

# **Ghost Hunting for the Greater Good: A Very Alton Story (for the Benefit of Godfrey)**

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ALTON – The Riverbend is full of a great many things – two of which are people with good hearts raising money for causes and ghosts.

Both of those things will be combined April 19 at the Mineral Springs Mall when Riverbend Paranormal will be hosting a ghost-hunting fundraiser for the family of fallen

Godfrey Firefighter Captain Jake Ringering. Ringering was killed while fighting a house fire on a mutual aid call to Culp Lane in Bethalto. A wall fell outward onto Ringering, in the early evening hours of March 4. He died shortly after that incident at Alton Memorial Hospital.

Riverbend Paranormal Co-Founder Brian Murray is himself a Godfrey resident. Like almost everyone in the village (and in the area in general) he was touched by Capt. Ringering's sacrifice in the line of duty. He decided to donate his time and talents to help the family left in the wake of that tragedy.

“This is our home,” Murray said in a Facebook message. “The reason we are here is because first responders like Capt. Jake provide us with a safe environment to live in, raise our families in, and to enjoy life. These heroes go out day and night, putting themselves out there for all of us. It's important to me and my team to give our support and thanks.”

Murray's team specializes in attempting communication with things that go bump in the night. While Alton has hosted ghost hunters from across the nation – especially at locations like the Mineral Springs Mall and McPike Mansion – Riverbend Paranormal is one of the “home teams.”

The group will be hosting an interactive paranormal investigation at Mineral Springs Mall on the evening of April 19 from 7 p.m. - 1 a.m. Tickets are \$35 per guest and will include both an investigation and silent auction. Tickets are \$5 cheaper when purchased via Eventbrite, and Murray said 100 percent of the proceeds will go to benefit the Ringering Family.

“The night at Mineral Springs will be an interactive paranormal investigation,” Murray said. “We will search the dark halls as one big team trying to figure out what goes bump in the night. There will be stories, a silent auction and, hopefully, some spooky memories.”

Currently, Murray said his team is ready to accept upwards of 40 guests, which he described as a “manageable group, really able to attack the atmosphere.” More will be accepted at the door if need demands it.

Amateur investigators may be in for a treat or a spook if past investigations are any indication.

“The experiences we've had at Mineral Springs have been audible voices, EVP (electronic voice phenomena), full-bodied and partial-bodied apparitions, footsteps and moving objects,” Murray said. “Every investigation is different. Sometimes 'things' act

out more in large groups, but also we've had days and nights where small groups have had the interaction.”

Riverbend Paranormal began with an investigative team in 2007. Currently, it has 16 members. Murray said the main goal of the group is to help people understand and investigate paranormal phenomena.

“To search for answers to the unknown,” Murray said when asked what the group's purpose was. “We do a variety of events to help raise money for charities. The main charity we try to help is the Lost Limbs Foundation. Our focus moving forward is to help the Lost Limbs, the first responders and the veteran programs down the line, but also to have a good time doing something not everyone does.”

More information can be found on the group's Facebook page, and tickets in advance can be purchased here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/investigation-to-benefit-capt-jake-ringing-tickets>