



# The ghosts of Ohio<sup>®</sup> Newsletter

www.ghostsofohio.org

Volume 15 Issue 3

FROM THE SPOOKY DESK OF JAMES WILLIS:

## CHANGES ARE COMING. SOME ARE ALREADY HERE!



James

In the last issue of The Ghosts of Ohio Newsletter, which was also our final one of 2017, I spoke of changes that were coming to our organization. Specifically, how The Ghosts of Ohio goes about “doing business.” Well, those changes have already started seeping into our newsletter,

which you’ll see as you continue reading.

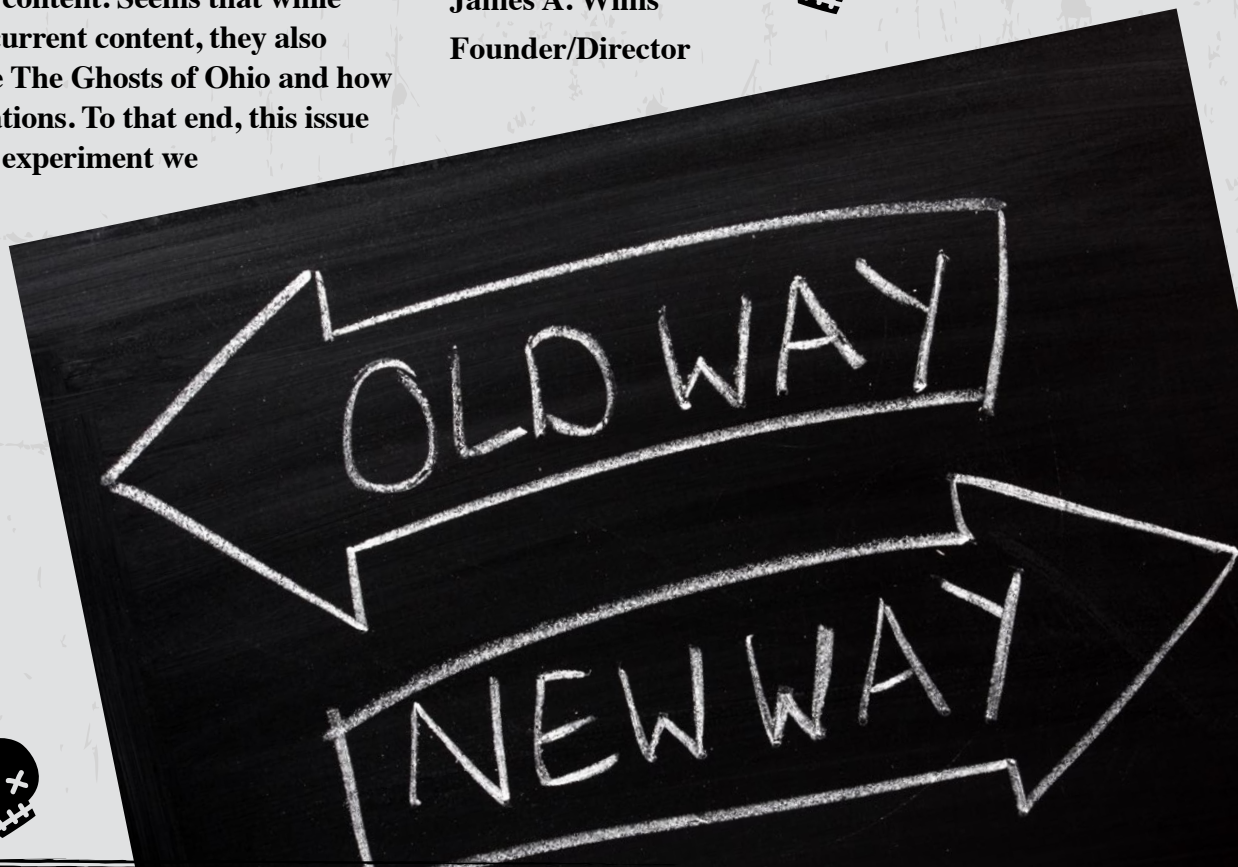
For starters, we listened to the feedback we’d gotten on newsletter content. Seems that while people enjoyed our current content, they also wanted a peek inside The Ghosts of Ohio and how we conduct investigations. To that end, this issue contains not only an experiment we did to see how cell phones could affect various EMF detectors, but also a brief overview on something else we’ve been digging into—if alcohol can make you see things that aren’t really there.

We also decided to start taking a broader view of the paranormal world around us. So this issue includes a review of the recent Twinsburg Paranormal Conference.

So what do you think of the newsletter changes? Anything else you’d like to see us cover? Let us know!

Cheers,

James A. Willis  
Founder/Director



## PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

# The Woman In The Woods

—Jim M., Mansfield, OH

When I was 10 years old, my family bought a house outside of Mansfield, Ohio. It was down an old dirt road off an old country road, so there was never any traffic. There really wasn't much to do and we didn't have many neighbors or people that even lived within a couple of miles of us. But that was fine with me because my two brothers and I used to like to run around in the woods behind our house. It was about five acres and since we owned it, we could pretty much do whatever we wanted back there. There was a little stream and we would catch frogs and try to fish. When we got older we would hunt out there, too. I loved those woods even though they were haunted.

