passed to create a Labor Day holiday. New York was the first state to introduce legislation, but it was Oregon who first passed it in 1887.

Presently, we celebrate Labor Day with a little less pomp-and- circumstance. Many larger cities have parades and community picnics, while a lot of people will celebrate by just sleeping in or cooking-out.

Most Americans consider Labor Day to be the unofficial end of summer. Therefore the beaches, amusement parks and other popular vacation spots are packed with people who want to enjoy one last three-day get-away before the fall weather hits.

It is important that we all remember this special day actually started out as a celebration of hard working Americans which gave way to the fight for fair wages, as well as all the basic employee rights we still appreciate today.