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Liberal's firemen "do work" in the south station's basement Friday morning. Their daily workout includes a treadmill, bench press, bicycle, squats, a tire and a hammer, which simulates the unstable ground in a burning building, curls, deadlift, stairs, pipe pole, a punching bag, hose and push ups. The men shifted workout stations every 30 seconds and within minutes, they were all drenched in sweat. L&T photos/Giseelle Arredondo

To be physically prepared to respond, firefighters work to stay in shape

By GISEELLE ARREDONDO

• Leader & Times

After doing morning chores, Liberal's firemen also need to stay in shape.

At about 8 a.m., the men head over to south station to work out as a shift.

Firemen Warren Headrick, Andrew Huelsman and Capt. Jose Torres joined Scott Helberg and Lt. Tyson Rice, from south station, to workout together, with James Jacobs, from the station located at the airport, who was getting his physical Friday morning and unable to attend the workout.

The firemen are required to exercise every day they are on shift.



“We are required to work out for one hour a day, and we all decided to do it together,” Torres said. “We chose to do it not only to keep us in shape, but it also builds a bond. The thing with us, on our off days we do a lot of lifting anyways.”

Rice added, “We usually just do some weight training and some cardio stuff in the basement and the basement kind of has like little workout rooms. We usually do ‘Insanity.’ We do P90x sometimes.”

However, “Insanity,” a popular workout DVD, wasn't in the cards Friday.

“We didn’t want to be laying on the floor dying,” Rice said, laughing.

The basement consists of a treadmill, bench press, bicycle, squats, a tire and a hammer, curls, deadlift, stairs, pipe pole, weights, a punching bag, a water hose, which has to be carried up the stairs and an area push ups.

The men also did yoga once, and they agreed that it is pretty difficult. However, since they only did it once, they don’t count it in their list of activities.

After the guys have gathered in the south station, they change into workout clothes and head downstairs. They pick a station. The timer is then set for 30 seconds with country music blasting away.

Within minutes, the men are so seriously drenched in sweat, even the floor gets wet.

After one of the guys calls time, they shift workout stations and start the timer again.

Routine physicals are important to their health.

“We get physicals on our anniversaries, basically, to make sure that our hearts are still thumping and we ain’t got a bunch of bad lungs – not diabetic or anything like that,” Rice said. “They do that just in case, let’s say we come in contact with something at a fire, some toxins or something, and it creates lung cancer. We can kinda keep an eye on our health, as well.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: This is the second article in an L&T series looking at the day in the life of a Liberal firefighter while doing shift duty.

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