

# CITY OF MUSCATINE



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## PATRIOTS DAY – REMEMBERING THOSE LOST ON 9/11

Memorial Stair Climb to be held at Muscatine High School football field

**MUSCATINE, Iowa** – A steady drizzle fell on Muscatine a year ago as the community remembered the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, and dozens of First Responders honored their fallen colleagues with a stair climb in the bleachers at the Muscatine High School football field.



The damp conditions did not hinder the remembrance activities a year ago as local First Responders and citizens climbed the stairs of the bleachers in reverent silence to honor the fallen First Responders and the survivors who rushed into the damaged and burning Twin Towers in their rescue efforts in 2001.

The Muscatine Fire Department, Muscatine Police Department, and the City of Muscatine will mark the 23rd Anniversary of the tragic events this year and invite residents to join them for a

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Moment of Silence Wednesday at the Muscatine Firefighters Memorial located on the corner of East 5th and Cedar streets. The ceremony will begin at 7 a.m.

"We will honor the 343 brothers and sisters from the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) who lost their lives on 9/11, along with the 72 police officers, other first responders, and citizens who also perished, and the families of the fallen who have had to endure more than we can know," Fire Chief Jerry Ewers said.

This is the 23rd Anniversary of the four coordinated terrorist's attacks that resulted in 2,977 fatalities and over 25,000 injuries with many of those still plagued by substantial health concerns. Four planes were hijacked by terrorists on that fateful day with the first two striking the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City. A third hijacked plane crashed into the Pentagon while a fourth plane crashed in Pennsylvania. Authorities believed that plane was headed to the U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C.

"We remember the strength of our brother and sister responders, their families who supported them, and the nation's response as a whole," Assistant Fire Chief Mike Hartman said. "Great loss reveals character, and we as a nation stood tall on this day so many years ago. As we grieve the loss, we can take solace in our response to this event. Stay safe, and stay strong."

A memorial stair climb will be conducted starting at 8:52 a.m., Wednesday, the exact time that the first FDNY apparatus arrived on scene at the Twin Towers. The stair climb will be held at Muscatine High School this year.

"We would like to invite anyone that would like to do the stair climb to come join us," Battalion Chief Gary Ronzheimer said. "The invitation is open to surrounding departments as well or

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anyone that would like to honor the fallen firefighters and other first responders who lost their lives racing up the stairs of the Twin Towers to rescue victims of the attack.”

Those who would like to participate in the stair climb are asked to contact Captain Andrew McSorley at 563-263-9233 extension 622 or email at [amcsorley@muscatineiowa.gov](mailto:amcsorley@muscatineiowa.gov). Email is preferred.

“This is a great way to honor those lost that day and show our support from Muscatine,” Captain McSorley said. “Everyone is welcome to attend whether they choose to climb or not, and the public is certainly welcome to attend and encourage our first responders in their efforts.”

Muscatine firefighters and police officers will join together for the Moment of Silence early Wednesday morning, just as other departments across the United States will gather in silent remembrance of those that died, those that lived but suffer medical and psychological issues, and the families of the survivors and the fallen.

The Memorial Stair Climb is 2,200 steps, or 110 stories, which was the highest point firefighters reached that day before the first tower collapsed. One bell will ring at 8:46 a.m. Wednesday, the time that the north tower was hit. The climb will begin at 8:52 a.m. to mark the arrival of the first FDNY rescue units. A single bell will ring at 9:03 a.m. to mark the south tower being hit, at 9:37 a.m. for the Pentagon being hit, and at 10:03 a.m. for when the fourth plane crash in Pennsylvania.

A bell, rescued from an old fire truck, will be rung by each first responder as they complete their climb while calling out the name(s) of the fallen heroes they were climbing for. After the last climber has completed their task, the ceremony will close with the bell being rung five

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times, a long-standing firefighter tradition that is the bell code for back in quarters, and marking the end of duty for the 343 firefighters and 72 police officers. A moment of silence will close out the ceremonies.

A memorial service for Mike Kruse, the only Muscatine Fire Fighter to die in the line of duty, will be held at 7 a.m. on Saturday, Sept. 14, at the Firefighters Memorial. The public is invited to attend the service.