

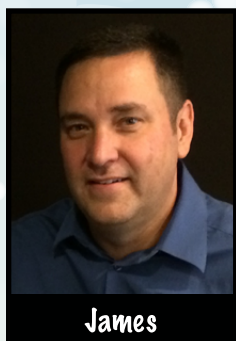


The ghosts of Ohio[®] Newsletter

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A MESSAGE FROM THE OTHER SIDE



James

I was sitting down, preparing to write this very newsletter introduction, when I received my message from the other side. Full disclosure: it was from the other side of the Internet and came from Ghosts of Ohio team member, Mark, who is very much alive.

Still, it touched a chord in me.

Mark was submitting his newsletter article, which you will find in the following pages. In essence, his article is about the human side of paranormal investigating. For years, I have been harping (some would say “whining”) about how ghost reality shows take the human element—the personal experience—out of paranormal encounters. Even the ones who interview the actual people who claim to have had an encounter often defer to long, drawn-out “dramatic recreations,” complete with cheesy Hollywood effects.

Mark’s article made me realize the same thing is happening to investigators themselves. We have all become this amalgamation of every tired reality TV ghost show cliché: black t-shirts, tattoos, inflated ego, “everything’s a ghost” attitude. Gone is the reality of ghost hunting—the nights where equipment gets broken, investigators fall asleep, and absolutely nothing ghostly happens. Does this sort of thing happen?

Of course it does. But it makes for boring TV, so it all gets swept under the ghostly carpet and “enhancements” are added to make for better television watching.

I totally get all that. But I’m concerned that we’re losing our individual and collective identity in the name of entertainment.

So with a new year knocking on our doors as we speak, how about we all plan to stand up and do what we can to regain our own individual identity. Sure, we’re all heading toward that one goal of obtaining concrete proof of the existence of ghosts, but that doesn’t mean we can’t do that as individuals, warts and all.

Cheers,

James A. Willis

Founder/Director



UPDATE: MISSING 411



Samantha

I was recently asked if there have been any updates regarding David Paulides' work on the *Missing 411* phenomenon, so I'm pleased to provide this quick rundown on what I've found.

The first major update is that Paulides has published yet another book in the series called *Missing 411: LAW* (Land, Air, Water). While I haven't had the pleasure of reading it yet, I did have a chance to listen to the September 30th episode of *Coast to Coast AM* where Paulides spoke with George Noory about the book. As you would expect (if you've listened to these podcasts before), the majority of the time was spent rehashing what the whole Missing phenomenon is. However, one noteworthy tidbit had to do with the media.

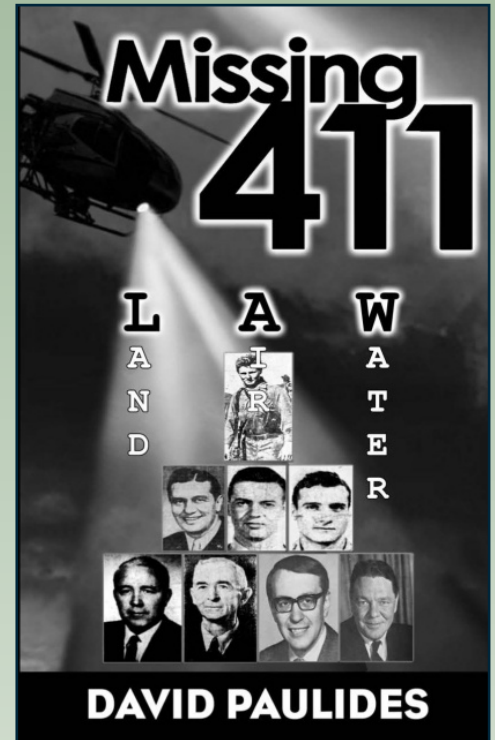
Paulides says that it's common for stories in the local media to differ from those documented in police reports, largely because many people nowadays don't delve deeper into the stories to discover all of the facts. Most of the important information can be found in the actual police reports, so it's important to get copies of them when you can. If, for some reason (or no reason), you are denied access to the police reports, particularly if you're a friend or family member of the missing person, Paulides' advice is to get the national media involved, not local. The reason for this is that the local media needs to maintain its relationship with law enforcement. It wouldn't do them any good to burn

their bridges with the police when they depend on them for news stories. The national media, on the other hand, can act as a squeaky wheel to get action, and also allow you to have a larger audience to bring attention to the case.

