

Photo by Mike C. Mulvey

Hole in one????

Jay Socol, a speech communication major, and Chris Hurt, an elementary education major, take a break from studying with a little friendly competition at Putt-Putt Golf in College Station.

Five die in Oak Cliff blaze; lack of knowledge blamed

DALLAS (AP) — What Willie Wallace would like to see should have come earlier, for the sake of his neighbors. Had he seen it, Mary Graham and four youngsters who died in a house fire might still be alive.

"What I really, really would like to see done in our community is fire safety, because I know there have been a lot of fires lately," Wallace said. "I know it's done in the schools, but I think the parents need to know these tactics because they're the ones who will be taking control in a fire anyway."

The fire at the Oak Cliff home broke out shortly after 11 p.m. Sunday.

"The fire itself didn't amount to a whole lot," a dispatcher who declined to give his name said. "It's smoke inhalation that gets most people."

And it appears smoke inhalation contributed to the deaths of Graham 71; Sierra Faggett, 17 months; Demarcus Faggett, 2; Latrece Faggett, 13 and Terrence Faggett, 17.

Fire Investigator Mike Southerland said the house had no smoke detector, and was secured with "double-key" deadbolts, a type of lock which requires separate keys to lock the house from the inside and outside.

"It is not the type we like people to have," Southerland said, adding that fire officials had not determined whether the locks prevented escape.

Meanwhile, investigator Randy Sanders said the lack of a smoke detector probably was a contributing factor in the deaths in the fire, which he said appeared to have been accidental.

A spokesman for the Dallas County Medical Examiner's office, Beverly Handy, said all victims suffered smoke inhalation.

Graham also suffered from burns and a heart condition, Handy said, while Sierra suffered burns as well.

Recent area fires have claimed several lives. Some died after firefighters were

slowed in freeing them because of iron burglar bars.

Sanders said he didn't think there had been any specific fire prevention programs directed at the neighborhood.

Paramedics attempted to resuscitate Sierra and Demarcus, but they were declared dead shortly after arriving at Parkland Memorial Hospital, Virginia Brandenburg, emergency room charge nurse, said.

Latrece died in the emergency room of Methodist Medical Center, Linda Dickson, nursing supervisor, said.

Terrence died at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas, Glenda Coley, emergency room assistant supervisor, said.

Graham, who was initially transported to Methodist, was transferred by helicopter to the Parkland burn unit in critical condition with burns to her face and upper body. She later died, Brandenburg said.

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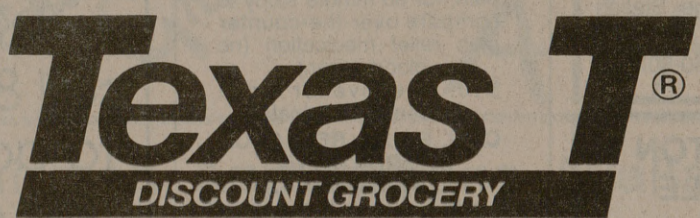
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