We had been in the house maybe a year or so, so I would have been around 11 and my two brothers would have been 14 and 9. One day in the summer, we went out in the woods trying to figure out the best place to put up a tree fort when my one brother said, "Who is that lady?" and pointed. When I looked, I saw a lady in a white shirt and jeans and she looked like she was pointing at a tree on her right. We all saw her and I remember thinking that maybe she was a neighbor who thought we were on her property. I asked my brothers what we should do and my oldest said, "I'll go talk to her." But when we looked back,

she was gone. But we had all seen her standing there. We sort of looked around a little bit but then when we couldn't find her, we just went back to playing. Sounds weird that we didn't investigate or even talk about it anymore, but I guess we were just being kids.

Here's the weird thing. Even though we ended up putting the tree fort clear on the other side of the woods, from time to time, I would see that same woman. She was always wearing the same thing—white shirt, blue jeans and she had brown curly hair. And she was always pointing at the same tree. I know it sounds weird that I didn't think anything of it at the time, but I just thought she was some crazy lady from the area and didn't want us trespassing on her property or something. And it wasn't like she looked like a ghost or anything. She wasn't floating in the air and I couldn't see through her. She just looked like a person.

I guess it was a couple of years later and my brothers and I were just walking around in the woods, shooting the breeze and not really paying attention to much of anything. My oldest brother said something to the effect of "we're getting close to that weird lady's tree." That's when we got to talking and the three of us, for the

first time, told each other that we'd been seeing the same woman in the woods for years. And that every time one of us saw her, she was pointing at the same tree.

Finally, we decided to go over to the tree to see what was up. I was half-expecting the woman to show up, but she never did. But we all agreed on the spot where she was standing and what tree she was pointing at. I decided to stand where we usually saw her standing and point. My two brothers looked at the tree where I was pointing and found what looked like an old, rusty necklace, nailed to the tree. There was a little locket on the necklace, and you could open it. But if there had been something inside, it was long gone. It was then that we realized that the lady was probably a ghost! We were going to take the necklace, but then we thought that if she was a ghost, she might follow us home. So we left it there. The bottom line is that ever since we found that necklace, we never saw the woman again. It was as if she wanted us to find it, although I don't know why. Over the years, I've tried doing some research, but I've never been able to find out who the woman was or why her necklace was nailed to the tree in the woods.

# EMF TEST #1: FUN WITH CELL PHONES

OK, before we begin, let's go ahead and get something out of the way: EMF meters do not detect ghosts. Rather, they are designed to detect and measure electromagnetic fields (EMF), a real field of energy. It doesn't matter what sort of bells, whistles, and/or flashing lights an EMF device comes with, it's not going to be able to detect a ghost. Why? Simply put, no one knows what a ghost is, so it's impossible to prove that an EMF meter can detect one. That of course raises the question: If they can't detect ghosts, why do so many paranormal researchers use EMF meters on investigations?

Well, the reason The Ghosts of Ohio uses EMF meters on investigations is that we believe a ghost is, in its most basic form, a form of energy. So in theory, the presence of "ghost energy" may be able to be detected by an EMF meter. So for example, if we have an EMF meter sitting on a table and it has been measuring a steady EMF of 0.02 for hours and then it suddenly jumps to 10.2, this could be something that indicates something ghostly is taking place. Of course, there are numerous other non-ghostly reasons that the EMF could have spiked (something electrical being turned on nearby, for example), so all of us at The Ghosts of Ohio know to immediately start looking at the surrounding environment whenever there's an EMF spike.

Usually, the culprit is quickly identified because we can see or hear the change—someone turning the lights on in a room, hearing a furnace kicking it, etc.). All of which led us to ask the question: How do electrical things we can't see affect EMF readings? And that's how our series of EMF experiments were born.

For our first experiment, we wanted to focus on something that is usually present in multiple forms on every investigation, but one that is seldom looked upon as being a potential EMF culprit: The cell phone.



Not only do we often forget about our cell phones during an investigation, but they are usually stuffed in a pocket somewhere, meaning out of sight could be out of mind. So once the lights on an EMF start flashing, it's easy to forget that a cell phone is constantly putting out energy with all the incoming and outgoing calls, texts, and even updating apps.

For this experiment, we tested several different makes and models of EMF meters, including:

- EMF Field Testers
- Natural Tri-Field Meters
- K-II Meters
- ELF Meters
- Cell Sensors (aka: The Ghost Meter)
- MEL Meters

We arranged the meters in a wide circle on the floor, with the meters being randomly placed throughout the circle (as opposed to, for example, putting all the K-II Meters next to each other. We then placed one of our cell phones in the center and ran it through a series of functions:

- Send a text
- Receive a text
- Call another phone
- Receive a call from another phone
- Connect to the Internet

We also put the phone in "Airplane Mode" and then had someone send the phone a text and then call the phone. That completed the tests we did with one phone. From there, we put a different make and model cell phone in the center of the meters and repeated the series of functions, watching to see if and how the meters reacted.

What we saw was that while some of the devices didn't react to the cell phone activity at all, others responded every time. And the results were consistent across the different devices. In other words, if one type of device reacted to the cell phone, regardless of the make and model of the other devices, they reacted as well.

*(continued on page 4.)*



*Some of our experiments were conducted under the watchful eye of unofficial Ghosts of Ohio mascot, Furry John*

# EMF TEST #1: FUN WITH CELL PHONES CONT.

## EMF Field Testers

Did not appear to react at all, although there was sometimes a slight (0.01-0.02) increase. It didn't happen every time and couldn't be replicated, so we were unable to say for sure that the cell phone caused the increase.

## Natural Tri-Field Meter

Did not react to the cell phone at any time.

## K-II Meter

Reacted strongly (often pegging out—lighting all the lights up) to the cell phone, regardless of which cell phone was being used or what function the phone was doing.