The second major *Missing 411* update is that David Paulides has been dealing with a lot of copycats who are publishing books similar to his series ("Imitation is the biggest form of flattery," right?), and there are a number of individuals creating *Missing 411* podcasts who are fooling people into thinking that Paulides is the creator and host of them. As a result, people often approach Paulides at conferences with questions regarding something he said, when he didn't actually say those things at all.

I empathize with him because this is, indeed, a major problem. Whenever I, myself, search for new podcasts featuring David Paulides, I often find myself wading through a plethora of choices that all look like they could be the real thing. In fact, I've clicked on a few with the hope that I was going to hear something new from him. I know his voice after hearing him on *Coast to Coast* and seeing him speak at conferences, and, unfortunately, the podcasts I'm finding are mostly fake. In fact, Paulides told George Noory that the only YouTube channel he is directly involved with is his official "Canam Missing Project."

That being said, even Paulides should be able to admit that his official YouTube channel leaves a lot to be desired, especially by people who want to hear updates regarding *Missing 411*. There's simply not much there, and everything is over a year old. Is it any wonder that other people



have taken it upon themselves to create new material, even if they get it wrong? It seems to me that it would benefit everyone if David Paulides would regularly post a 20- or 30-minute update, perhaps every month or every other month. I'm sure we'd all like to hear what his team is working on or what new projects are underway.

As usual, I highly recommend reading his books in order to learn everything you need to know about the *Missing 411* phenomenon. Yes, they are dry reads because they state a lot of facts. However, the facts help you to see the important patterns that have become the basis for Paulides' research. Knowing the facts will help you determine who the fakers are, and will allow you to ask smart questions if you ever have the chance to meet the real David Paulides. And believe me, he will respect you if you've done your research.

We'll be sure to keep you posted whenever there are more *Missing 411* updates!

HAUNTED ROADTRIPS: Santa Fe, New Mexico



Wendy

I was recently in Santa Fe with fellow Ghosts of Ohio member Sam, and for my birthday she booked a surprise tour with Peter Sinclaire, who runs The Original

Santa Fe Ghost Tour. Peter has been running his tour for close to 25 years, and this man knows his haunted history and loves his town.

We started out meeting at the only Santa Fe hotel that is located on the Plaza, La Fonda. The first inn on that site was built when Santa Fe was settled in 1607, so you know with over 400 years of humans living, loving, fighting and dying on this spot, there's bound to be a ghost, right? The current building that you see was built in 1922, and is filled with all the splendor of that age. What used to be a courtyard is now the main dining room, and it is here that you can possibly encounter the ghost of a man who lost his company's money



The La Fonda

gambling in the bar before throwing himself down the well in the courtyard. Sightings of a ghostly bride also occur here and upstairs in the room where she died. While we sat in what I am calling the side parlor next to the dining room listening to Peter

talk, I felt a sudden surge in the energy field. Both Sam and the woman sitting next to me also felt it: it felt like the hair was standing up on my neck and scalp and arms, although with it being a balmy 40 degrees that evening, I wasn't planning on taking of my coat to check! Ghostly or not, it was pretty cool!

Peter lead our group out on to the plaza where he told us of a recent encounter experienced by a lady (who I will call Ann) who worked at one of the museums near the plaza during a lunch break, and the two began talking about issues in their lives. The woman gave Ann some advice and told her everything would be all right. Ann didn't see her again for months, and then encountered her as she was walking through the plaza to her new job at the post office. She and the woman began walking to Ann's job while Ann told her about how her life had improved. The woman followed her into the post office, where Ann waved to a coworker, then stepped behind the counter to drop off her purse and jacket. She came back out to continue the conversation with the woman, only to find she was gone. When she asked her coworker where the woman was, he responded, "What woman? You walked in alone." Guardian angel? Guide spirit? Again, wonderful to hear personal experiences like these, and Peter loves to collect them to share with his tour groups. I may have some of the story confused, since I am writing this over a month after the fact, so you will have to go see Peter yourself to get the full story and any updates!

