



NEWS RELEASE

215 SYCAMORE STREET
MUSCATINE, IA 52761
PH. (563) 264-1550

For more information contact:

Kevin Jenison
Communication Manager
Public Information Officer
Muscatine City Hall
(563) 264-1550
kjenison@muscatineiowa.gov

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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A total of 343 flags, each one representing a firefighter who lost their life during the attack on the Twin Towers September 11, 2001, were placed alongside the Public Safety Building today by firefighter Travis Edwards. The Muscatine Fire Department will, Muscatine Police Department, and the City of Muscatine invite all residents to the corner of Fifth and Cedar at 7 a.m. Saturday for a Moment of Silence.



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343 FLAGS HONOR FIRST RESPONDERS WHO DIED SEPTEMBER 11

Each flag has name of firefighter who died during the attack on the Twin Towers in 2001

MUSCATINE, Iowa – Muscatine firefighter Travis Edwards participated in the Memorial Stair Climb a year ago, but this year he wanted to do more to honor those who lost their lives in the 2001 attack on the Twin Towers.

Edwards wrote the name of each firefighter who lost their life on that fateful day on a small flag and then arranged all 343 flags in the grass next to the Public Safety Building.

“Perfect,” Edwards said as he finished placing the last flag and looked back down the three rows of flags.

The Muscatine Fire Department, Muscatine Police Department, and the City of Muscatine will observe a Moment of Silence at 7 a.m. Saturday at the Firefighters Memorial. The public is invited and encouraged to come to the corner of Fifth and Cedar to join in honoring those who lost their lives 20 years ago.

“I would like to thank Travis for placing all of the 343 flags next to the memorial,” Jerry Ewers, Muscatine Fire Chief, said. “I would encourage everyone to attend the memorial service, to stop and reflect, and to offer thanks to our first responders who are serving and protecting us 24/7.”

A memorial stair climb will be conducted at the Merrill Hotel & Conference Center starting at 9 a.m.

“I also encourage everyone to come down to the Merrill and support our firefighters as they participate in the stair climb,” Chief Ewers said.

Edwards donned full gear and made the 25 and a half round trips of the training tower at the Public Safety Building a year ago and is hopeful that he will be able to do it again this year.



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"My shift is on duty so it is just a matter of whether we are called out or not," Edwards said.

Edwards, who was joined by Andrew McSorley in the climb a year ago, added that he thinks 10 members of the Muscatine Fire Department plan to participate in the 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb.

Each participant will complete 18 laps of the six-floor Merrill Hotel and many will be carrying badges identifying a firefighter who lost their life trying to save others on that tragic day 20 years ago. The effort is equivalent to 2,200 steps or 110 stories, which was the highest point firefighters reached on that day before the first tower collapsed.

"Even though there is fewer laps, the Merrill may be a tougher workout than the training tower," Edwards said. "We will be going up six flights of stairs at the Merrill instead of the two that we did in the training tower."

The alley behind the Merrill will be closed to traffic as that will be part of the course for the participants. Spectators are welcome to watch the stair climb from the Chestnut Street side of the Merrill. At the end of the stair climb, a bell rescued from an old fire truck, will be rung five times, a long standing firefighter tradition that is the bell code for back in quarters.

This is the 20th Anniversary of the coordinated terrorist's attacks that resulted in 2,977 fatalities and over 25,000 injuries, many of whom have been plagued by substantial health concerns since the attack.