## ELF Meters

Did not react to the cell phone at any time.

## Cell Sensors (aka: The Ghost Meter)

Slight reactions to the cell phones, but needed to be in extremely close proximity to the phones (1-2 inches away from it)

## MEL Meters

Did not react to the cell phone at any time.

I think the most surprising part of this little experiment was that the Ghost Meter needed to be almost touching the cell phone(s) in order for it to register anything. Those of you who didn't pay the extra \$10-\$20 to get the "ghost meter" sticker on their device know that these things are really just cell sensors, which should mean that they pick up cell phone signals. And in our experiment, they did. We were just a little surprised as how close they had to be to the phone in order to do that.

The other interesting thing was how strongly the K-II meters reacted to the cell phone, regardless if the phone was sending or receiving. In all instances where the phone was performing a function, all of the lights on the K-II would light up, sometimes a good 2-3 seconds after the phone had completed the function (received the call, etc.).

So our takeaway from the experiment was that while some EMF meters repeatedly and consistently reacted to a cell phone being used, others did not. Seems that if you're on an investigation and your K-II starts acting all crazy, check to make sure it's not picking up the phone in your pocket. Or better yet, just put your phone in Airplane Mode and you won't have to worry about it at all!

**NEXT ISSUE:**  
The effect of wireless routers  
on EMF meters.



**GOT A  
SCARY STORY  
TO TELL?**

Have you had a ghostly encounter in Ohio? Want to see it featured in a future issue of The Ghosts of Ohio Newsletter? Then here's all you have to do:

Just write down your story and send it to [info@ghostsofohio.org](mailto:info@ghostsofohio.org) with the subject line "Newsletter Ghost Story." Be sure to also include your name as you'd like it to appear with the story. We'll take it from there and send you out an email letting you know which issue it is going to appear in. That way, you can get all your friends to sign up for the newsletter so they can see how famous you are!

# Twinsburg Paranormal Conference

February 17, 2018



Wendy

This was the first year for the Twinsburg Paranormal Conference, put on by fellow ghost hunter **Brian D. Parsons**. And it was a heck of a first year! It is about time we had a paranormal conference up here on the north shore of the state, so thank you for that Brian. And this was not a slammed together production; it was quality all the way. The speakers

were respectful of their time allowance, the space was comfortable, the food was good. The lineup included speakers from all realms of the paranormal; ghosts, ufos, cryptids, vampires...there was pretty much a speaker for every type of taste. There was a good representation of vendors also, from a haunted tour group to gemstones and sage, along with the speakers selling their books.



Aaron Clark

After Brian gave a quick opening speech, the event was on. Opening was **Aaron Clark**, the co-director of The Cleveland Ufology Project, the oldest continually operating UFO research group, which was created in 1952. Aaron talked about what got him interested in the field of ufology—a sighting in the Parma area when he was a child. The sighting was also experienced by his mother, and it seems like his entire family has had some type of UFO experience. This drove him on the quest of “what are they,” and leading him to the Cleveland Ufology Project. He

talked about several area sightings, including the 1994 Trumbull county sighting which led to police from several counties out chasing the object and the Hopkins Airport sighting where not only did people as far away as Olmsted Falls call in to police, but air traffic controllers watched the object from the control tower for 45 minutes. He also spoke about his experience investigating the Chillicothe Crop circle of 2012, along with some theories on how to tell where a circle is likely to occur.

Find the Project at [www.clevelandufo.com](http://www.clevelandufo.com).



Scott Sukel

Next up was **Scott Sukel**. If you ever investigated Mansfield Reformatory, then you know Scott. His presence there was so extensive that he even lived onsite for most of 2010. He spoke about his first experience with the paranormal, having a word with his grandfather as he walked up to the house from the barn, only to realize as he got to the house that his grandfather had been dead for years. That is how real the contact was. After his teenage years, he began working with the Ohio Ghost Hunter Society, learning all he could, eventually partaking in some pretty brutal cases that church clergy called him in to help with. Throughout his presentation, he reiterated that investigators need to look at every situation with fresh eyes, and not just stick to their usual routine. When you are

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# Twinsburg Paranormal Conference Cont.



focused on what you think you should be doing, you can be missing what is actually going on. He also seconded The Ghosts of Ohio's belief that you should NEVER provoke... always treat a spirit kindly and with respect. Your results will be much better. And a suggestion he made that I definitely want to pass on—listen during your investigation as if you are listening to your evidence afterwards with that same concentration level. Really focus on listening to what is going on around you. Don't just walk through, running your recorder to listen afterwards. Another great tip: turn off your flashlight! When it is on, you are only focusing on what you see in the beam—you are missing everything else in the area. Sit still, let your eyes adjust, and then you are more apt to have a visual experience. Scott's favorite piece of equipment? Himself. In his words, don't get so blinded by the blinking lights and the FLIR and the beeping equipment that you are missing what is truly going on around you. Most experiences are felt, not seen.

The last speaker before the lunch break was **Colin Schneider**. Colin is a 17-year-old cryptid enthusiast, and with a presentation called "Bloodsucking Beasties and Shadowy Stalkers: A Study in Cryptid Predation," you knew you were in for a treat. Colin is very well-spoken. In fact, he speaks better than quite a few professional speakers that I have listened to over the years at these conventions. He is a very thorough researcher, and his presentation was clear and enjoyable. I learned more about animal and human attacks and what he believes the perpetrator was than I ever had before. He talked about known cryptids like chupacabra, and opened our eyes to things we hadn't heard of like "The Vampire Beast of Bladenboro" and "The Abominable Chicken Man." He concluded by explaining how newspapers at the turn of the 20th century often hoaxed these events when they had space to fill in their newspapers. He also posited a very sound theory on what really occurs when corpses are found that supposedly are bloodless. Check him out at [www.paranormal101.blogspot.com](http://www.paranormal101.blogspot.com).

