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‘We climb because they climbed’

TCFD takes part in Dallas 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

THE COLONY, Texas — In its sixth year, the [Dallas 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb](#) was among several similar events held around the nation recently paying tribute to the sacrifices of the fallen first-responders and the events of Sept. 11, 2001.

According to its website, the Dallas Memorial Stair Climb fulfills the promise to “Never Forget” those who died in the line of duty as 343 firefighters, 70 law enforcement officers and nine EMTs (the number of firefighters/law enforcement/EMTs that perished at Ground Zero with the collapse of the Twin Towers) climb 110 floors (the height of the former World Trade Center Twin Towers) at the Renaissance Tower in Dallas. Many climbers wear their personal protective equipment – all climbers wear the name and picture of a hero they are climbing for.



The [Accountability Board](#) from the Dallas 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb. Organizing such displays was part of TCFD Firefighter/Paramedic Cliff Brooks’ duties as Memorial Director of the event.

The Colony Firefighter/Paramedic Cliff

Brooks served in the Honor Guard for last year’s event and said he wanted to do more this year. At the urging of Assistant Fire Chief Shannon Stephens, Brooks applied for and was chosen to serve as the Memorial Director for this year’s climb. As such, he was responsible for organizing the event’s opening ceremony, Honor Guard presence, pipes and drums performers, and other symbolic elements. Fellow **TCFD firefighter Perry Lane** also participated as a member of the Honor Guard.

But for Brooks, being a part of the Stair Climb is about a very personal connection.

“I lost a friend in the North Tower on 9/11, Lt. Dennis Mojica, FDNY RESCUE 1,” Brooks said. “So I felt I had a special obligation to honor him the best way I could.”

In what Brooks described as “an amazing twist of fate,” he had the pleasure of running into the firefighter who was climbing for Mojica during this year’s event.

When stair-climbers reach the 54th floor of the Renaissance Tower, they take an elevator back down to the basement to begin the climb again. Along with several climbers, Brooks boarded the elevator transporting a dolly full of water for the various rest stops.

He then asked the climbers if any of them happened to be climbing for his friend, Lt. Mojica. The odds were slim but sure enough, there stood Cory Glassburn, a member of the Volunteer Fire Department of Lakeside City, Texas, holding Mojica’s ID card.

As recounted on his own [Facebook page](#), Glassburn noted “there was an eerie silence that came upon that elevator.” The pair took a photo together, and later reunited on the 54th floor, where Brooks shared stories of his friendship with Mojica, and gave Glassburn the metal bracelet he’d had since 2002 containing Lt. Mojica's information.

“We exchanged a brotherly hug that would make any grown man cry, it was an unspoken moment of honor, pride and brotherhood. I know that our elevator moment was guided by God. I can honestly say, Lt. Dennis Mojica will #NeverBeForgotten,” wrote Glassburn.

Brooks said this is what the entire Stair Climb experience was about.

“Holding the memory of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice that day – that is why they climb, that is why it was such an indelible mark placed on my memory that I will carry for the rest of my life,” Brooks said.

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TCFD Firefighter/Paramedic Perry Lane served in the Honor Guard, pictured here in front of the [Table of Honor](#).