

News Release

MULLAN TRAIL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT WINS KOOTENAI
COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE FIRE PREVENTION RAFFLE



Pictured from left to right: Chief Merritt, Stephen Mahaffey (Father), Riley Mahaffey, Avery Walker (Mother), Firefighter Tony Blasick

Riley Mahaffey, 5th grade student at Mullan Trail Elementary School in Post Falls, was presented with a RAZOR Electric Scooter and a helmet by Kootenai County Fire and Rescue's (KCFR) Chief Warren Merritt. The second week of October is National Fire Prevention Week, and Riley attended one of nearly twenty presentations given by KCFR firefighters to local 3rd and 5th grade students.

This year the national theme for Fire Prevention Week was "Don't Wait - Check the Date." The presentations explained a widely unknown fact that smoke alarms expire ten years from the manufacture date. This date is printed on the back of the alarm, so the unit must be removed from the wall or ceiling to check its expiration.

The fire prevention presentation attended by Riley and other students covered many important topics. Answers to the following questions were discussed: What should be done if a person's clothes catch on fire? What should be done if home smoke alarms are activated? How often should smoke alarm batteries be replaced? How should smoke alarm expiration dates be checked? At the end of the presentation, students were given a "homework" assignment to complete with their parents (see below for an example). The project was to inspect every smoke alarm in their house to ensure the alarm worked, the batteries had been changed in the last six months, and the alarm was less than ten years old. Each student was required to obtain a parent signature and return the completed project to his or her teacher to be entered into a drawing for the RAZOR scooter.

Riley was the lucky winner of the KCFR district-wide drawing. While completing the project, he also discovered that none of the smoke alarms in his home were operational. According to data obtained from the homework projects, only 44% of students were protected by fully functioning smoke alarms that were less than ten years old and contained fresh batteries. Even more startling, nearly 10% of students were completely unprotected with no working smoke alarms in the home at all. Through a generous outside donation, KCFR also presented Riley and his family with four new smoke alarms.

KCFR would like to remind the community of the following smoke alarm safety tips:

- “Don’t wait - check the date!” Smoke alarms should be replaced every ten years.
- “Change your clocks - change your batteries!” Smoke alarm batteries should be replaced twice per year, even if the alarm is hardwired.
- Test smoke alarms by pushing the “test” button at least once per month to ensure proper operation.
- Smoke alarms should be installed in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the home including the basement.

If you have any questions regarding smoke alarms, or if you would like to know how to donate smoke alarms to help other families in need, please contact Kootenai County Fire and Rescue at 208-777-8500.

Homework Project

Alarm	Manufacture Date	Is the alarm working?	How old is the alarm?	Should the alarm be replaced	Last date the batteries were replaced.	Should batteries be replaced?
Living Room	9/2004	Yes	12 Years	YES	2/2015	Yes