After our lunch break (during which we grabbed Scott Sukel for a quick chat on what he is planning for his paranormal future), **Audrey Hamilton** gave a short talk on the Presque Isle State Park UFO. This occurred in 1966 at beach #6 on the Presque Isle peninsula near Erie, PA. Two families were picnicking, and upon leaving, got their car stuck in the sand. At that time, they saw an object come

down and land on beach #7. Alarmed, the men left to get help. When police arrived, the object left, and the police and the men headed to inspect beach #7, only to be pulled back by the women screaming and beeping the car horn. Apparently as the men left, a bigfoot like creature appeared next to the still-trapped car. And here Audrey made a good point—often times different paranormal events happen in conjunction with one another. We as investigators should be teaming together; ghost hunters should investigate with cryptid researchers, and UFO researchers should work with ghost hunters. For all we know, all of this is tied in together, and together we can solve the mystery.

**Brandon Massullo** spoke next. I heard his presentation on his work at Mary King's Close in Edinburgh, Scotland, years ago at another convention, so it was a pleasure to hear about the continuation of his work. He talked to us about the Survival Hypothesis, and talked about cases that involved crisis apparitions, and how these can actually be the cause of some hauntings. Say for instance a family member is killed in a car crash in another state. At that time, in your state, you hear their voice, you feel sudden pain and you just KNOW something happened. Flash forward 40 years, and people living in the house complain about hearing a voice, and feeling odd pain. Are they actually just re-witnessing the crisis apparition? Are crisis apparitions creating what we know of as residual haunts? These hauntings can occur at the site the crisis occurred, and at the receiving site of the transmitted message. Brandon called this Spontaneous Apparitional Trace Theory. This really gives investigators something to get their teeth into. What are people actually witnessing? So many things to think about, which is why I like hearing Brandon's talks. You always walk away with a new way of thinking about and approaching investigations. Check out his research at [www.HauntedTheories.com](http://www.HauntedTheories.com). You can also find him on facebook at Haunted Theories.

**Amy Bue** is a teacher who spends her spare time as a Bigfoot researcher. She really began to look into the Bigfoot question after seeing one at the Meander Reservoir. She joined up with the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization and began actively investigating sightings throughout Ohio. She went to such places as Shawnee State Park, where her group of five people had a large rock thrown at them while they were all sitting on the ground near their parked cars, miles into the forest. During that

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# Twinsburg Paranormal Conference Cont.

time they also heard rocks being clacked together, and recorded odd howls. She has also worked on the Olympic Project. If you haven't heard of their work, they are currently analyzing material from nests large enough for a man to lay fully down in, which have been found in the Olympic, WA, peninsula. They need to get this work done quickly, before the area is clear-cut. I am really intrigued by these nests, and hope that the results are shared with the world.

**Ronald Murphy** loves to look into old tales of otherworldly creatures, and researches them back to their state of origin. Today his topic was vampires, and he spoke about how vampires came out of a mix of early cannibalism, war gods, Ancient religious texts, plagues and superstitions. He goes back about 14,500 years ago, during the Younger Dryas. In Cheddar, England, at Gough's Cave, they found a butchering site for animals. Surprisingly, they found human bones, butchered in the same way. Skulls had been fashioned into cups, and they retained blood, as if these skulls were specifically used for drinking blood. Flash forward to 5,000 years ago, and we find Sekmet, a war goddess of Egypt, and Lilith, from the Jewish tradition. Lilith finds her way into Muslim tradition as Satan's bride. Their children, the djinn, re-animated fresh corpses, went back into their town and fed on the blood of the villagers. Another jump forward finds Lamia and Empusa, who caused crib death and fed upon men. He then talked about vampiric folk more commonly known to us, such as Vlad Tepes and Countess Bathory. Even today, bodies are still being dug up, having their hearts ripped out and burned, as near as just 8 years ago. Throughout it all, you find vampirism being blamed on deaths that were actually caused by plague and consumption. It's a fear and superstition that has been with man for eons. Ron also talked about current and future vampirism, such as empathic, elemental (drawing energy from the environment), and psychic (pulling energy from people in a gathering).

**Greg Feketik** was the final speaker and gave some good insight and tips into the things that you will encounter when investigating. One thing is to be prepared for your clients to not like your findings. When people are sure they are being haunted, some don't really want to hear that there is a logical explanation for what they are experiencing. It's your job as their researcher to just lay out the facts. They are going to do what they want with that information, and arguing with them is not going to help the situation. Also, when you are looking at your results, make sure that you yourself are not tainted by the thought that everything you see/hear is a ghost. Keep your mind open and always discount all explainable things before you come to the conclusion that you have real evidence. Be very aware of photos and EVPs that are provided to you. So much of this is easy to manipulate with computer programs. As an investigator, you always need to be on your toes. Good things to keep in mind when taking on the task of helping someone else with their haunting issues.

Thanks to Brian for putting on a great event, and to all of the speakers who shared their time with us. I hope this becomes a yearly event, and that we can all continue to come together and share our thoughts without fear of mockery. The paranormal community is always stronger when they work with each other rather than against each other, and I saw a great example of that at the conference.





