Richard creates cool way to cook

By Chris Segura
Staff Writer

ABBEVILLE — It’s not unusual to go to the refrigerator before cooking.

But Johnny Richard goes to the refrigerator while he cooks. He cooks in a refrigerator.

He got the idea from Mother Earth News. He does it because it’s fun, economical and interesting, he says.

This is how it works:
First, you get an old, metal-lined refrigerator. Next, you cut a two-inch ventilation hole in the rear, near the top. The only other thing you need is a small hibachi, charcoal, starter and matches. Oh, yes, and the food.

A tiny amount of charcoal can cook the entire fridge-full of food, he says.

Ingenuity comes naturally to the Richard household. At their home on S. Henry Drive and in a shop next door in a portion of his family’s old auction barn, Richard builds and repairs saddles while his wife, Kathy, makes scrimshaw on alligator teeth. Swamp ivory, she calls her creations.

Richard has only one warning about the unusual cooking style, proving that every idea has a drawback.

“Don’t try to cool your beer in it,” he says with a mischievous smile.