



Pictured left to right are: Dr. Jon Sibert, Dr. Cameron Laboret, Fire Fighter Richard Burch, Fire Fighter Brad Sherburn, Dr. Charles Lane, Fire Chief Bill Shanklin, CFAAA President Dennis Stewart, Fire Marshal Steve Dossett, Megan Olson. Young Bretton Laboret helps hold the sign.

Central Healthcare helps fund Fire Safety House

Each year Central Healthcare in Richardson conducts a safety fair to raise money for community needs. This year the organization presented a check to the Richardson Fire Department for \$16,500. The money will be used to help purchase a Fire Safety House that the department will use to increase public awareness of home fire safety.

The interior of the safety house is designed to simulate the interior of a home but is on a trailer so it can be taken to schools, community events, businesses and shipping areas. Inside the safety house, adults and children enter a simulated bedroom where fire fighters teach realistic fire escape techniques by using electronically operated smoke detectors and non-toxic smoke. As the artificial smoke enters the room, participants learn the necessary actions they should take to get safely out of a burning structure. The smoke is used for dramatic effect and is removed through the ventilation system. There is a 9-1-1 programmed telephone system in the living room that gives children the opportunity to practice calling 9-1-1. An operator in the control room of the safety house will answer the phone in the same manner as an actual emergency telecommunicator. There is also a full-size kitchen where participants can receive safety information on how to avoid cooking fires, prevention of burns and other general safety information.

Richardson Fire Department receives Fire Safety House

The Richardson Fire Department took possession of a new Fire Safety House in October after four years of fundraising efforts led by the Citizen Fire Academy Alumni Association (CFAAA). Donations of \$35,000 and grants totaling \$25,000 allowed the Fire Department to purchase the fire safety training tool without using any City funds.

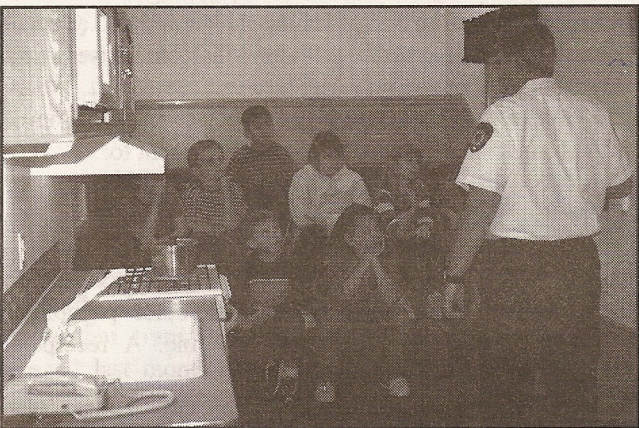


The new Fire Safety House is pulled by a utility vehicle and is self contained.

"From day one, we made this a 'doable' project, and directed our time and energies to acquiring a Fire Safety House for the City of Richardson," said Alicia Marshall, president of the Citizen Fire Academy Alumni Association. "We knew this could be a reality. The CFAAA is excited and pleased that this House is now in Richardson and we are thrilled to have a great safety presentation for our children and families."

The Fire Safety House is a mobile classroom that features child-size rooms and real-life hazards such as smoke and heat.

"The Fire Safety House provides a hands-on learning experience that gives children and their families the skills and knowledge they need to prevent fires and the steps to follow if they find themselves in a fire situation," Richardson Fire Marshal Steve Dossett said. "The CFAAA saw the need for this and thanks to their hard work and the donations from community members and community merchants, the Richardson Fire Department has a training device that we can take directly to the schools or to City events."



The living room of the Fire Safety House provides seating and is used to demonstrate kitchen fire hazards.

Once the Fire Safety House is on location it is completely self contained and can be powered by its own generator. Before entering the Fire Safety House, children are shown a fire safety video on the television monitor located on the

The Fire Safety House includes a kitchen, living room and bedroom. It can seat 12 to 15 children on built-in risers. The program, presented by instructors who are also Fire Department personnel, is tailored to students in grades 3 through 6.

The kitchen area has a microwave and a stove with burners that glow but do not heat, and common kitchen fire hazards are discussed. The log-light fireplace in the living room is a focal point for discussions for home fire hazards. There is a phone in the living room for the children to practice calling 9-1-1. An instructor acts as the dispatcher while sitting in the fully enclosed control room, hidden from view. The children talk to a real person and not a recording to provide a more interactive lesson. The living room also has a smoke detector, a carbon monoxide detector and a manual pull-down fire alarm lever that can be demonstrated.

In the bedroom, the children are taught to roll off the bed and onto the floor when they hear the smoke alarm. Non-toxic water-based smoke is pumped into the room as the children crawl to the bedroom door. They are instructed to feel if the door is hot. The bedroom door in the Fire Safety House can be heated to mimic the effects of a fire on the other side. If the door is hot, the children "escape" the room through the bedroom window using a ladder.

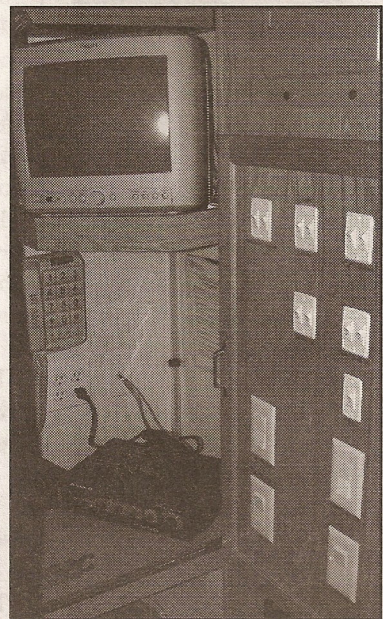
The Fire Safety House is not limited to fire prevention education since it is equipped with a "Severe Weather Package." The students are put through a severe weather experience. The television in the living room announces a tornado warning. Sirens go off, strobe lights replicate a lightning storm, there are thunderclaps and the window blinds shake. Then instructors discuss what the kids should do in the event of a tornado.

"The Fire Safety House is a state of the art educational tool," Dossett said. "We go to the schools and talk to the kids about fire prevention, but having them go through a hands-on experience is the best teaching tool."

For more information about the Fire Safety House contact Steve Dossett at 972-744-5752.

In addition to many local residents contributing to this project, the following area merchants and corporations contributed to the purchase of the Fire Safety House:

Baylor Richardson Medical Center (now Richardson Regional Medical Center); B.B. Owen Trust; Central Healthcare; Compass Bank; FSI Restaurants; Innovative Printer Solutions; J.J. Pearce Homeowners Association; M.B. and Edna Zale Foundation; MCI of Richardson; Preferred Imaging;



The control room in the Fire Safety House is used to operate the training features and a staff member in the room also acts as a 9-1-1 dispatcher to teach children how to make emergency phone calls.