## CAN ALCOHOL REALLY MAKE SOMEONE SEE PINK ELEPHANTS ...AND GHOSTS?



James

There's this really weird thing that supposedly happens to people when they imbibe a bit too much: They see things that aren't there. If you've watched enough classic cartoons and/or

Disney movies, for some reason, the things they see are usually pink elephants.

True or not, the idea that alcohol can somehow make you see things that aren't really there has permeated the field of paranormal research. Case in point, ever since 2001, The Ghosts of Ohio Witness Interview form contains multiple questions regarding someone's alcohol consumption. But is it really true? Can alcohol really have that effect on some people? Perhaps more importantly, if you were interviewing someone concerning seeing a ghost, would there be any telltale signs that might suggest the person's encounter was alcohol-induced?

We'll start by getting to the bottom of this whole pink elephants thing. Seems that as far back as the 1900s (perhaps even longer), there were stories of extremely drunk individuals seeing all sorts of creatures that weren't really there. Usually, though, these were real-life animals such as snakes that weren't there at the moment. In 1913, author Jack London published the novel *John Barleycorn*, which featured an alcoholic character who saw "blue mice and pink elephants." From there, popular culture stepped in and suddenly intoxicated people were seeing all sorts of animals of all shapes, sizes, and colors. For whatever reason, the pink elephants remained the most popular. So popular that Disney's 1941 animated feature, *Dumbo*, featured the main character drinking champagne and then seeing singing and dancing pink elephants.

So now you know the background. But can alcohol really make you see things? The answer is "yes" and the condition is officially known as alcoholic hallucinosis,

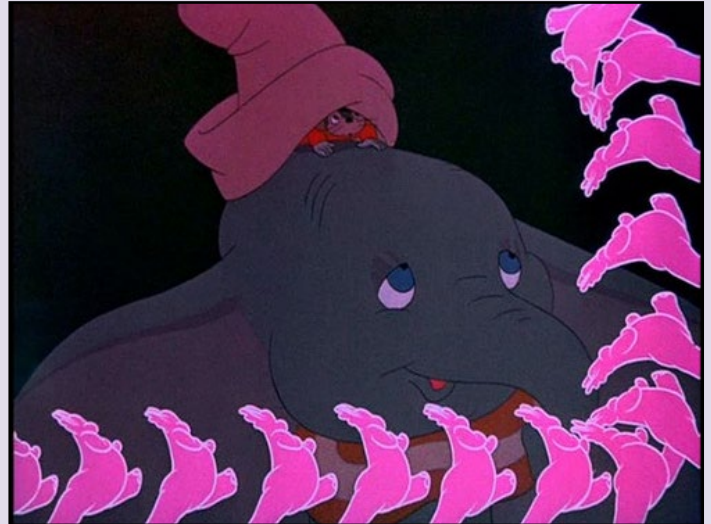
which is described as "a rare complication of chronic alcohol abuse characterized by predominantly auditory hallucinations that occur either during or after a period of heavy alcohol consumption.

From a paranormal/ghost perspective, there are two things in the description of alcoholic hallucinosis that should be addressed. The first is the fact that the hallucinations are "predominantly auditory." So, while this does not mean a person suffering from alcoholic hallucinosis can't see something that's not there (e.g., a ghost), they would be more likely to hear something instead. In fact, in the published studies of patients with alcoholic hallucinosis, less than 3% of all patients reported seeing something that was not actually there.

The second part of the description of alcoholic hallucinosis is how someone suffering from it would appear. In other words, if you were conducting an investigation and were interviewing someone who claimed to have seen a ghost, would you be able to tell just by looking at that person if what they saw was a result of alcohol hallucinosis?

The short answer is "no." There is no way to diagnose alcohol hallucinosis by doing nothing more than looking at a person. However, from a paranormal researcher perspective, the sad truth is that a person suffering from alcohol hallucinosis is going to present with more than enough "clues" that something is wrong.

In other words, since alcohol hallucinosis is the result of chronic alcohol abuse, the afflicted person is going to appear incredibly intoxicated (slurred speech, trouble standing, etc.). Also, the idea that



Controversial scene in Disney's *Dumbo* (1941), in which an intoxicated Dumbo and Timothy see "Pink Elephants On Parade"

an otherwise healthy individual could binge drink over a short period of time (i.e., over the course of a day or even a weekend) and begin to hallucinate is incredibly unlikely. Multiple studies of patients diagnosed with alcohol hallucinosis found that most had been consuming upwards of 20 ounces of hard liquor on a daily basis for decades before they began experiencing hallucinations. So the possibility that you would interview someone and not recognize that something alcohol-related was going on does not seem possible. In all likelihood, this person is (hopefully) already under a doctor's care or getting treatment.

So all in all, it would appear that while alcohol can, in extreme cases, cause a person to hear and possibly see something that's not real, it is an incredibly rare condition and the afflicted person would certainly exhibit telltale signs that something is wrong. It should be noted that the studies dealt specifically with alcohol-related hallucinations and not any comorbid condition or situations where alcohol was combined with any other substances, controlled or uncontrolled. In essence, the presence of alcoholic hallucinosis alone does not totally discredit the validity of a ghost sighting. As always, dig deeper and continue to look for answers.



# Best Places to Investigate...or Not! (Investigation Safety)



Samantha

As a paranormal investigator, one of the first questions people like to ask me is, "So where's the best place you've investigated?" It's a tough

question because there are several places I've enjoyed investigating, regardless of whether or not I experienced anything ghostly. Sometimes it's the history that fascinates me, or the architecture. In those cases, finding evidence of the paranormal is icing on an already delicious cake.

