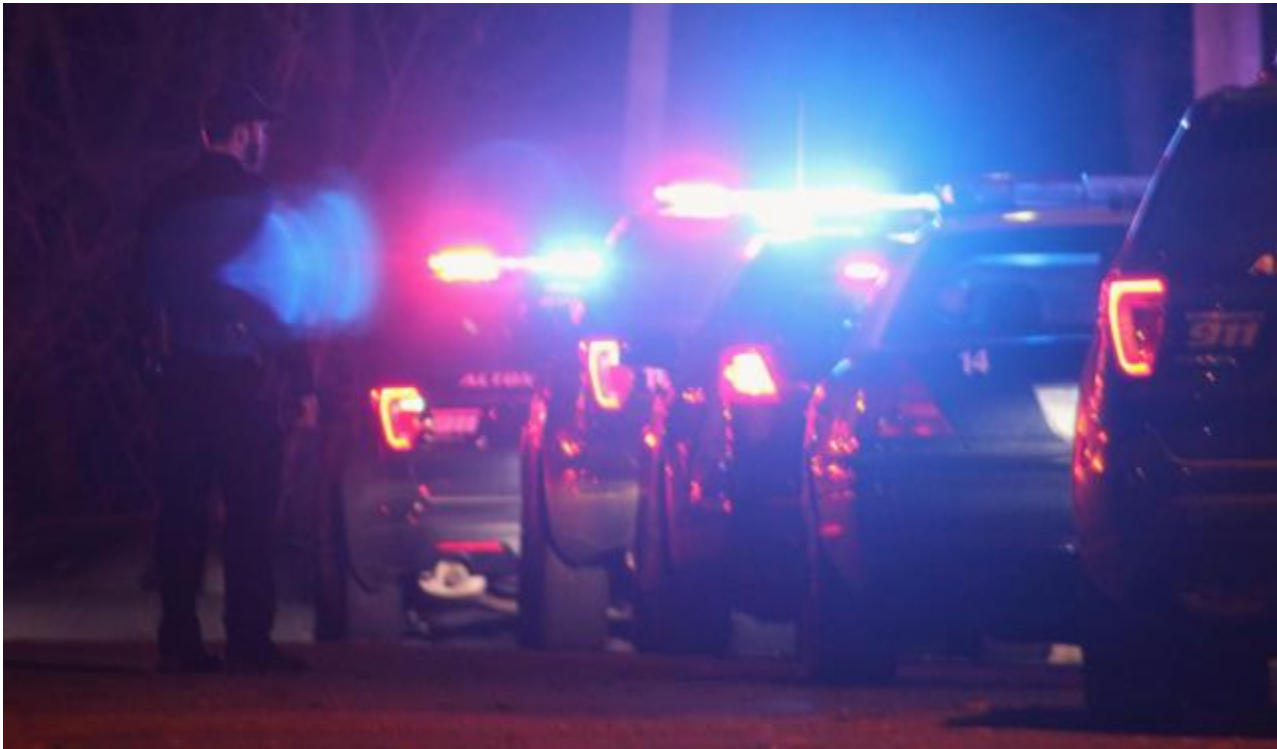


# Three homicides, eight days: What's causing this violence in Alton?

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer  
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**ALTON** – The Alton Police Department is investigating its third homicide in eight days.

A person was murdered last night in the 3400 block of Bolivar just before 6 p.m. Thursday. Since that case is still under investigation, details are still sparse at this time. Another murder started the Thanksgiving Holiday Weekend with a domestic-related double shooting on Edwards. Yesterday, there was also a report that two missing persons from Alton were discovered in Carrollton – a 22-year-old woman who was

found alive, and her six-month-old little boy who was found dead in a shallow grave. Charges on that last one are expected today from the Greene County State's Attorney's Office.

There was also a shooting Thursday night in the 800 block of Ridge Street. No one died, but it was still another act of violence in Alton.

But what does it all mean?

“We have no explanation of what's been happening over the last eight days,” Alton Police Chief Jason Simmons said. “None of these incidents are anything we could have prevented. My guys have been working 80-90 hours straight, taking cat naps at their desk. The men and women in blue have shown true dedication to the city. Who would have thought we'd have this much violence not only in Alton but in the Riverbend area? Alton is a great community.”

When Simmons said “none of these incidents are anything we could have prevented,” he meant the police had no forewarning those exact incidents would take place. None of the incidents in Alton seem to have been random. In the grand majority of them, the victim and perpetrator knew each other – in some cases, quite well. So what can be done to curb this violence in the city?

“People need to be taught the skills to deal with disappointment and problems in a non-violent way,” Alton Public Information Officer Emily Hejna said. “All of this happens when people are so enraged they cannot see past the next few moments. We need to work with the youth and people in the community to come up with better conflict resolution skills.”