

# Alton Police warning people to be cautious of solicitors

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer  
October 19 2016 1:02 PM



**ALTON** - The **Alton Police Department** is warning the public against donating to people claiming to help the family of slain St. Louis County Police officer and Alton native **Blake Snyder** without research.

This warning was issued after two Alton City employees reported being solicited over the phone for donations to the police. The number calling to ask for donations had a 314 area code, denoting it was based from St. Louis. Even if people have good intent to

donate to the family, **Alton Police Chief Jake Simmons** said those people would ensure that money goes to the right place by donating to **Backstoppers**.

"Usually people calling and asking for donations to an officer's family is not on the up-and-up," he said. "We ask people to donate to Backstoppers, which is what we use to help the families of first responders killed in the line of duty."

Backstoppers is a charity, which provides for the families of police officers, firefighters, EMTs and other emergency responders in the event they die in the line of duty. It is not the only charity to do so, Simmons said.

"I know there are other programs out there," he said. "When in doubt, call your local police to ensure it is on the up-and-up."

Simmons also encouraged people to ask the police department before donating to charities seeming a bit less than honest. He said several organizations in the Alton area need money, especially this time of year, with the holidays just around the corner.

"Lots of people in the area need support," he said. "I'm not telling anyone not to donate. There are a lot of people in need. Organizations like the **Salvation Army**, **Oasis Women's Center**, the **Boys and Girls Club** and the **YWCA** all do great things and need support."