To be honest, a much more interesting question (that I'm never asked) is, "So what are the worst places you've investigated?" I've got a running list in my head for those! What a lot of people don't realize about our investigations is that it's not always pretty. While we've explored plenty of clean, comfortable locations, there have also been a number of seedy, filthy, and downright unsafe ones that make participants like me question whether finding evidence of the paranormal is worth the risk to our own health and safety. Here is a list of some of the roughest conditions we've experienced, loosely ranked from least offensive to the nearly intolerable. I'll even throw in some tips to help you stay safe on your own adventures.

## Locations that are either too cold or too hot and stuffy

You probably don't think that something as simple as temperature would be that big of a deal, but the truth is that it can hamper an investigator's willingness or ability

to carry out necessary tasks; and in extreme cases it can threaten a person's health. I'm stating the incredibly obvious here. Too cold, and you risk frostbite and hypothermia. Too hot, and you risk dehydration and heatstroke. Use common sense and take precautions!



Our fearless leader, donning a mask in order to venture into a mold-infested basement

## Dust

Do you know what dust is made of? It's made up of things like human skin, animal dander, insect waste, lint, dirt, pollen, food particles, wood dust, ash, bacteria, mold spores and more. In old buildings, there's even a possibility that dust contains lead and asbestos, both of which are hazardous substances. To prevent inhaling too much dust, there is an assortment of dust masks available in stores or online. It's always a good idea to have some on hand for investigations, just in case.



## Bugs and spiders—Yuck

Most of us are repulsed by them, but even if you're a rare lover of creepy crawlies, there are plenty of reasons to be cautious of them if you value your health. For starters, many (ticks, mosquitoes, cockroaches, etc.) carry diseases that can be transmitted to humans, some of which can be deadly. How about the ones that sting, like bees, yellow jackets and hornets? Someone with an allergy who is stung

can experience anaphylaxis, which can cause his or her airway to swell, possibly causing death. And let's not forget about all of the different types of spiders out there. While most spider bites will simply leave you with an itchy red lump similar to a mosquito bite, there are others that can cause a lot more harm, even death. It's important to be prepared for whatever bugs/spiders you might encounter by wearing appropriate clothing and/or using repellent; and be sure that all food is well-sealed in air-tight containers. After all, you don't want to give those critters an extra reason to hang around.



## Animal feces and corpses

Yuck and double-yuck! Unfortunately, these are all too common in many investigation locations where animals can get in, and they can be detrimental to our health. Animal droppings can spread bacteria and disease; and bird and bat poop can contain harmful fungi. Since dried droppings can turn to dust and go everywhere, having a dust mask or respirator handy is a good idea, and be sure to wash your hands before eating. As for animal corpses, just avoid them.



## Rough neighborhoods and sketchy people

It's unsettling to conduct investigations in crime-ridden areas, or where there are questionable people lurking about. Some of the scariest moments in our investigations are when we discover strangers peeping through windows or, worse, hanging around the outer doors. In those cases we keep an extra close eye on each other, lock the doors, and if necessary, inform the police.

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## Best Places to Investigate...or Not! (Investigation Safety) Cont.



### Unstable structures

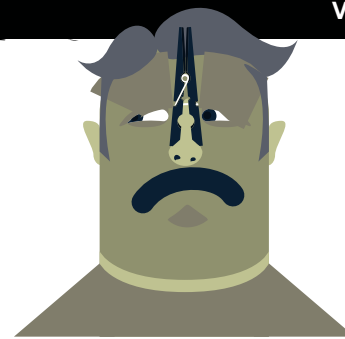
Have you ever walked through buildings with missing floorboards, leaning walls, or areas that had to be cordoned off due to instability? Believe me, it's not fun and it's downright dangerous. Avoid them!

### Mold

Most people know that mold can be extremely hazardous to health, and we've encountered it on a number of investigations. The dank, musty smell is always the first assault on our senses, followed by the sight of its fuzzy, sickly-colored stains on ceilings, walls and floors. Mold grows in areas that are damp and dark, like basements, bathrooms, and anywhere there's moisture and poor ventilation; and it can grow on most porous surfaces, like paint, wallpaper, fabric, carpet, insulation, and even dust!

Gross, right? And the health effects of mold are two-fold. First, inhaling mold spores can cause people to experience stuffiness, throat and eye irritation, coughing and wheezing, respiratory infections, and more. Use those masks, people! Second, mold can also weaken wood structures, like wall framing, roofing and floors. Have you ever walked on a soft floor before, or seen furniture that's literally sinking into the floor? It's one of the scariest things we've experienced on investigations. Obviously, we avoid those areas as soon as we discover them and ensure that everyone in the group is made aware of the situation. However, a better idea would be to avoid buildings like this altogether. The risks just aren't worth it.

On that note, here's one final tip: If you're about to sign a waiver to do a paid ghost hunt and you don't feel safe, walk away. Just leave. Sure,



you'll probably never get your money back, but you'll have your health. And that's a lot more pleasant than breathing in toxic mold and trying not to fall through the floorboards. Even the ghosts would back you up on that.

Do you have investigation gripes you'd like to share, or maybe your own list of "worst places" you've visited? We'd love to hear about them! And yes, I know. You're burning with curiosity about my top three "worst" list, right? Sorry, but I won't name names here, but if you meet me at one of our events, I would be happy to tell you in person. The only hints I'll give you here are: a) They are all located in Ohio, and b) Mansfield Reformatory is NOT among them.

Good luck, and happy (and safe) hunting!