After this, our small group walked down to what is now the Drury Inn Suites, formerly the local hospital. It was interesting that one of the local

women on our tour had actually been born there and was able to give Peter even more history on the building. Peter told us about former ghostly



The Original Santa Fe Ghost Tour's Peter Sinclaire with Ghosts of Ohio members Sam and Wendy.

patients possibly still re-enacting their stays in the hospital. A lot of the activity here seems to be centered around the hotel's kitchen area.

Finally, we traveled down one more block to La Posada, where Peter told us the sad story of Julia Staab, the resident ghost. We went into La Posada where we saw the stairwell she is most often seen at, along with several other of the beautiful rooms. We also dared to stop in to the ladies restroom, another reputedly haunted place in this beautiful Victorian inn. After the tour broke up and we finished talking to Peter, I took several pictures of Sam on the staircase. Unfortunately, no ghosts appeared in the pictures (it is never that easy), but the tour was very enjoyable and chock full of historical data. I think I can also speak for Sam when I say this tour is highly recommended. Look Peter up when you are in Santa Fe. He may not have a tour scheduled, but he is very open to doing private tours for anyone who wants one and will also create one based on whatever you want, from chocolate to churches!

www.theoriginalsantafeghosttour.weebly.com

THE HUMAN SIDE OF PARANORMAL INVESTIGATIONS



Mark

It was dark, that much I'm certain of. A forlorn moon cast dark grasping shadows of twisted tree branches onto freshly fallen leaves, framing

an old but stately gate on the path before me. Pushing past the cold ironwork, I found myself on a crumbling stone path leading up to a large and long-abandoned mansion. In the moonlight, the unlit windows regarded my approach with a darkly suspicious gaze. Stepping onto the wide porch, the floorboards softly creak at my uninvited intrusion as I cross and reach for the once opulent doorknob. Corroded by age, the metal feels ice cold in my hand, but the knob turns easily enough and the door rotates inward, drawing me into a shadowed and silent entry hall. A thick, undisturbed layer of dust covers the floor. A nearby table holds a single, lit candle, which I take. Walking further into the hall, I begin to hear a faint but persistent sound of laughter, the tinkling of glasses and fine China plates, and a jaunty tune in the background coming from an old Victrola phonograph player. Impossible to resist, this haunting, whispery echo of some long-forgotten house memory leads me onward into the gloom toward a massive oak pocket-door sealing an ornately carved doorframe. My hand noticeably trembles in the flickering candlelight as I reach toward the latched door handle. Now I can almost make out the murmur of individual conversations and laughter from

gleeful party goes on the other side. But they cannot possibly be real. No one lives here anymore! Pushing hard against the door, it reluctantly slides back into the wall, revealing only an empty chamber and cloth-shrouded furniture against the outline of a grand marble stone fireplace. The jovial music, the care-free laughter, the sound of party goes long gone—all vanish in the instant the door opens, replaced with a silence far more unsettling.

Then everything shifts, fades, collapses, and “Mark! Mark! Wake-up! You fell asleep!” calls out one of my Ghosts of Ohio investigative team members. Samantha nudges me awake with an amused twinkle in her eye, then moves on to readjust a nearby microphone. Jolted wide-awake, I see that instead of a candle, I am holding a digital recorder in one hand and my trusty “portal detector” in the other. Shaking the cobwebs from my mind, I slowly reacquaint myself with my surroundings, finding myself in a library of all places, with stacks of books towering around me. A large book on the floor before me bears a familiar author's name: Edgar Allen Poe. On the cover, a painting of the decrepit ruin of the once stately House of Usher. “Well, that explains a lot,” I thought, still remembering the dream with unfaded clarity. I stand up and check the time: 3:14 AM. Always 3:14 I note to myself, having encountered that time on the clock more than random chance would suggest over the past year. A subconscious message of some sort, no doubt, but what does it mean? Soon Jim wanders by and checks on me. Falling asleep on a late-night investigation occasionally

happens (but, truth be told, this has only happened to the men in the group!), usually resulting in immediate playful tricks by the group, or material that ends up on an anniversary DVD production of activities. Sometimes both!

