

Atchison Represented at 9/11 Memorial Climb



From front to back: Atchison Firefighters Kameron Duncan, Alex Ritchel, and Matt Ploeger, making the 9/11 Memorial Climb

(KAIR)--A remembrance of the fallen, as three members of the Atchison Fire Department have completed the 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb.

Held annually in Wichita, the 111 story climb honors the 343 firefighters who lost their lives when responding to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

Representing the Atchison Fire Department were Kameron Duncan, Alex Ritchel, and Matt Ploeger, with all three completing all 111 stories.

Atchison Fire Chief Ted Graf tells MSC News he's proud of his team members for stepping up and accepting the challenge. "They approached me, and they said they wanted to enter this, they were accepted to do it. These guys are in full turnout gear, they have the [self-contained breathing apparatus] on their back, weighs about 70 pounds. So they go up they, do this tower, about a 20 sum story building, like there or four times, to his the 111 stories. All the guys came back and said it was more difficult than they would have thought it would be, and these are young guys that are in really good shape. It takes a special amount of dedication for somebody to do something like that."

Each firefighter who makes the climb is assigned the name of one who fell on 9/11, and walks in their honor. However, each Atchison firefighter walked for two who died in the line of duty, due to the absence of other firefighters who had planned to attend, but were called away to offer assistance to areas of Texas and Florida hit by hurricanes. "It's very honoring to know that each walked for two firefighters who lost their live in the twin towers collapse."

The memorial climb was held Saturday at the Epic Center in downtown Wichita.

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