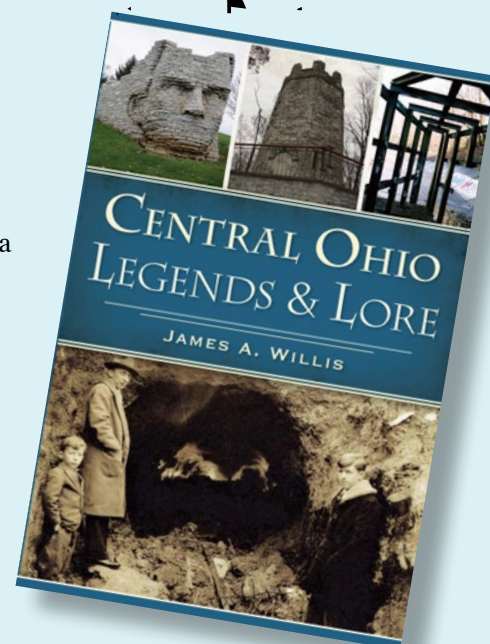
## OHIO HISTORY & LEGENDS: A CONTINUING EDUCATION CLASS

If you've been a subscriber to The Ghosts of Ohio newsletter for any length of time, you have no doubt realized that we are always striving to find that sweet spot where a ghost story and actual history meet. And if you're as fascinated with that as we are, here's a truly unique opportunity to spend the day learning more about it.

This summer, our very own founder and director, James A. Willis will be offering a 4-hour Continuing Education course on researching the historic aspects of Ohio's folklore and ghost stories. The course will be held on July 26th from 10:00 am until 3:00 pm, with a one-hour break for lunch.

Registration will begin as soon as the Summer Class Schedule is released in a few months. So go ahead and bookmark this link as it's where all the pertinent class information will appear in a few months!

<http://www.cotc.edu/Communities/Pages/Lifelong--Learning-Institute.aspx>



TV SHOW REVIEW:

# REAL FAKE OR UNKNOWN?



James

Earlier this year, I was flipping through the channels in an attempt to see just how far these paranormal reality shows have sunk. To be honest, it's not something I

enjoy doing, but I feel it's required if for no other reason that I can educate myself in order to talk about all the latest (and usually fake) things being beamed across our TV screens.

So as I sat there on my big comfy couch, getting angrier by the minute at seeing "true" stories that might as well have had titles like *The Hobgoblin That Stole My Breakfast Burrito* and *The Demonic Tax Advisor Who Failed To File My Taxes On Time, Despite My Repeated Reminders*, I came across a show that made me stop, smile, and then binge watch: *Real, Fake Or Unknown*.

I'd never heard of *Real, Fake or Unknown* before. I'm guessing that's because it's a new show that is currently running on The Science (or "SCI") Channel, which I didn't even know existed. *Real, Fake or Unknown* describes itself as follows:

*Every minute of everyday, thousands of videos are uploaded to the Internet. The most extreme and shocking go viral. But is that incredible viral video you just viewed real? In this series we'll probe and dissect some of the most watched clips, separating fact from fiction. Using scientific analysis and digital forensics we'll discover who made them, how and why. Some will be real, some will be fake, and some you'll just have to wait*

*and see. You'll never watch a viral video the same way again!*

Essentially, the show gathers up a bunch of "extreme" viral videos (i.e., people hanging off the edge of a skyscraper, getting stuck under a moving train, or lighting oneself on fire and then jumping into a snow bank...just because), divides them into categories like "animals" or "dangerous situations." They then use the whole 60-minute show to focus on 8-12 specific viral videos, trying to determine if the videos are real, faked, or, in some instances, unknown since they can't prove it either way.

In order to get to the bottom of the videos, the show turns to a multitude of experts, from scientists and special effects wizards to stunt men and historians. Whenever possible, they even track down the people who made or are in the video to get their side of the story.

Even though this is an interesting, albeit somewhat of a reread of shows like *Fact or Faked*, what really sold me on it was its unintentional yet strong connection to the field of paranormal research. At first glance, there doesn't seem to be any connection, especially since, while there have only been four episodes of *Real, Fake or Unknown* to date, not a single viral video they examined has anything to do with the paranormal. But hear me out.

If you trace back the history of paranormal research, you will find that many scientists and a bunch of really, really smart people in general, took the idea seriously. So much so that there was a time where several well-respected colleges and universities even offered actual degrees in Parapsychology. Things have changed, though. Not many scientists, or learned individuals, take

this field seriously. Why? Personally, I think it's because scientists don't like working in a field where hoaxes and fakery are the norm.

Reality TV shows are directly responsible for this, too. Gone are the shows where, upon hearing or seeing something strange, they try to recreate it. Heck, there was a time where the term "debunking" was all the rage on these shows (even when they used it incorrectly). But that's over with. Now, they hear a noise, play their recorder back, and simply accept what they hear as being ghostly. It's all taken at face value. And I personally believe it's what has caused the paranormal field to get sloppy and lazy in their research.

But *Real, Fake or Unknown* doesn't do that. They pull up a video and say, "OK, this looks real, but could it have been faked?" It doesn't simply accept what is being shown as truthful and instead digs deeper into it. Granted, there are no ghosts, aliens, or cryptids (yet) to be found in any of the videos. But as I mentioned, we're only 4 episodes into the season. Plus, it's really not that far of a stretch to say that process the show followed examining the video of a skier being chased by a giant grizzly bear would be the same if that skier was being chased by, say the Abominable Snowman or even a snow-covered ghost. The comparisons are plentiful and yet more reasons why you should give *Real, Faked or Unknown* a chance. It will be time well-spent.