While I have taken some creative, fun liberties with the story and post-script above for you, the reader, the embellishments serve a purpose. To entertain, of course. But also to convey a more human side of paranormal investigations that you will not see on truly overly hyped television shows on these subjects. During our years of paranormal investigations, we have encountered situations where there are truly weird vibrations, feelings, and events, and those are quite exciting! We try to collect physical evidence, and we enjoy hours of detailed analysis, research, and group discussions as well, working together to debunk the explainable and to focus upon the truly exceptional evidence. But, we have also experienced nothing at all on other investigations and have left a place with sleep the only priority in the early morning hours. That does not mean a place is not haunted, but, like fishing, sometimes the ghostly fish aren't biting no matter the day, place, or time, or how good you think the bait is. In The Ghosts of Ohio, we accept that reality and push forward to doing our best on each paranormal investigation that we are invited to explore. To you, the reader, we stand ready to investigate a mysterious world with you. We can help you explore that old stately door that divides our world from one we cannot easily see. All you need do is ask.

BOOK REVIEW:



LIGHT AS A FEATHER STIFF AS A BOARD



Samantha

Oh, the spooky things we did as children! “Light as a Feather, Stiff as a Board” was a staple of slumber parties. The game involved one girl lying flat on the floor, while everyone else spaced themselves around her with one or two fingertips under her body. The person at her head would then place her hands on the girl’s head and

make up a creepy story about how the girl died. Once the story was told, everyone would begin chanting in unison, “Light as a Feather, Stiff as a Board” as they used their fingers to raise the girl’s body effortlessly into the air. We felt like witches casting a spell or something, even though it was just plain old physics. It was loads of fun!

I suppose it was just a matter of time before someone realized that this party game would make for a great horror story. Author Zoe Aarsen’s teen novel *Light as a Feather, Stiff as a Board* is about four popular high school girls who invite a shy new girl, Violet, to a sleepover. When Violet suggests that they play “Light as a Feather...,” the girls get into position with ringleader Olivia on the floor and Violet as the storyteller. As with all horror stories, things are fine at first. But the level of detail in Violet’s descriptions begins to worry a couple of the girls. Does Violet have some kind of ability to foresee the future?

Their answer comes when Olivia is killed in a horrific car crash, exactly how (and when) Violet described. How could Violet have known all those details? Did she somehow orchestrate the accident? Does she have some sort of supernatural power that allows her to kill people to get what she wants? After all, since the accident, she has started dating Olivia’s boyfriend, taken Olivia’s place on the pom squad, and is now the class president (a role that Olivia had).

Something’s definitely wrong with Violet, and it’s up to the rest of the group to figure it out and stop her before the next girl dies.



This novel is definitely a teen read. There is the gamut of stereotypical high school characters, there’s the usual high school drama that we see in horror flicks, and there’s enough mystery and scare factor to keep readers interested. However, as an adult, I felt that the novel was too long. And since I’m someone who knows a bit about the paranormal, I found myself wanting to scream at the characters for their attitudes and making such terrible choices. Like I said, it’s a teen read.

If you’re interested, this book has been turned into a television series of the same name. It premiered in October on Hulu with 10 episodes, and so far I’ve seen mediocre reviews. I’m not inclined to check it out myself. For me, the book was more than enough.



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 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!

MERRY SCARY 2018



WANT TO SPEND THE NIGHT WITH THE GHOSTS OF OHIO IN 2019?



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 email 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 have begun scheduling investigations and consultations for 2019. If you or someone you know is experiencing something unexplained in a home or place of business, contact us at 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>

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