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Robert Schoonover is known for making sure his fellow firefighters know the hazards they may face when entering a commercial building, but the children know him as the man who launched the idea for the City's first Burleson Fishing Adventures program in 2013. Two fire lieutenants nominated the Burleson Fire Department engineer for the 2013 Fire Chief's Award. Schoonover accepted the award at the annual banquet.

"Robert took it upon himself to start Burleson Fishing Adventures," Fire Lt. Greg Mason said. "He used his love of the outdoors and fishing to coordinate volunteers, the parks department, local businesses, Burleson Professional Fire Firefighters Association #4025 and the police department. Through his efforts, and despite bad weather, many local youth were able to enjoy a day of fishing and received free fishing poles and equipment."

The 45-year-old fire engineer is a native of Fort Worth. He graduated from high school in 1987. Schoonover started out as a volunteer firefighter for the Burleson Fire Department in 1998 and was hired as a career firefighter in 2003.

"I wanted to stay close to home and Burleson has great people and citizens to work with and for," Schoonover said. "I really had a desire to help people in need."

He earned a Chief's Achievement Award in 2001 and Rookie Firefighter of the Year for 2003. Schoonover earned his emergency medical technician certification and advanced from firefighter to fire engineer in 2005. He is certified as an advanced firefighter, fire instructor, driver/operator and hazardous materials technician. He is also certified in swift water rescue.

Lt. Mike Jones praised Schoonover for the "exceptional pride he takes in his job as an engineer" and for always being willing to "take on any task assigned to him, no matter the size."

One of those programs is the department's preplan program. This program assists firefighters by giving them the information they need to know concerning hazards that exist in commercial buildings.

"He has spent countless hours perfecting this program and has even spent his own time assisting fellow firefighters with any questions that might come up while conducting these surveys," Lt. Jones said. "He has a great love and pride for his job and the department he serves. I believe it is actions like this that go above and beyond his normal assigned duties."

Schoonover's family includes his wife Barbara and two sons, 21-year-old Cody and 12-year-old Austin.