New episodes of *Real, Fake or Unknown* air every Wednesday evening at 10:00 pm EST on the Science Channel. Check the [Science Channel](#) website for local listings.

# REVIEW: Missing 411: Off the Grid



Samantha

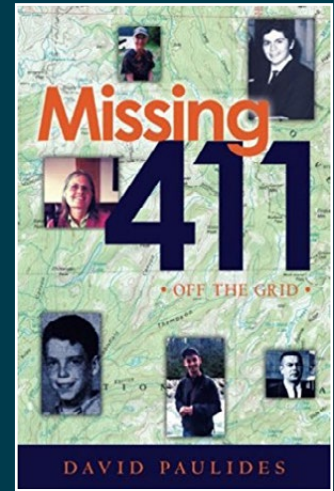
David Paulides is at it again, unveiling even more bizarre cases of missing people in this seventh volume of the *Missing 411* series.

By now readers should have a solid understanding of the commonalities associated with the cases included; and throughout this book Paulides has made it easy to identify those traits at the start of each case so that readers know what details to look for. In my opinion, this book contains the strangest cases yet!

One case involved a man named David Stone who was supposed to drive from San Diego to El Paso to be the best man in a wedding. He never made it because, sometime after getting gas in Arizona, something went wonky. On one occasion he was spotted walking

along the highway near Rodeo, NM, in shorts and a t-shirt, carrying a walking stick. When someone asked him what he was doing, he responded seriously, "Looking for the beast." A couple days later, he was spotted twice by two people who said he was carrying a backpack; and other witnesses later said that they saw him standing on the side of the highway with some sort of notepad, staring at Granite Peak. After that, he was never seen alive again. His car was found parked at an odd angle along Highway 80, and his bones were found 4 years later in a granite outcropping. He was missing his keys, wallet, eyeglasses, and all clothing except his sneakers, which were found in a ravine "some distance" from his remains. Talk about bizarre!

Another shocking case involved a man named Mark Rhineburger who, after leaving home without his wallet, stopped at two different gas stations claiming that he was being chased by



someone or something. His truck was later found when it crashed into a home with the keys still in the ignition. Mark was nowhere to be found, even though people immediately rushed in to help. There was simply no one inside the truck!

Cases like these are what make the entire *Missing 411* phenomenon so engrossing. How are these things happening? What's happening to these victims? The mystery continues.

## GHOSTS AREN'T JUST FOR HALLOWEEN ANYMORE!

If you're like us, there just aren't enough days in October for you to fit in all the strange and spooky things you want to do. In fact, we've heard from so many of you who were disappointed they couldn't make it to one of our October appearances that we decided to do something about it: Introducing The Ghosts of Ohio's spring/summer presentation schedule!

That's right, we're offering a bunch of strange and spooky presentations, just in time for Spring Break road trips! Looking for someplace spooky to visit when the weather finally gets better? Then come out to one of our presentations and bring a notebook because we plan on sharing a whole bunch of strange and spooky Ohio locations for you to check out!

*NOTE: With the exception of the Kent Paranormal Weekend, all other events are FREE and open to the general public. Seating for these are usually limited, so we suggest contacting the venue beforehand to see if they require preregistering.*

See you soon!

**Thursday, March 15th @ 6:30 pm**  
*Meet The Ghosts of Ohio presentation*

JR Clarke Public Library  
102 East Spring Street  
Covington, OH

**Saturday, April 21st @ 3:00 pm**  
*Weird Ohio presentation*

Lorain Main Library  
351 W. Sixth Street  
Lorain, OH

**April 28th & 29th**  
*Kent Paranormal Weekend*

The Kent Stage  
175 East Main Street  
Kent, OH 44240

**Tuesday, May 1st @ 6:30 pm**  
*Central Ohio Legends & Lore presentation*

West Salem Branch-Wayne County  
Public Library  
99 East Buckeye Street  
West Salem, OH

**Saturday, June 9th @ 2:00 pm**  
*Just How Weird Is Ohio? presentation*

Morley Library  
184 Phelps Street  
Painesville, OH 44077

# WANT TO SPEND THE NIGHT WITH THE GHOSTS OF OHIO IN 2018?

It's true: The Ghosts of Ohio is getting ready to start releasing a list of locations where you can investigate with us as part of our Spend The Night With The Ghosts of Ohio program!

What's the Spend The Night program? Simply put, it's an opportunity for some of our fans to get locked inside of a haunted location with us on a private, overnight ghost hunt.

All you need to be is an active subscriber to this very newsletter. As long as you are, there's a chance your e-mail address will be randomly pulled from the list. When that happens, you and a guest are headed to a haunted location with us for the night!



## Investigations & Consultations

The Ghosts of Ohio are continuing to schedule investigations for 2018. If you or someone you know is experiencing something unexplained in a home or place of business, contact us at [info@ghostsofohio.org](mailto:info@ghostsofohio.org) or visit our website to fill out an investigation request. All investigations are offered free of charge, and confidentiality and discretion are assured.

Not sure if you want or need an investigation? The Ghosts of Ohio also offers consultations. Let us sit down with you to discuss your current situation and what help we may be able to offer. For more information, please visit <http://ghostsofohio.org/services/investigations.html>

## Interact with The Ghosts of Ohio

In addition to our website, here are a couple of places where you can find The Ghosts of Ohio lurking online:

 FACEBOOK  
<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/pages/Columbus-OH/The-Ghosts-of-Ohio/60704381381?ref=mf>

 TWITTER  
<http://twitter.com/ghostsofohio>

## Administration

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