

# Remembering Jake: First Anniversary of Godfrey Fire Captain Ringering's Death is Marked

by Chris Rhodes, Reporter  
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GODFREY - Today marks the one year anniversary of the death of Godfrey Fire Captain Jake Ringering.

Captain Ringering lost his life while battling a structure fire on March 6, 2019. A wall collapsed killing Ringering and seriously injuring Godfrey firefighter Luke Warner and two Bethalto firefighters.

After the fire at a press conference Godfrey's then fire chief Erik Kambarian described Ringering as "gold" saying "everyone wanted to train with him and be on duty with him, so they could learn from him. He said Ringering's efforts often attracted people to the Godfrey Fire Protection District due to his dedication and professionalism."

Before becoming a firefighter, however, Capt. Ringering worked at Fischer Lumber – just across the street from the East Alton Fire Department. He worked with Musgrave and Paul Stover. They continued to work thereafter Ringering joined the department. The two were delivering shingles on Wednesday, April 26, 2007.

Musgrave and Stover recounted delivering a load of shingles to a residence in East Alton. A part of the truck came into contact with a power line and sent a current of electricity through Musgrave's body. This knocked him unconscious and Stover pulled him from the vehicle before the tires burst into flames and ignited the rest of the truck's contents. The homeowner then called 911. "At this point, he wasn't breathing so I really didn't know what to do," Stover said in a message. "Honestly, I was just panicking. At this point, I just looked over my shoulder and Jake was just there. He was off-duty, I think he was working for the East Alton Fire Department at the time. But, he was there for what seemed like hours before other first responders showed up. I had no track of time. But, if he didn't show up when he did and act so calm and collected I don't know. But, he got James to breathe again, and kept him breathing." Musgrave said Ringering was off-duty but lived down the street, less than a block away. They said he received the call on his pager and arrived on the scene before anyone else. He credits his life to Ringering.

Captain Ringering came from a family of firefighters, his grandpa was an East Alton firefighter, his dad Larry Ringering worked his way through the ranks and was East Alton Fire Chief then over the Madison County Emergency Management. His brother was also a firefighter for East Alton then Godfrey.

Friends of Ringering described him as always smiling and a happy guy. Ringering was huge into training new firefighters and was a teacher at Lewis and Clark Community College in the fire science program.



After Ringering's death Backstoppers presented a check for \$10,000 upon their loved one's passing, which they can use for whatever they need. Also, area businesses and community members had multiple fundraisers and donated the proceeds to the family of Ringering and the other injured firefighters.

At Captain Ringering's visitation over 1,000 first responders across Illinois, Missouri and as far as Chicago, New York City, Boston and many more showed their respects. During the funeral procession, hundreds of residents lined the streets holding up signs, flags, and other items to show support.

On August 22, 2019, the Madison County board passed a resolution to demolish the house where Captain Ringering fought his last fire.

